

# **THE ETHERIC DOUBLE**

## **The Health Aura of Man**

**by A.E.Powell**

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### **Publisher's Preface**

The author's aim in compiling the books in this series was to save students much time and labour by providing a condensed synthesis of the considerable literature on the respective subjects of each volume, coming mostly from the pens of Annie Besant and C.W.Leadbeater. The accompanying list shows the large number of books from which he drew. So far as possible, the method adopted was to explain the form side first, before the life side: to describe the objective mechanism of phenomena and then the activities of consciousness that are expressed through the mechanism. There is no attempt to prove or even justify any of the statements. Marginal references give opportunity to refer to the sources.

The works of H.P.Blavatsky were not used because the author said that the necessary research in The Secret Doctrine and other writings would have been too vast a task for him to undertake. He added: "The debt to H.P.Blavatsky is greater than could ever be indicated by quotations from her monumental volumes. Had she not show the way in the first instance, later investigators might never have found the trail at all."

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### **Foreword**

by members of the Science Group of the Theosophical Research centre, London, England

The Etheric Double was first published in 1925 as one of a series by the same author dealing with the inner structure of Man. It is now represented to the public unchanged except for the omission from the last chapter of a reference to local research, active when the book was written.

No attempt has been made to augment or otherwise bring up to date this classic in the light of understanding accumulated during the intervening forty-odd years. As A.E.Powell said himself in his introduction, this is a compilation from forty main works published between 1897 and 1921 and in view of their wide range and the painstaking thoroughness with which they were extracted, the collated information may fairly be taken to summarise the general views upon the subject *up to 1925*.

In more recent years, a better appreciation has been built up of the way the unconscious mind functions, and sources of possible error have been discerned in the operation of mediumistic faculties which necessitate caution concerning information obtained through their use. Much of the contents of *The Etheric Double* is derived from the exercise of clair-sentience (or extrasensory perception, as it is now called) and although the contents may be accurate, there is as yet no accepted method of confirming them. This is not to cast doubt on the honesty of those who recorded the observations; they were persons of unimpeachable integrity who continually emphasised their pioneering status and fallibility. There is no doubt that the psychic phenomena they described were experienced by them and, indeed, others have since confirmed some of their accounts. The sources of possible error referred to lie

one state deeper than that - in the psychic mechanisms for experiencing what they did. This is the still unresolved and fascinating province of parapsychology.

Further assistance can be expected towards corroborating or refuting the observations and the theory of the etheric double from data emerging in the natural sciences, but at present there are few points of contact. Space craft have taken recording instruments to Mars and Venus, and electron microscopes in common laboratory service provide enormous magnifications of what is normally invisible, but there is hardly any information relating to etheric states of matter that has been acquired in a similar direct and orthodox way. Work with recording devices has so far failed to detect etheric matter in its normal working state and thereby confirm it as physical or near-physical substance. Probably the closest approach has been in studies of ectoplasm, which seems to be the temporary and abnormal condition of a plastic and extrudable component of the human body that becomes amenable to test only when it has been made external and densified into tangible form by the special and unconsciously exercised psychic abilities of certain rare people. When the densification ceases and the material is withdrawn again into the donor's body, it could well be returning to its function as part of a less easily identified etheric constitution. However, much more work is needed before this can be concluded with any confidence.

Since rigorously established evidence can still neither confirm nor deny, it is reasonable to hold the theory and information presented here as a hypothesis for further investigation. This is the procedure in all scientific work and, in fact, little progress can be made without some tentative working concept as context and guide. But it is essential to remember that an adopted hypothesis may have to be modified or even rejected as the work proceeds, and this is most likely during the early stages of an exploration. It happens frequently in the natural sciences of the physical world for which our ordinary language and mathematical symbology are expressly designed. How much more likely must this be in a domain more psychic than physical.

Modern investigators continue the quest for a deeper understanding of Man's nature and constitution and they have noted the more recent developments in psychology and parapsychology that underlie the caution sounded here. However, their gratitude is due to Powell for his orderly presentation of statements and ideas current in the 1925; time and effort need not now be spent on the reference material that he so ably examined for them. Here is ample justification for reprinting his work just as he wrote it.

The Science Group, Theosophical Research Centre, London, England.

H.Tudor Edmunds, Chairman - 1968

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## INTRODUCTION

This book has been compiled with the object of presenting to the student of Occultism a coherent synthesis of all, or nearly all, the information regarding the Etheric Double, and other closely allied phenomena, which has been given to the world through the medium of modern Theosophical and psychical research literature.

This information is scattered over a very large number of books and articles, some forty of which the compiler has consulted, a list of these being given at the end of this document. The writer wishes it understood that his work is a compilation - nothing more. All he has done is to collect and arrange the material which others have provided.

There are many advantages in this method of study. In these busy days few have the leisure, even if they possess the inclination, to search through some scores of books for scattered item of knowledge, and then to weld them into a coherent whole. It is better, therefore, for one to do this work, that others may benefit and save their own time and labour. The work of the compiler brings to light many new relationships between fragments culled from divers sources, and under his hand the mosaic gradually forms itself into a pattern. His work, necessarily intensive, recalls to notice many isolated and often forgotten facts, which may be of little value or interest considered individually, but which collectively constituted a substantial and useful array. Finally, the picture which the compiler presents not only displays in orderly fashion what is known today, but, by its very orderliness, reveals where our knowledge is incomplete. Recognising such gaps in our knowledge, other investigators may perhaps turn their attention in those directions and so make the picture more nearly complete.

The compiler has throughout used his best endeavour to present the material he has gathered with scrupulous exactitude. In very many cases he has employed the actual words, adapted or abridged where necessary to the context, of the authors he has consulted; but, not to make the text burdensome and unsightly with large numbers of inverted commas, these have been consistently omitted. In order, however, that students may, if they wish, refer to the original sources of information, the references have been provided, in abbreviated or long form,

The compiler would be grateful to any students who would call his attention (1) to any inaccuracies in his work; (2) to any omissions of material which he may have overlooked.

The diagrams and charts contained in the text are original; they are intended to be purely diagrammatic, and in no sense pictures of the actual phenomena they attempt to illustrate.

A.E.Powell

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## CHAPTER 1

### GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Every student of Occultism is familiar with the fact that man possesses several bodies or vehicles through which he is enabled to express himself on the various planes of nature – physical, astral, mental, and so forth.

The occultist finds that physical matter exists in seven grades or orders of density, viz. :

Atomic  
Subatomic  
Super-Etheric  
Etheric  
Gaseous  
Liquid  
Solid

Particles of all these grades enter into the composition of the physical vehicle. The latter, however, has two well-marked divisions, viz., the dense body, composed of solids, liquids and gases, and the Etheric Body, or Double, as it is frequently called, consisting of the four finer grades of physical matter.

It will be our purpose in these chapters to study this Etheric Double; its nature, appearance, functions, its relationships to the other vehicles, its connection with Prâna, or Vitality, its birth, growth and decay, its connection with certain methods of healing, with mesmerism, with mediumship and materialisations, the powers it can be made to exercise, and a host of miscellaneous etheric phenomena with which it is connected.

Briefly, we shall find that the Etheric Double, while necessary to the life of the physical body, is not, properly speaking, a separate vehicle of consciousness: that it receives and distributes the vital force which emanates from the sun and is thus intimately connected with physical health: that it possesses certain Chakrams or Force-Centres of its own, each with its distinct function: that upon the action of etheric matter mainly depends the memory of the dream life: that it plays an important part in determining the kind of physical vehicle which an incarnating ego will receive: that, like the physical body, it dies and decays in due course, releasing the "soul" for the next stage in its cyclic journey: that it is especially associated with what is known as Vital or Magnetic Healing, and also with Mesmerism, whether for purposes of healing, anaesthesia, or trance: that it is the principal factor concerned in séance-room phenomena, such as the movement of objects, production of "raps" and other sounds, and materialisations of all kinds: that the development of etheric faculties confers new powers and reveals many etheric phenomena, which are beyond the experience of most men: that by the use of the matter of the etheric body objects may be "magnetised", much as living beings may be mesmerised: and, finally, that the etheric body provides the material out of which the substance known as ectoplasm is formed.

The Etheric Double has been given a variety of names. In early Theosophical literature it was often called the astral body, the astral man, or the Linga Sharîra. In all later writings, however, none of these terms are ever applied to the Etheric Double, as they belong properly to the body composed of astral matter, the body of Kâma of the Hindus. In reading the Secret Doctrine, therefore, and other books of the older literature, the student must be on his guard not to confuse the two quite distinct bodies, known today as the Etheric Double and the Astral Body.

The correct Hindu name for the Etheric Double is Prânamâyakosha, or vehicle of Prâna: in German it is known as the "Doppelgänger": after death, when separated from the dense physical body, it is known as the "wraith", and has also been called the "phantom", "apparition", or "churchyard ghost". In Râja Yoga the Etheric Double and the dense body together are known as the Sthûlopâdhi, or lowest Upâdhi of Âtmâ.

Every solid, liquid and gaseous particle of the physical body is surrounded with an etheric envelope: hence the Etheric Double, as its name implies, is a perfect duplicate of the dense form. In size it projects about one quarter of an inch beyond the skin. The etheric aura, however, or health Aura as it is frequently called, projects normally several inches beyond the skin: this will be further described later.

It is important to notice that the dense body and the Etheric Double vary together as to their quality: hence one who sets himself deliberately to purify his dense body, at the same time automatically refines its etheric counterpart.

Into the composition of the Etheric Double must enter something of all the different grades of etheric matter, but the proportions may vary greatly, and are determined by several factors, such as the race, sub-race, and the type of man, as well as by his individual karma.

As yet, the only information which the compiler has been able to gather regarding the particular properties and functions of each of the four grades of etheric matter is the following :-

<b>1 Etheric</b>	<b>The medium of ordinary current electricity, and of sound.</b>	
<b>2 Super-Etheric</b>	<b>The medium of light.</b>	
<b>3 Subatomic</b>	<b>The medium of the “finer forms of electricity”.</b>	
<b>4 Atomic</b>	<b>The medium for the transmission of thought from brain to brain</b>	

The following is stated, in *Theosophy* for May, 1922, by F.T. Pierce, to be probably correct:-

	<b>Occult Chemistry</b>	<b>Physics</b>	<b>Example</b>
E-1- Atomic	Electronic	Electron	
E-2- Subatomic	Positive Nucleus	Alpha Particle	
E-3- Super-Etheric	Neutralised Nucleus	Neutron	
E-4- Etheric	Atomic	Nascent N.	
		Atomic H.	
Gaseous	Molecular Gas, etc.	H <sub>2</sub> , N <sub>2</sub> or gaseous compounds	

In appearance the Etheric Double is a pale violet-grey or blue-grey, faintly luminous, and coarse or fine in texture according as the dense physical body is coarse or fine.

The **Etheric Double** has two main functions. Firstly, it **absorbs Prâna, or Vitality, and distributes** this to the whole body, as we shall see in detail presently.

Secondly, it acts as an **intermediary or bridge between the dense physical body and the astral body, transmitting the consciousness of physical sense-contacts through the etheric brain to the astral body**, and also transmitting consciousness from the astral and higher levels down into the physical brain and nervous system.

In addition, the Etheric Double develops within itself certain Centres by means of which the man is able to cognise the etheric world and its hosts of etheric phenomena. These powers or faculties will also be described in due course.

It is important to recognise that the Etheric Double, being merely a part of the physical body, is not normally capable of acting as a separate vehicle of consciousness, in which a man can live or function. It has only a diffused consciousness belonging to its parts, and has no mentality, nor does it readily serve as a medium of mentality, when disjoined from the dense counterpart. As it is a vehicle, not of mental consciousness, but of Prâna or Vitality, its dislocation from the dense particles to which it conveys the life-currents is disturbing and unhealthy. In normal, healthy persons, in fact, the separation of the Etheric Double from the dense body is a matter of difficulty, and the Double is unable to move away from the body to which it belongs.

In persons known as physical or materialising mediums the Double is comparatively easily detachable, and its etheric matter forms the basis of many phenomena of **materialisation**, which will be dealt with more fully in a later chapter.

The Double may be separated from the dense physical body by accident, death, anæsthetics, such as ether or gas, or mesmerism. The Double being the connecting link between the brain and the higher consciousness, the forcible extrusion of it from the dense physical body by anæsthetics necessarily produces anæsthesia.

Further than this, the etheric matter thus forced out usually wraps itself round the astral body, and dulls the consciousness of that vehicle also; hence after the effects of anæsthetics have worn off there is usually no memory in the brain consciousness of the time spent in the astral vehicle.

The method and consequences of withdrawal of etheric matter by mesmerism will be dealt with more fully in the chapter specially devoted to the purpose.

In conditions of weak health or nervous excitement the Etheric Double may also in great part be extruded from its dense counterpart: the latter then becomes very dully conscious, or entranced, according to the lesser or greater amount of the etheric matter extruded.

Separation of the Double from the dense body is generally accompanied by a considerable decrease of vitality in the latter, the double becoming more vitalised as the energy in the dense body diminishes. In *Posthumous Humanity* Colonel Olcott says :-

"When the double is projected by a trained expert, even the body seems torpid, and the mind in a 'brown study' or dazed state; the eyes are lifeless in expression, the heart and lung actions feeble and often temperature much lowered. It is very dangerous to make any sudden noise or burst into a room under such circumstances; for, the double being by instantaneous reaction drawn back into the body, the heart convulsively palpitates, and death may be caused."

So intimate, in fact, is the connection between the etheric and the dense bodies that an injury inflicted on the Etheric Double will appear as a lesion on the dense body, this being an instance of the curious phenomenon known as repercussion. It is well known that repercussion can also occur in the case of the astral body, an injury to the latter, under certain circumstances, reproducing itself in the physical body.

It seems probable, however, that repercussion can occur only in the case of a perfect materialisation, where the form is both visible and tangible, and not when it is :-1.) tangible though not visible, or 2.) visible though not tangible

It must be born in mind that the above applies only where matter of the Etheric Double is used for the materialised form. When the materialisation is formed of matter, from the circumambient ether, an injury to the form could affect the physical body by repercussion no more than an injury to a marble statue could injure the man himself.

It must also be born in mind that etheric matter, though invisible to ordinary sight, is still purely physical, and can therefore be affected by cold and heat, and also powerful acids.

Persons who have lost a limb by amputation sometimes complain that they can feel pain at the extremities of the amputated limb, i.e., at the place where the limb used to be.

This is due to the fact that the etheric portion of the limb is not removed with the dense physical portion, but can still be seen in its place by clairvoyant sight, and therefore, under suitable stimulus, sensations can be aroused in this etheric limb and transmitted to the consciousness.

There are a large number of other phenomenon connected with the Etheric Double, its extrusion from the dense body, its emanations, and so forth, but these can be dealt with more conveniently and satisfactorily at a later stage, after we have studied the nature and methods of working Prâna, or Vitality.

## CHAPTER II

### PRÂNA, OR VITALITY

It is known to occultists that there are at least three separate and distinct forces which emanate from the sun and reach our planet. There may be countless other forces, for all we know to the contrary, but at any rate we know of these three. They are :-

1. Fohat, or Electricity
2. Prâna, or Vitality
3. Kundalini, or Serpent-Fire

Fohat or Electricity, comprises practically all the physical forces of which we know, all of which are convertible into one another, such as electricity, magnetism, light, heat, sound, chemical affinity, motion, and so forth.

Prâna, or Vitality, is a vital force, the existence of which is not yet formally recognised by orthodox Western scientists, though probably a few of them suspect it.

Kundalini, or Serpent-Fire, is a force known as yet only to very few. It is entirely unknown and unsuspected by orthodox Western science.

These three forces remain distinct, and none of them can at this level be converted into either of the others. This is a point of great importance, which the student should clearly grasp.

Further, these three forces have no connection with the Three Great Outpourings; the Outpourings are definite efforts made by the Solar Deity. Fohat, Prâna and Kundalini, on the other hand, seem rather the results of His Life, His qualities in manifestation without any visible effort.

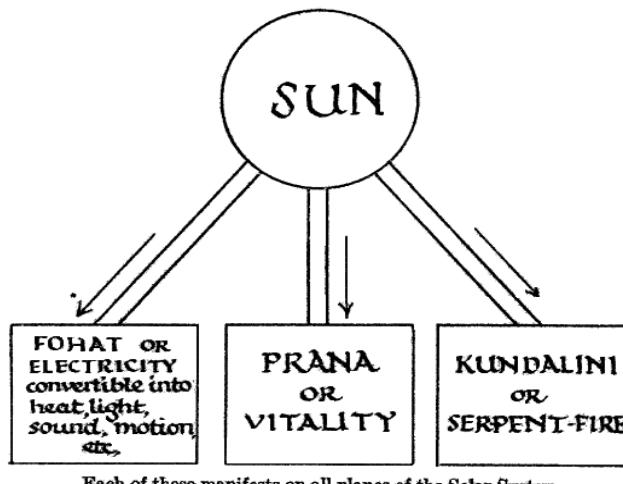
[ Since this document was compiled, *The Chakras* by C.W.Leadbeater, has appeared. In *The Chakras* it is stated that the three forces mentioned are connected with the Outpourings, as follows:

The First Outpouring, from the Third Logos, is the Primary force which manufactured the chemical elements. This appears to be Fohat. The Second Outpouring, from the Second Logos, has Prâna as one of its aspects.

Kundalini is a further development, on the ascending arc, of the First Outpouring ]

### PRÂNA, OR VITALITY

DIAGRAM I  
SOLAR FORCES



Prâna is a Sanskrit word, derived from *pra*, forth, and *an*, to breathe, move, live. Thus *pra-an*, Prâna, means to breathe forth, life-breath or life-energy being the nearest English equivalents of the Sanskrit term. As, in Hindu thought, there is but one Life, one Consciousness, Prâna has been used for the Supreme Self, the energy of the One, the Life of the Logos. Hence, Life on each plane may be spoken of as the Prâna of the plane, Prâna becoming the life-breath in every creature.

"I am Prâna... Prâna is life," says Indra, the great Deva who stands as the Head of the hierarchy of the life in the lower world. Prâna here clearly means the totality of the life-forces. In the Mundakopanishat it is stated that from Brahman the One comes Prâna – or Life. Prâna is also described as Âtmâ in its outgoing activity: "From Âtmâ this Prâna is born" (Prashnopanishat). Shankara says that Prâna is Kriyâshakti – the Shakti of doing, not of knowing. It is classed as one of the seven Elements, which correspond to the seven regions of the universe, the seven sheaths of Brahman, and so forth. These are: Prâna, Manas, Ether, Fire, Air, Water, Earth.

The Hebrews speak of the "breath of life", which they call Nephesch, breathed into the nostrils of Adam. Nephesch, however, is not strictly speaking Prâna alone, but Prâna combined with the next principle, Kâma. These together make the "vital spark" that is the "Breath of life in man, in beast or insect, of physical, material life."

Translated into more Western terms, Prâna, on the physical plane, is best described as Vitality, as the integrating energy that co-ordinates the physical molecules, cells, etc., and holds them together as a definite organism. It is the life-breath within the organism, the portion of the universal Life-Breath, appropriated by a given organism during the period of bodily existence that we speak of as "a life." Were it not for the presence of Prâna, there could be no physical body as an integral whole, working as one entity; without Prâna the body would be nothing more than a collection of independent cells. Prâna links up and connects these into one complex whole, playing along the branches and meshes of the "life-web," that shimmering golden web of inconceivable fineness and delicate beauty, formed out of a single thread of buddhic matter, a prolongation of the Sûtrâtma, within the meshes of which the coarser atoms are built together.

Prâna is absorbed by all living organisms, a sufficient supply of it seeming to be a necessity of their existence. It is not, therefore, in any sense a product of life, but the living animal, plant, etc., are its products. Too great an exuberance of it in the nervous system may lead to disease and death, just as too little leads to exhaustion and ultimately death.

H.P. Blavatsky compares Prâna, the active power producing all *vital* phenomena, to oxygen, the supporter of combustion, the life-giving gas, the active *chemical* agent in all organic life. A comparison is also drawn between the Etheric Double, the inert vehicle of life, and nitrogen, an inert gas with which oxygen is mixed to adapt the latter for animal respiration, and which also enters largely into all organic substances.

The fact that the cat is pre-eminently endowed with prâna has given rise to the popular idea of the cat having "nine lives", and appears to have been indirectly connected with the reasons for this animal being regarded in Egypt as sacred.

On the physical plane prâna builds up all minerals, and is the controlling agent in the chemico-physiological changes in protoplasm, which lead to differentiation and the building of the various tissues of bodies and plants, animals and men. They show its presence by the power of responding to stimuli.

The blending of astral with physical prâna creates nerve-matter which is fundamentally the cell, and which gives the power to feel pleasure and pain. The cells develop into fibres, as the result of thought, the prâna pulsating along those fibres being composed of physical, astral and mental prâna.

Within the physical plane atoms themselves, the prâna courses along the spirillæ. In our Chain, in the First Round, the Monadic Life, flowing through the Spiritual Triad (Atma-Buddhi-Manas), vivifies the first set of spirillæ, and these are used by the prânic currents which affect the dense physical body. In the Second Round, the Monad vivifies the second set of spirillæ, and through them runs the prâna connected with the Etheric Double. In the Third Round, the third set of spirillæ is awakened by the Monadic life, and through them courses

the kâmic prâna, which makes sensation of pleasure and pain possible. In the Fourth Round, the Monadic life awakens the fourth set of spirillæ, which becomes the vehicle for the Kâma-manasic prâna, thus making the atoms fit to be built into a brain for thought.

This is as far as normal humanity has progressed. Certain Yoga practices (in the use of which great caution is required, lest injury should be inflicted on the brain) bring about the development of the fifth and sixth set of spirillæ, which serve as channels for higher forms of consciousness.

The seven spirillæ in the atom must not be confused with the "whorls," of which there are ten, three coarser and seven finer. In the three coarser whorls flow currents of different electricities, whilst the seven finer whorls respond to etheric waves of all kinds – sound, light, heat, etc.

The *Secret Doctrine* speaks of Prâna as the "invisible" or "fiery" lives which supply the microbes with "vital constructive energy," thus enabling them to build the physical cells, the size of the smallest bacterium relatively to that of a "fiery life" being as that of an elephant to the tiniest infusoria. "Every visible thing in the universe was built by such lives, from conscious and divine primordial man, down to the unconscious agents that construct matter." "By the manifestation of Prâna, the spirit which is speechless appears as the speaker.

The whole constructive vitality, in the universe and in man, is thus summed up as Prâna.

An atom is also a "life", but the consciousness is that of the Third Logos. A microbe is a "life," the consciousness being that of the Second Logos, appropriated and modified by the Planetary Logos and the "Spirit of the Earth."

The *Secret Doctrine* also speaks of a "fundamental dogma" of occult science, that the Sun is the storehouse of Vital Force, and that from the sun issue those life-currents which thrill through space, as through the organisms of every living thing on earth. Paracelsus thus referred to Prâna : "The whole of the Microcosm is potentially contained in the Liquor Vitæ, a nerve fluid ...in which is contained the nature, quality, character, and essence of all beings." Paracelsus also spoke of it as the Archæus. Dr. B. Richardson, F.R.S., wrote of it as "nervous ether." The Nasmthy willow leaves are the reservoirs of the solar vital energy, the real sun being hidden behind the visible sun, and generating the vital fluid, which circulates throughout our System in a ten-year cycle.

The old Aryan sang that Surya "hiding behind his Yogi, robes his head that no one could see."

The dress of the Indian ascetics is dyed a red-yellow hue, with pinkish patches on it, and is intended rudely to represent the prâna in men's blood, the symbol of the vital principle in the sun, or what is now called the chromosphere, the "rose-coloured" region.

The nerve-centres themselves are of course provided by the "food-sheath" or dense body, but Prâna is the controlling energy which acts through the nerve-centres, making the food-sheath obedient, and fashioning it for the purpose which the I, seated in the higher intelligence, demands.

It is important to note that although the nerves are in the physical body, it is not the physical body, as such, which has the power of feeling. As a sheath, the physical body does not feel: it is a receiver of impressions only. The outer body receives the impact, but in its own cells does not lie the power of feeling pleasure or pain, except in a very vague, dull and "massive" way, giving rise to vague, diffused feelings, such as those of general fatigue, for example.

The physical contacts are transmitted inwards by prâna, and these are acute, sharp, keen, specific, quite different from the heavy, diffused sensations deriving from the cells

themselves. It is thus in every case prâna which gives the sense-activity to the physical organs, and which transmits the outer vibration to the sense-centres, which are situated in Kâma, in the sheath which is next to prâna, the Manomayakosha. It is by means of the Etheric Double that prâna runs along the nerves of the body and thus enables them to act not only as the carriers of external impacts but also of motor force, originated from within.

It is the play of the prânic life-currents in the Etheric Doubles of minerals, vegetables, and animals which awaken out of latency the astral matter involved in the structure of their atomic and molecular constituents, thus producing a "thrill" which enables the Monad of form to draw in astral materials, which are built by nature-spirits into a loosely constituted mass, the future astral body.

In the mineral, astral matter is so little active that there is no perceptible working from the astral to the physical. In the higher plants the increased astral activity affects their etheric and, through this, their dense matter. With animals, the much greater astral consciousness affects their Etheric Doubles and, by these etheric vibrations, the building of the nervous system, which was dimly foreshadowed only in plants, is stimulated.

It is thus impulses set up by the consciousness – *willing* to experience – which cause astral vibrations, these producing vibrations in etheric matter: the impulse thus comes from the consciousness, but the actual building of the nervous system, which the consciousness at this stage is unable to undertake, is performed by etheric nature-spirits, directed by the Shining Ones of the Third elemental Kingdom and the Logos working through the Group Soul.

There appears first in the astral body a centre, having the function of receiving and responding to vibrations from outside. From this centre, vibrations pass to the etheric body, causing there etheric vortices which draw into themselves dense physical particles: these eventually form a nerve-cell, and groups of cells, which, receiving vibrations from the outer physical world, transmit them back to the astral centres, the physical and astral centres thus acting and reacting on one another, each in consequence becoming more complicated and more effective. Out of these nerve-cells, the sympathetic system is built first, by impulses, as we have seen, originating in the *astral* world: later the cerebro-spinal system is constructed, by impulses originating in the *mental* world.

The sympathetic system always remains directly connected with the astral centres: but it is important to note that these astral centres *are not the astral chakrams*, of which we shall speak later, but are merely aggregations in the astral sheath which form the beginnings of the centres which will build the organs in the physical body. The astral chakrams are not formed till a much later period in evolution.

From these centres then – which are *not* the chakrams – ten organs in the physical are formed: five to receive impressions, Jñânendriyas, "knowledge-senses" or sense-centres in the brain, which eventually are connected with eyes, ears, tongue, nose and skin: and five to convey vibrations from consciousness to the outer world, Karmendriyas, "action senses," or sense-centres which cause action, these being the motor-centres in the brain, to be connected with the sense-organs in hands, feet, larynx, organs of generation and excretion.

The student must carefully note that the *prâna* which courses along the nerves is quite separate and distinct from what is called a man's *magnetism*, or *nerve-fluid*, which is generated within his own body. This *nerve-fluid* or magnetism keeps the etheric matter circulating along the nerves, or, more accurately, along a coating of ether which surrounds each nerve, much as the blood circulates through the veins. And just as the blood carries oxygen to the body, so does the *nerve-fluid* convey *prâna*.

Furthermore, just as the particles of the dense physical body are constantly changing and being replaced by fresh particles derived from food, water, and air, so are the particles of the

etheric body being constantly changed and replaced by fresh etheric particles, these being taken into the body along with the food eaten, with the air breathed, and with prâna, in the form known as the Vitality Globule, as will presently be described.

Prâna, or Vitality, exists on all planes – physical, astral, mental, etc.. Prâna, the One Life, is “the nave to which are attached the seven spokes of the universal wheel” (*Hymn to Prâna, Artharva Veda*, XI., 4). We are here, however, concerned only with its appearance and methods of work in the lowest, the physical plane.

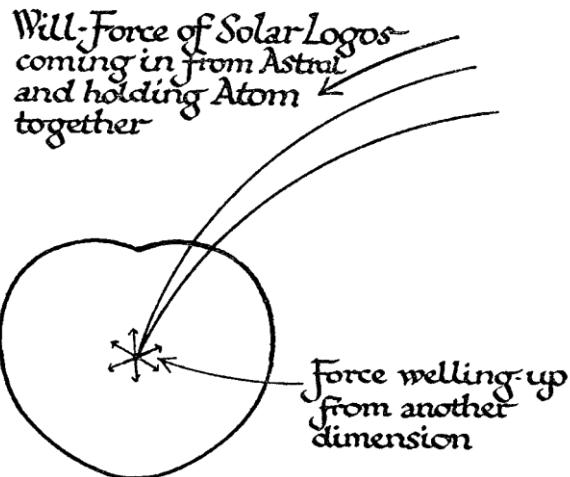
It must also be noted that prâna on the physical plane is sevenfold, *i.e.*, there are seven varieties of it.

We have seen already that is quite separate and distinct from light, heat, etc., but nevertheless its –

#### DIAGRAM II

##### The Vitality Globule (1) An Ultimate Physical Atom

DIAGRAM II  
THE VITALITY GLOBULE  
(1) An Ultimate Physical Atom



For details of atom, see *Occult Chemistry*, Plate II., and page 5, *et seqq.*

For details of atom, see *Occult Chemistry*, Plate II, and page 5, *et seq.*

manifestation on the physical plane appears to depend upon sunlight: for when sunlight is abundant, prâna also appears in abundance, and where sunlight is absent, prâna also is deficient.

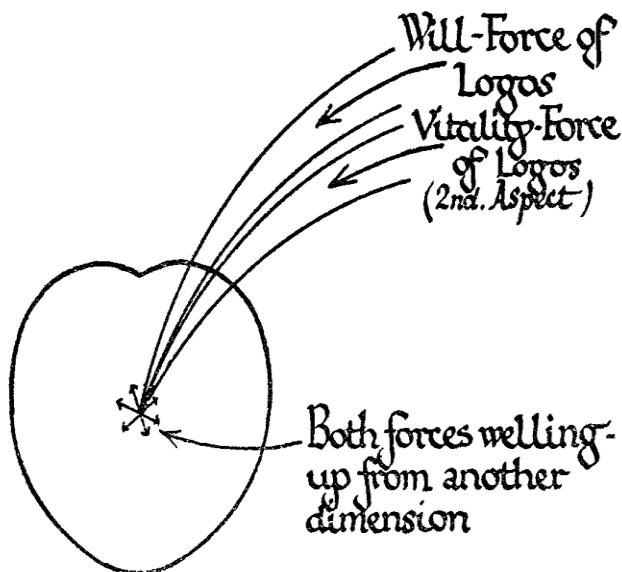
Prâna emanates from the sun, and enters some of the ultimate physical atoms which float about in the earth's atmosphere in countless myriads. Although we say that this prânic force “enters” the physical atom, it does not do so from outside: it enters from a higher dimension, the fourth, and so appears to the clairvoyant as welling up within the atom.

There are thus two forces which enter the atom from within: (1) the Will-force of the Logos, which holds the atom together in its proper shape; (2) the Prânic force. It is important to note that Prâna comes from the Second Aspect of the Solar deity, whereas the Will-force emanates from the Third Aspect

#### DIAGRAM II

The Vitality Globule (2) Vitality-Force enters Atoms

DIAGRAM II  
THE VITALITY GLOBULE  
(2) Vitality-Force enters Atom

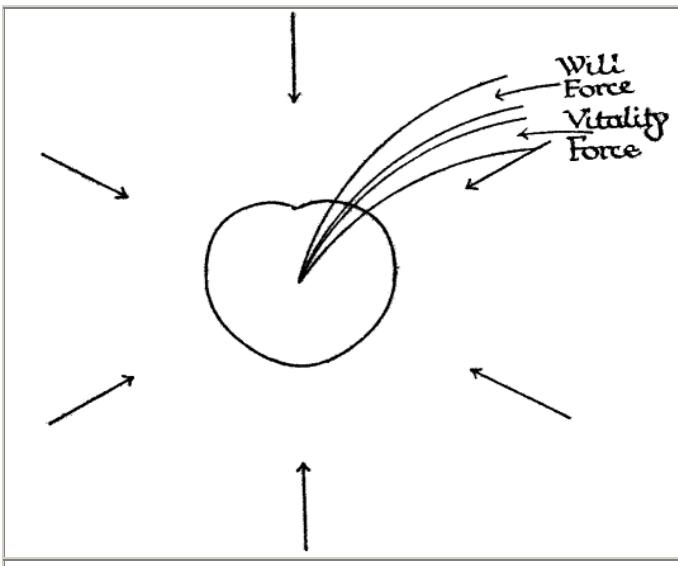


The effect of Prâna on atoms is entirely different from that of electricity, light, heat or other expressions of Fohat. Electricity, rushing through the atoms, deflects them and holds them in a certain way, and also imparts to them a separate and distinct vibration-rate. Any of the variants of Fohat, such as electricity, light, or heat, cause an oscillation of the atom as a whole, an oscillation the size of which is enormous as compared with that of the atom itself, these forces of course acting on the atom from without.

Students of occultism will be familiar with the shape and structure of the ultimate physical atom, the smallest particle of matter on the physical plane, out of combinations of which are made the various combinations we know as solid, liquid, gas, etc. In drawings in this document, therefore these ultimate physical atoms are indicated as outlines only.

#### DIAGRAM III-

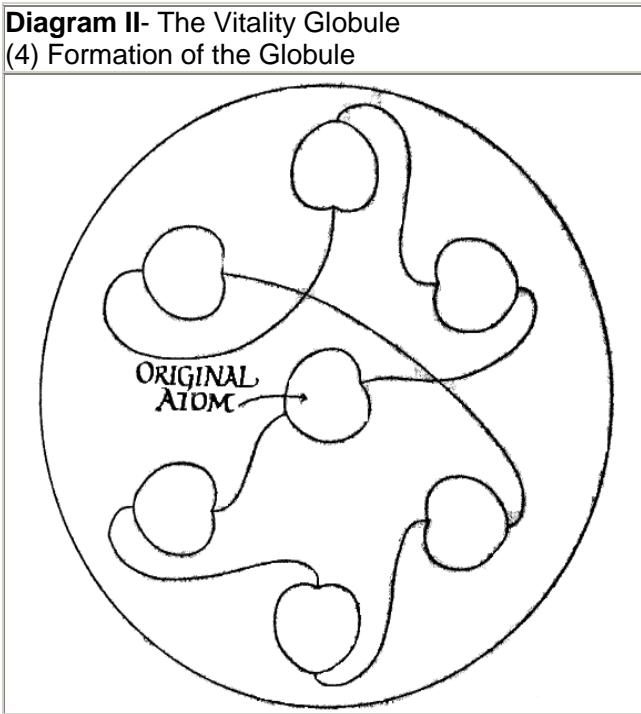
The Vitality Globule (3) The Atom attracts 6 other atoms



The Vitality Force "endows the atom with an additional life, and gives it a power of attraction..."

The force of Prâna, then, radiated from the sun, enters some atoms in the atmosphere and causes them to glow. Such an atom, charged with this additional life, has a sixfold power of attraction, so that it immediately draws round it six other atoms. These it arranges in a definite form, making what is termed in *Occult Chemistry* a hyper-meta-proto-element, a combination of matter on the sub-atomic sub-plane. This combination, however, differs from all others so far observed, in that the force which creates it and holds it together comes from the Second Aspect of the Solar Deity instead of from the Third. This form is known as the Vitality Globule, and is shown in the appended drawing, which is enlarged from that on p. 45 of *Occult Chemistry*. This little group is the exceedingly brilliant bead upon the male or positive snake in the chemical element oxygen, and it is also the heart of the central globe in radium.

**Diagram II- The Vitality Globule**  
(4) Formation of the Globule



N.B.- The Vitality Globule is a hyper-meta-meta-proto element, i.e., On the sub-atomic level, and is unique in that it is created and held together by force emanating from the Second Logos. H.S.I. Page 67, O.C., Page 45

The globules, on account of their brilliance and extreme activity, can be seen by almost any one who cares to look, darting about in the atmosphere in immense numbers, especially on a sunny day. The best way to see them is to face directly away from the sun and focus the eyes a few feet away, with a clear sky as background. Brilliant as is the globule, it is almost colourless, and may be compared to white light.

It has already been remarked that although the force which vivifies these globules is quite different from light, it nevertheless appears to depend upon light for the power of manifestation. In brilliant sunshine this vitality is constantly welling up afresh, and the globules are generated in incredible numbers; but in cloudy weather there is a great diminution in the number of globules formed, and during the night the operation appears to be entirely suspended. During the night, therefore, we may be said to be living upon the stock manufactured during the previous day, and although it appears practically impossible that it should ever be entirely exhausted, that stock evidently does run low when there is long succession of cloudy days.

It is, of course the work of the physical elemental to defend the body and to assimilate vitality (as will be described in detail in the next chapter) in order to recuperate the physical body. Whilst the physical body is awake, the nerves and muscles are kept tense, ready for instant action. When the body is asleep, the elemental lets the nerves and muscles relax and devotes himself especially to the assimilation of vitality. This accounts for the strong recuperative power of sleep, even of a momentary nap.

The elemental works most successfully during the early part of the night, when there is a copious supply of vitality. In the daily cycle the supply of globules is at its lowest ebb in the small hours of the morning, before sunrise, and this is one reason why so large a proportion of deaths occurs during those hours. Hence also the saying that an hour's sleep before midnight is worth two after it. Similarly of course, the supply of prâna is at a lower ebb in winter than in summer.

Further, Prâna is poured forth, not only on the physical, but also on all planes, emotion, intellect, and spirituality will be at their best under clear skies and with the inestimable aid of sunlight. It may also be added that even the colours of etheric prâna correspond to some extent to similar hues at the astral level. Hence right feeling and clear thought react on the physical and assist the latter to assimilate prâna and thus maintain vigorous health. We thus find an interesting light thrown on the intimate connection between spiritual, mental, and emotional health and the health of the physical body, and are reminded of the well-known saying of the Lord Buddha that the first step on the road to Nirvâna is perfect physical health.

The vitality globule, once charged, remains as a sub-atomic element, and does not appear to be subject to any change or loss of force unless and until it is absorbed by some living creature.

Before proceeding to study the extremely interesting and important subject of the absorption of Prâna in the physical body, we must first study the mechanism in the Etheric Double by means of which this process is effected.

## CHAPTER III

### FORCE CENTRES

In the Etheric Double, as well, incidentally, as in each of our other vehicles, there are certain Force-Centres, or Chakrams, as they are called in Sanskrit, this word meaning literally a wheel or revolving disc.

The Chakrams are situated on the surface of the Double, that is about a quarter of an inch outside the skin of the body. To clairvoyant sight they appear as vortices or saucer-like depressions of rapidly rotating matter.

The force flowing through the chakrams being essential to the life of the Etheric Double, every one possesses such force-centres, though the degree of their development varies considerably in individuals. Where they are undeveloped they glow dully and the etheric particles move sluggishly, just forming the vortex necessary for the transmission of the force, and no more: in developed people, on the other hand, the chakrams glow and pulsate, blazing with blinding brilliance like miniature suns. They vary in size from about two inches in diameter to about six inches.

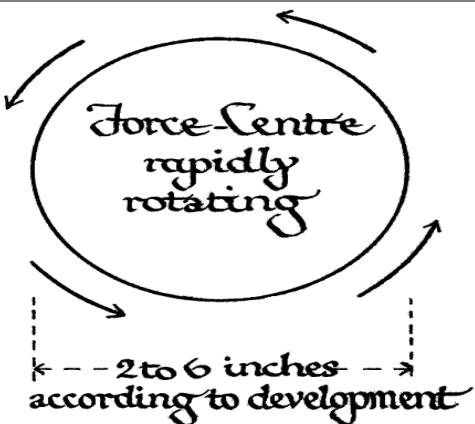
In a new born baby they are tiny little circles like a three-penny piece – little hard discs scarcely moving at all, and only faintly glowing.

The etheric chakrams have two distinct functions. The first is to absorb and distribute Prâna, or Vitality, to the etheric and thence to the physical body, thus keeping these alive. The second function is to bring down into the physical consciousness whatever may be the quality inherent in the corresponding astral centre. It is the lack of development of the etheric centres which accounts for the failure to bring into the physical brain memory of astral experiences. Many people are fully awake and vividly conscious on the astral plane and lead active lives in their astral bodies.

### DIAGRAM III

#### Structure of Force-Centre

##### (1) Shape



The appearance is that of a saucer-like depression, or vortex, in the surface of the Etheric Double, i.e., 1/4 inch outside the surface of the physical body.

Function: to convey forces from Astral to Etheric.

N.B. Similar centres exists in all vehicles.

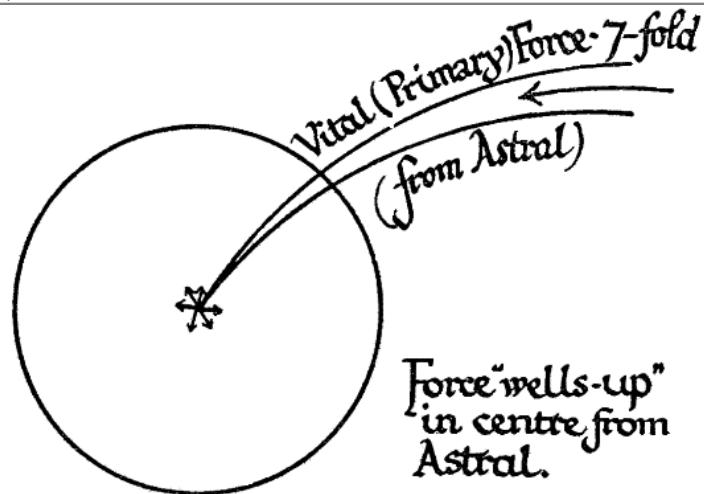
When however, they return to their sleeping physical bodies, scarcely any memory of the astral life filters through into the brain, simply because the necessary etheric bridge is not built. When the etheric centres are fully developed, there is full and continuous memory of astral experiences in the brain.

There appears to be no connection between the activity or development of the etheric chakrams and moral qualities: the two developments are quite distinct.

Although there is in the astral body an astral centre corresponding to each of the etheric centres, yet as the astral centre is a vortex in four dimensions, it extends in a direction quite different from the etheric, and consequently the astral centre is by no means always coterminous with the corresponding etheric centre, though some part of it is always coincident. Whilst the etheric centres are always on the surface of the etheric body, the astral centre is frequently in the interior of the astral body.

**DIAGRAM III**

Structure of Force-Centre  
(2) Inrush of Vital Force



One of the seven varieties of he Vital Force greatly predominate in each centre.

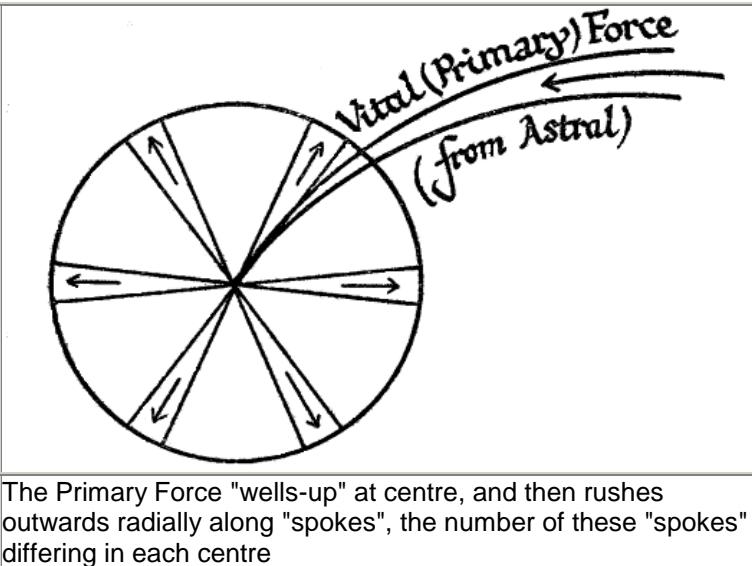
This inrush of Vital Force brings life to the physical body.

We have already seen (Chapter II ) that there are seven varieties of Prâna, all of which are present in all the chakrams; but in each chakram one of the varieties is always greatly predominant.

The Prâna rushes into the centre of each chakram from a direction at right angles to the plane of the chakram; "welling up" would perhaps be a better term, as the force comes from the astral plane into the etheric. From the centre of the chakram the force then radiates at right angles to the direction from which it came, i.e., in the plane of the surface of the Etheric Double, in a number of directions, and in straight lines. The number of directions, which are similar to the spokes of a wheel, is different in each chakram.

**DIAGRAM III**

Structure of Force-Centre (3) Formation of "Spokes"



The spokes divide the chakram into a number of segments, like the petals of a flower; hence, in Hindu books, the chakrams are often described as resembling flowers.

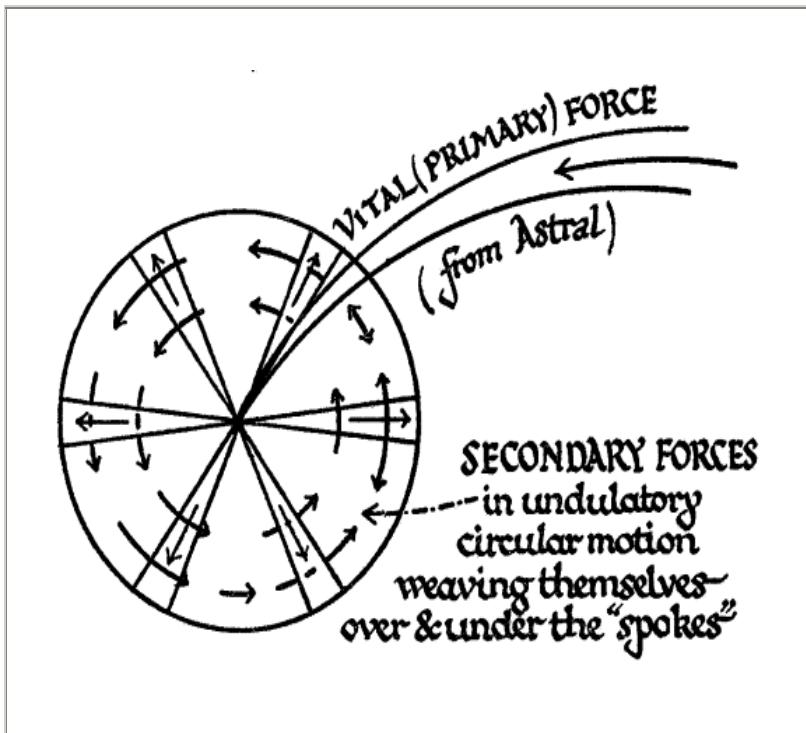
Now somewhat as a bar-magnet thrust into a coil of wire will set up or "induce" a current of electricity in the wire at right angles to the axis of the magnet, so does the primary force of Prâna entering the chakram set up or induce secondary forces in the plane of the chakram. These secondary forces spin round the chakram, passing over and under the spokes, much as the material of the bottom of a circular basket passes over and under the ribs which radiate from the centre.

Each of these secondary forces, sweeping round the chakram, has its own characteristic wavelength, and in addition moves, not in straight lines, but in relatively large undulations, each of which is a multiple of the wavelength within it. The wavelengths are very minute, and probably some thousands of them are very minute, and probably some thousands of them are included in one undulation, though the exact proportion has not yet been determined. The general effect is shimmering and iridescent, like mother-of-pearl, or a certain variety of Venetian glass.

#### **DIAGRAM III**

Structure of Force-Centre

(4) Formation of Secondary Force



The chakrams are often spoken of as corresponding to certain physical organs, those organs, in fact, which are the nearest to them; but, as already mentioned, the chakrams themselves are not in the interior of the body, but on the surface of the Etheric Double.

The list of the chakrams and their names is as follows:-

No.	Nearest Physical Organ	Sanskrit Name
1	Base of Spine	Mûladhâra
2	Navel	Manipûra
3	Spleen	Svâdhîsthâna
4	Heart	Anâhata
5	Throat	Visuddha
6	Between Eyebrows	Ajnâ
7	Top of Head	Sahasrâra Brahmarandhra
8		
9	Lower Organs	
10		

Numbers 8, 9, and 10, connected with the lower organs of the body, are not used by students of the "white" magic, though there are certain schools in existence which make use of them. The dangers connected with them are so serious that we should consider their awakening as the greatest of misfortunes.

The flow of vitality into or through any chakram is quite separate and distinct from the development of the chakram brought about by the awakening of Kundalini, which will be described in Chapter XIII.

We shall now proceed to study each of the seven chakrams in turn, examining its structure, appearance, function, and the faculties associated with it. For reasons which will presently appear, it will be convenient to commence with the third centre, that situated near the spleen.

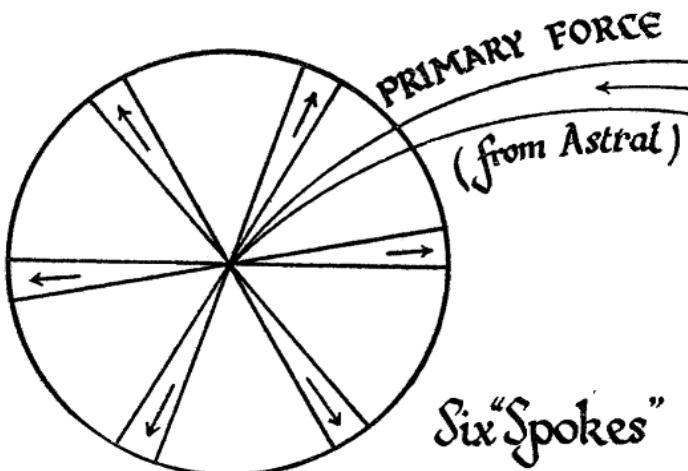
## CHAPTER IV

### THE SPLEEN CENTRE

The spleen centre has six spokes, and therefore the same number of petals or undulations. In appearance it is specially radiant, glowing and sun-like.

This centre is unique in this, that it has the all-important function of absorbing the Vitality Globules –

**DIAGRAM IV**  
Spleen Centre  
(1) Structure



General appearance "Radiant and sun-like"

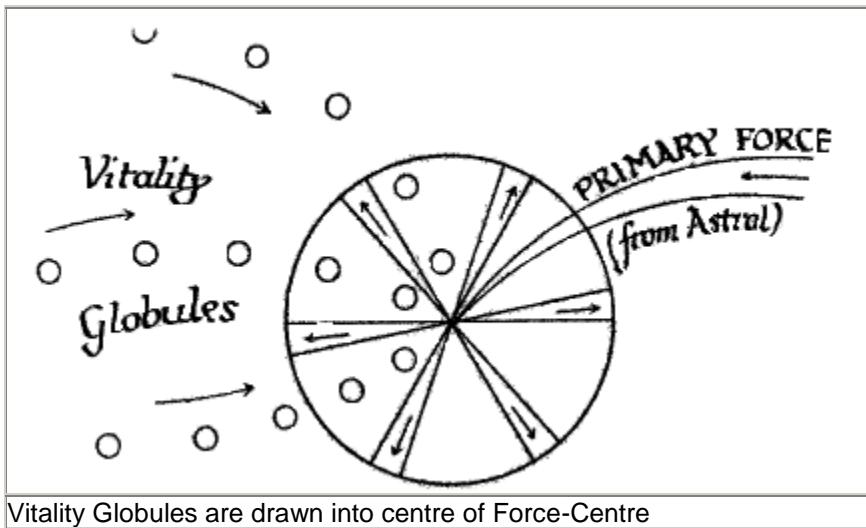
**Function of Astral Centre:** vitalises Astral Body. Power to travel consciously.

**Function of Etheric Centre:** vitalises Physical Body, Memory of Astral Journeys.

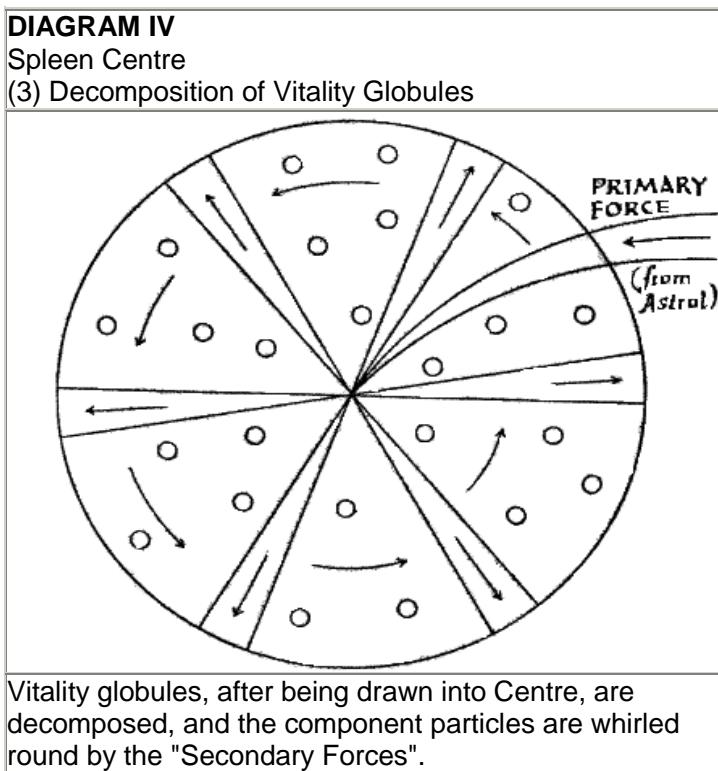
from the atmosphere, disintegrating them, and distributing the component atoms, charged with the specialised and transmuted Prâna, to the various parts of the body.

The process will most readily be followed with the aid of diagrams, Nos. IV (2), (3) and (4).

**Diagram IV**  
Spleen Centre  
(2) Absorption of Vitality Globules



**DIAGRAM IV**  
Spleen Centre  
(3) Decomposition of Vitality Globules



Vitality globules, after being drawn into Centre, are decomposed, and the component particles are whirled round by the "Secondary Forces".

The Vitality Globules are first drawn into the spleen centre: then they are broken up into seven component atoms, each atom charged with one of the seven varieties of Prâna : these atoms are then caught up by the rotating secondary forces and spun round the chakram.

The seven different kinds of Prâna are coloured thus: -

Violet – Blue – Green – Yellow – Orange – Dark Red – Rose-Red

It will be observed that the divisions are not exactly those to which we are accustomed in the solar spectrum, but resemble rather the arrangement of colours seen on higher levels in the causal, mental, and astral bodies. The indigo spectrum is divided between the violet and blue rays of Prâna, whilst the red of the spectrum is split up into dark red and rose-red Prâna.

Each of the six spokes then seizes on one variety of atom and despatches it to the chakram or part of the body for which it is needed. This accounts for six kinds of atoms only: the seventh variety, - that coloured rose-pink, is despatched through the hub or centre of the spleen chakram itself, whence it is distributed over the whole nervous system. These rose-coloured atoms are the original atoms which first drew round them the six others to form the globule.

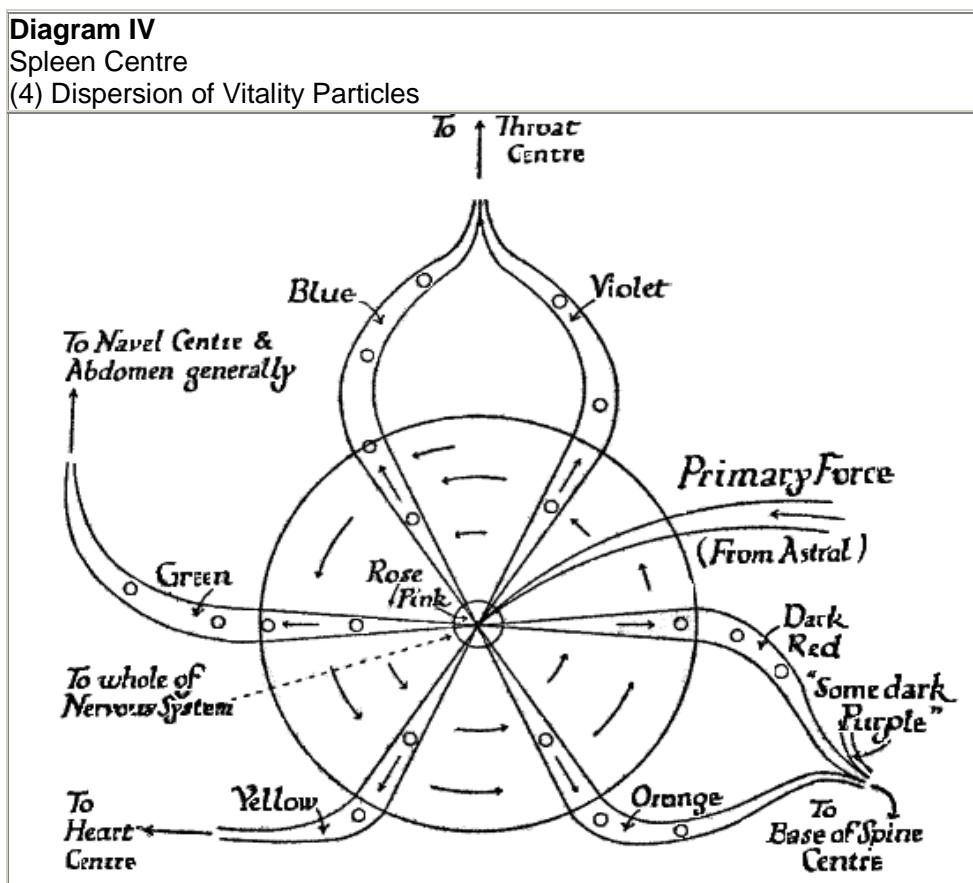
The atoms which bear the rose-coloured Prâna are clearly the life of the nervous system, and it is this variety of Prâna which one man may give to another, as described in Chapter XIII. If the nerves are insufficiently supplied with this rose-coloured Prâna, they become sensitive and intensely irritable: the patient finds himself restless, and the least noise or touch is agony to him. Instant relief may be afforded him by some healthy person flooding his nervous system with a supply of rose-coloured Prâna.

Although there are seven distinct kinds of Prâna, there are only five main streams, as described in some Indian books, because after issuing from the spleen chakram the blue and violet join into one stream and the orange and dark red join into another stream. The streams leave the spleen centre horizontally.

**Diagram IV**

Spleen Centre

(4) Dispersion of Vitality Particles



Process:-

- 1- Vitality globules are drawn into Centre.
- 2- Vitality globules are broken up into particles.
- 3- Vitality particles are whirled round by "secondary" forces.
- 4- Vitality particles are seized by appropriate "spoke", and despatched to destination shown.

N.B.- The rose-pink atoms are the original atoms which first drew round them 6

others to form the globule.

The colours of the streams and their destinations are set out in the following table :-

<b>NO.</b>	<b>STREAM</b>	<b>DESTINATION</b>
1	Violet-Blue	Throat Centre
2	Green	Navel Centre and Abdomen generally
3	Yellow	Heart Centre
4	Orange-Dark Red ( and some Dark Purple).	Base of Spine Centre
5	Rose-Red	Nervous System

As the various kinds of Prâna – charged atoms are distributed where required, the charge of Prâna is withdrawn from them, precisely as a charge of electricity might be withdrawn. The Prâna gives life to the Etheric Double and, through that, to the dense body, the degree of health of the parts of the body being largely determined by the volume of Prâna distributed. The bearing of this significant fact on the maintenance of physical vigour and the cure of disease is clearly of very great importance and will be more fully considered in the section devoted to Healing and Mesmerism.

The atoms bearing the rose-coloured Prâna grow gradually paler as they sweep along the nerves and part with their Prânic content. They are eventually discharged from the body through the pores of the skin (as well as in other ways), forming what is called the health aura, a pale bluish-white emanation, of which a plate is given in *Man, Visible and Invisible*, page 128.

In a man in vigorous health the spleen does its work so generously that considerably more of the particles charged with Prâna are present than the man requires for his own use. These unused particles are discharged from the body in all directions, through the health aura, along with the particles from which the Prâna has been extracted. Such a man is thus a source of health and strength to those around him, constantly though unconsciously shedding vitality on any who may be in his vicinity. This process may be considerably intensified by those who definitely set themselves to heal others, by mesmeric passes and otherwise, as we shall see more fully in a later chapter.

In addition to these particles just mentioned, it is also well known that small particles of dense physical matter are continually being thrown off from a man's body, in insensible perspiration and in other ways. A clairvoyant sees these particles as a faint grey mist. Many of the particles are crystalline in form and therefore appear as geometrical figures; one of the commonest is that of salt, or sodium chloride, which takes the form of cubes.

A man on the other hand, who is unable for any reason to specialise for his own use a sufficient amount of Prâna, frequently and also unconsciously acts as a sponge, his physical elemental drawing vitality from any sensitive person who happens to be near, to his own temporary benefit, but often to the serious injury of the victim. This phenomenon largely accounts for those feelings of weariness and languor which come over one after being near people who, not being very strong themselves, possess this unfortunate vampire-like faculty of draining others of vitality. The same thing may happen, often in an aggravated form, at spiritualistic séances.

The vegetable kingdom also absorbs vitality, but seems in most cases to use only a small part of it. Many trees, especially the pine and eucalyptus, extract from the globules almost exactly the same constituents as does the higher part of man's etheric body, and reject any

superfluous atoms charged with rose-coloured Prâna which they do not themselves require. Hence the proximity of such trees is extremely beneficial for people who are nervously depleted.

The health aura, consisting of these particles ejected from the body, serves the useful purpose of protecting the man from the invasion of disease germs. In health the particles are thrown out through the pores in straight lines, at right angles to the surface of the body, giving to the health aura a striated effect. As long as the lines remain firm and straight the body seems to be almost entirely protected from the attack of evil physical influences, such as disease germs, the germs being actually repelled and carried away by the outrush of Prânic force. But, when on account of weakness, over-fatigue, a wound, depression of spirits, or through the excesses of an irregular life, an unusually large amount of Prâna is required to repair waste or damage within the body, and there is consequently a serious diminution in the quantity radiated, the lines of the health aura droop, become erratic and confused, the system of defence is weakened, and it is then comparatively easy for deadly germs to effect an entrance (*vide M., V., & I.*, p. 132, Plate XXV).

In *The Science of breath*, translated by Râma Prasâd, it is stated that the natural length from the body to the periphery of the "halo" of Prâna, is 10 "fingers" during inspiration of the breath and 12 during expiration. At other times the lengths are stated to be as follows: in eating and speaking, 18; in walking, 24; in running, 42; in cohabitation 65; in sleeping, 100. A reduction in length is said to result when a man overcomes desire, gains the 8 Siddhis, etc. It seems probable, though by no means certain, that the "halo" mentioned is the health aura. The term "fingers" here means, according to the method of reckoning used in India, not the length of a finger but with width.

Both etheric matter and Prâna are very readily amenable to the human will. It is possible, therefore, to protect oneself to a considerable extent from hostile influences mentioned above, by making an effort of the will to check the radiation of vitality at the outer extremity of the health aura, building it there into a wall or shell which will be impervious to disease germs and also prevent the vitality from being sucked away by any one near who has the vampire tendency.

With a little further effort a shell may be made impervious also to astral or mental influence.

The question of etheric shells is so important that it will be necessary later on in this book to enter into it rather more fully than we have done here, where we are dealing purely with the health aura.

The development of the spleen centre enables the man to remember his astral journeys, though sometimes only very partially, the faculty associated with the corresponding astral centre being that of travelling consciously in the astral body. Those vague memories, that most of us have, of blissful flights through the air are often due to slight accidental stimulation of the spleen chakram.

It maybe mentioned, in passing, that the astral centre corresponding to the spleen also has the function of vitalising the whole astral body.

## CHAPTER 5

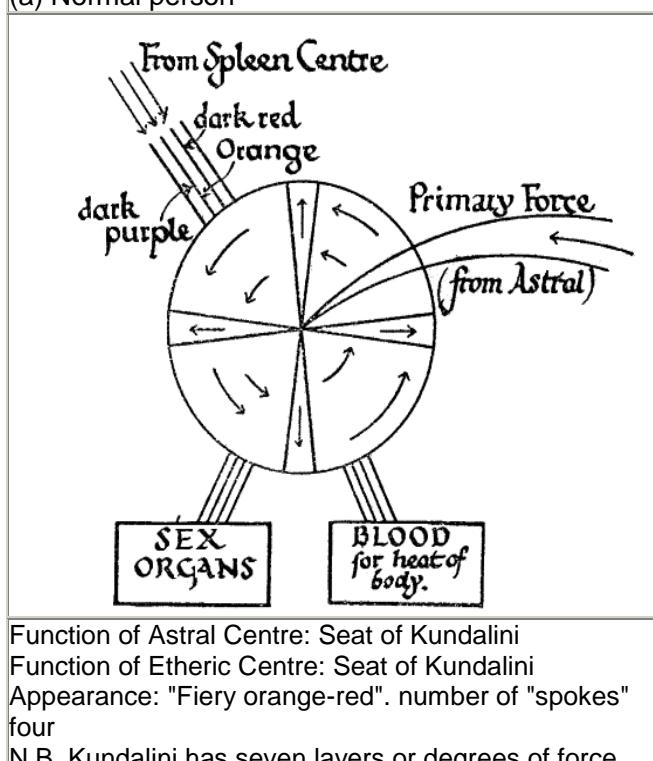
### THE BASE OF THE SPINE CENTRE

The first centre, or chakram, at the base of the spine, has a primary force which radiates in four spokes, making the centre appear to be divided into quadrants, with hollows between them, like a cross, a symbol which is often used to represent the centre.

**DIAGRAM V**

Base of Spine Centre

(a) Normal person



Function of Astral Centre: Seat of Kundalini

Function of Etheric Centre: Seat of Kundalini

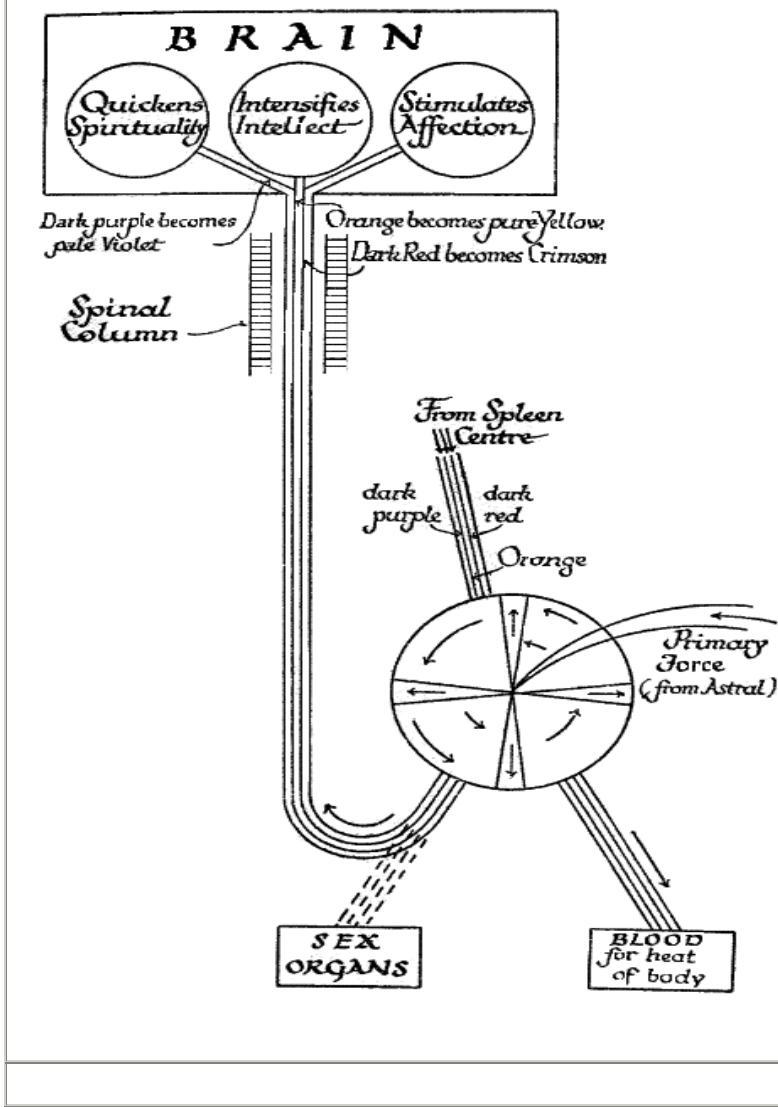
Appearance: "Fiery orange-red". number of "spokes" four

N.B. Kundalini has seven layers or degrees of force.

When aroused into full activity, this centre is fiery orange-red in colour corresponding closely with the stream of dark red and orange vitality which comes to it from the spleen centre. It may be mentioned that in every case there is a similar correspondence between the colour of the stream of vitality flowing into a centre and the colour of the centre itself.

**DIAGRAM V**

Base of Spine Centre  
(b) Developed person



In addition to the orange and darker reds, there is also some dark purple vitality flowing into this centre, rather as though the spectrum bent round in a circle and the colours began again at a lower octave.

From this centre the orange-red ray flows to the generative organs, energising the sexual nature: it also seems to enter the blood and keep up the heat of the body.

A very remarkable and important effect can be produced by a person who persistently refuses to yield to the lower nature. By long and determined effort the orange-red ray can be deflected upwards to the brain, where all three constituents undergo a profound modification. The orange is raised into pure yellow and intensifies the intellectual powers. The dark red becomes crimson and increases the power of unselfish affection; the dark purple is transmuted into a beautiful pale violet, quickening the spiritual part of the nature.

The seat of Kundalini, the Serpent-Fire, is in the base of the spine centre. This will be dealt with in a later chapter: for THE present we may just note that a man who has achieved the transmutation just mentioned will find that sensual desires no longer trouble him, and when it becomes necessary for him to arouse the serpent-fire he will be free from the most serious of dangers of that process. When a man has finally completed the change, the orange-red ray passes straight into the centre at the base of the spine, and thence runs upwards through the hollow of the vertebral column and so to the brain.

A flaming cross is a symbol sometimes used to represent the serpent-fire residing in the base of the spine centre.

## CHAPTER VI

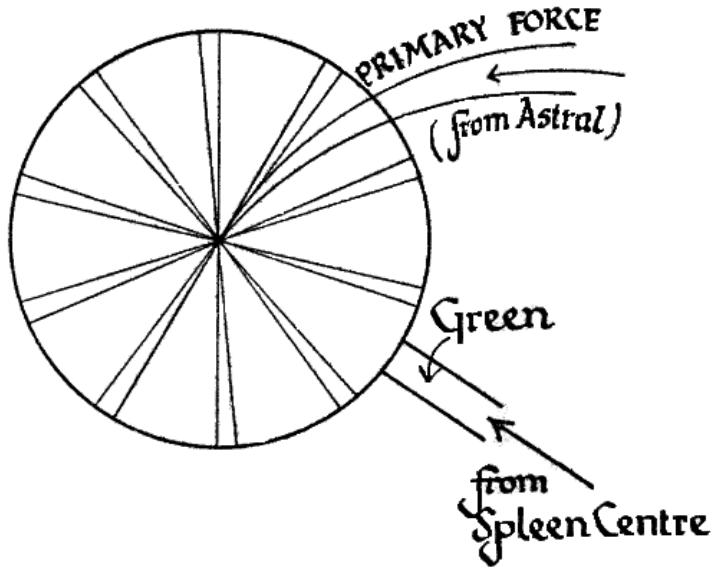
### THE NAVEL CENTRE

The second centre, at the navel or solar plexus, receives a primary force which radiates in ten directions, there being ten undulations or petals.

Its predominant colour is a curious blending of various shades of red, though there is also a great deal of green in it. It receives the green ray from the spleen centre, that ray also flooding the abdomen, vivifying the liver, kidneys, intestines, and the digestive apparatus generally, centering especially in the solar plexus.

DIAGRAM VI

Navel Centre



**Function of Astral Centre:** Feeling: general sensitiveness.

**Function of Etheric Centre:** Feeling astral influences.

Appearance: "various shades of red, with much green".

Number of "spokes" ten

The centre is closely associated with feelings and emotions of various kinds. The corresponding astral centre, when awakened, gives the power of feeling, a sensitiveness to all sorts of influences, though without as yet anything like the definite comprehension that

comes from the faculties corresponding to seeing or hearing. When, , therefore, the etheric centre becomes active, the man begins in the physical body to be conscious of astral influences, vaguely feeling friendliness or hostility, or that some places are pleasant and others unpleasant, but without the least knowing why.

The Sanskrit name for this centre is Manipûra.

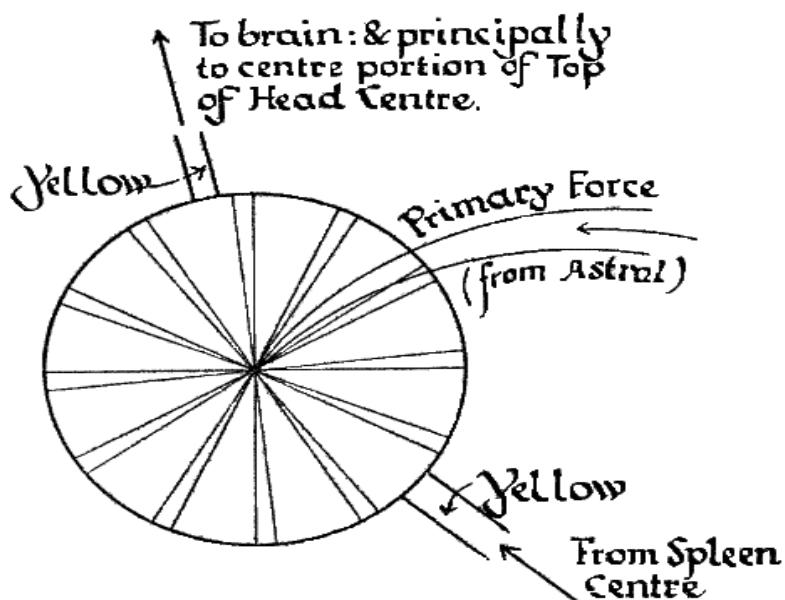
## CHAPTER VII

### THE HEART CENTRE

Having already dealt with the third centre, that near the spleen, we pass next to the fourth centre, that of the heart.

**DIAGRAM VII**

Heart Centre



N.B. The Yellow Ray permeates the blood, and is carried all over the body with it.

**Function of Astral centre:** Comprehension of Astral vibrations.

**Function of Etheric Centre:** Consciousness of feelings of others.

**Appearance:** " glowing golden". Number of "spokes", 12.

This chakram has twelve spokes or radiations, and is a glowing golden colour. It receives the yellow ray from the spleen centre; when the current is full and strong it produces strength and regularity in the heart section. Flowing round the heart chakram, the yellow ray also interpenetrates the blood and thus is carried all over the body. It also passes on to the brain and permeates it, though directing itself principally to the twelve-petalled flower in the middle of the seventh or highest centre. In the brain, it confers the power of high philosophical and metaphysical thought.

The corresponding astral centre, when awakened, endows a man with the power to comprehend and sympathise with, and so instinctively understand, the feelings of other astral entities.

The etheric centre, therefore, makes a man aware, in his physical consciousness, of the joys and sorrows of others, and sometimes even causes him to reproduce in himself by sympathy their physical aches and pains.

The Sanskrit for this chakram is Anâhata.

## CHAPTER VIII

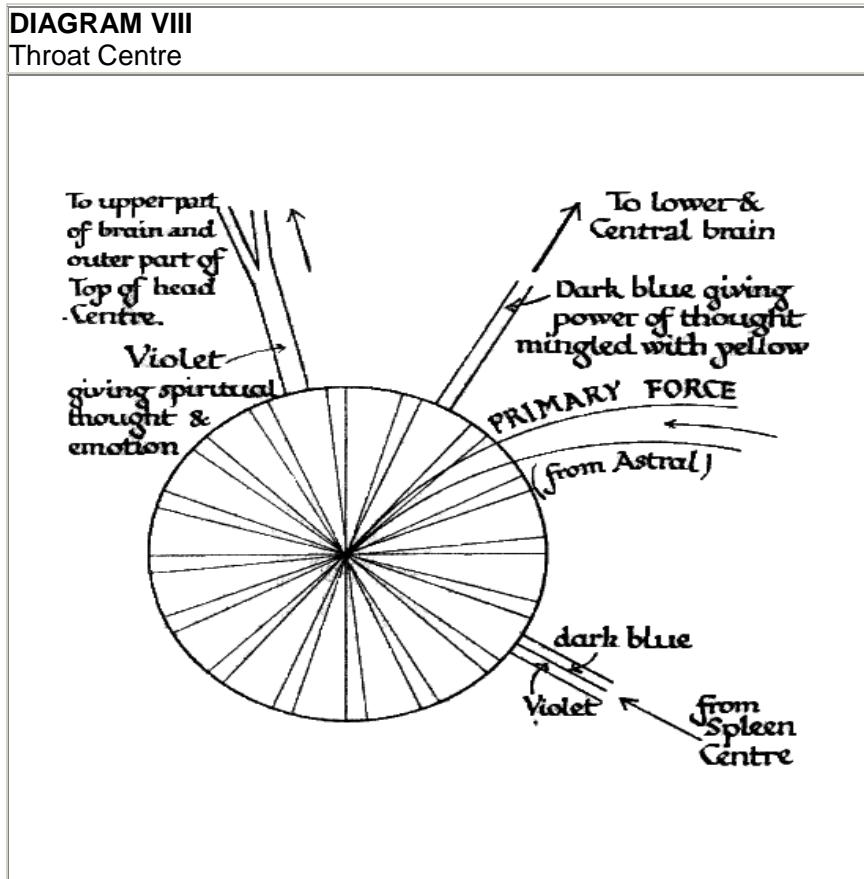
### THE THROAT CENTRE

This chakram, the fifth, has sixteen spokes, and, therefore, sixteen petals or divisions. In colour it shows a good deal of blue, but its general effect is silvery and gleaming, not unlike moonlight on rippling water.

It receives the violet-blue ray from the spleen chakram. This ray then appears to divide, the light blue remaining to course through and vivify the throat centre, while the dark blue and violet pass on to the brain.

The light blue gives health to the region of the throat, the strength and elasticity of the vocal cords of a great singer or speaker, for example, being accompanied by special brilliance and activity of this ray.

**DIAGRAM VIII**  
Throat Centre



**Function of Astral Centre:** Hearing

**Function of Etheric Centre:** Etheric and Astral hearing.

**Appearance:** "Silvery and gleaming with a good deal of blue".

Number of "spokes" 16.

The dark blue expends itself in the lower central parts of the brain, while the violet floods the upper part and appears to give special vigour to the chakram at the top of the head, diffusing itself chiefly through the nine hundred and sixty petals of the outer part of the centre.

Ordinary thought is stimulated by the blue ray, mingled with part of the yellow (from the heart centre, *vide Chapter VII.*).

In some forms of idiocy the yellow and blue-violet flow to the brain is almost inhibited.

Thought and emotion of a high spiritual type seem to depend largely upon the violet ray.

The awakening of the corresponding astral centre gives the power of hearing on the astral plane, that is to say, the faculty which produces in the astral world the effect similar to that which in the physical world we call hearing.

When the etheric centre is aroused, the man in his physical consciousness hears voices, which sometimes make all kinds of suggestions to him. He may hear music, or other less pleasant sounds. When fully working, it makes a man clairaudient so far as the etheric and astral planes are concerned.

The Sanskrit name for this centre is Visuddha.

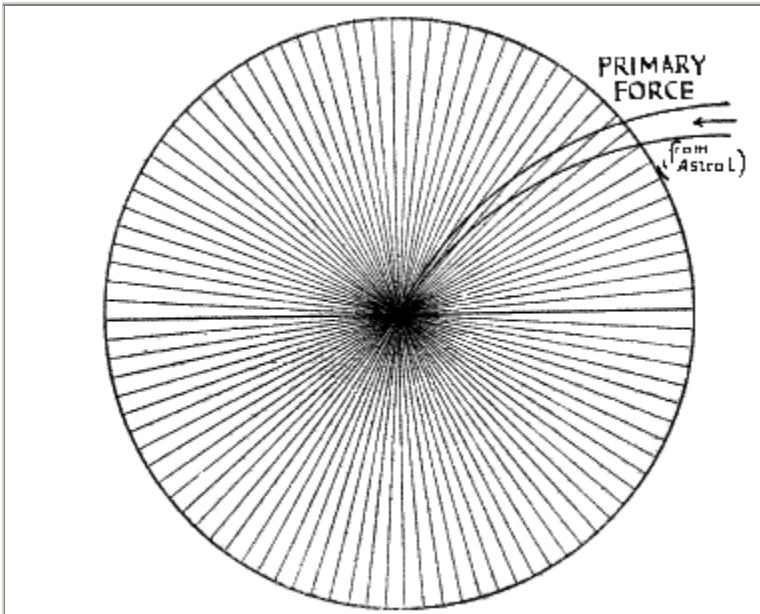
## CHAPTER IX

### THE CENTRE BETWEEN THE EYEBROWS

The sixth centre, that between the eyebrows, has ninety-six spokes. In Indian books, however, it is mentioned as having only two petals, this being probably due to the fact that it presents the appearance of being divided into halves. Of these, the one is predominantly rose-coloured, though with a great deal of yellow in it, and the other predominantly a kind of purplish-blue.

#### DIAGRAM IX

Between the Eyebrows Center



**Function of Astral Centre:** sight.

**Function of Etheric Centre:** Clairvoyance: Magnification.

**Appearance:** half' predominantly rose, with much yellow:; half "predominantly a kind of purplish blue".

**Number of "spokes"** 96.

The writer has been unable to find any specific description of the source of the Prânic stream which flows into this centre, though it is mentioned in *The Inner Life*, p. 449, that the purplish-blue appearance of one half of the centre agrees closely with the colours of the special types of vitality that vivify it. This would seem to indicate the dark blue (and violet?) ray which passes the throat centre and proceeds to the brain.

The development of the corresponding astral centre confers the power to perceive definitely the nature and shape of astral objects, instead of vaguely sensing their presence.

The awakening of the etheric centre cause a man to see objects, and to have various sorts of waking visions of places or people. When just beginning to awaken, landscapes and clouds of colour are half-perceived. When fully developed it brings about clairvoyance.

The remarkable faculty of magnification of vision, or its converse, is associated with this centre, and will be described in the chapter on Etheric Sight.

In Sanskrit this centre is known as Ajnâ.

## CHAPTER X

### THE CENTRE AT THE TOP OF THE HEAD

This centre, the seventh, situated at the top of the head, is somewhat different in construction from the other six. It is described in Indian books as the thousand-petalled lotus, though the actual number of radiations of the primary force is 960. In addition to this, it possesses a sort of subsidiary whirlpool or minor activity in its central portion, which has twelve undulations of its own.

When fully alive, this chakram is perhaps the most resplendent of all, full of indescribable chromatic effects and vibrating with almost inconceivable rapidity. The central portion is gleaming white, flushed with gold in its heart.

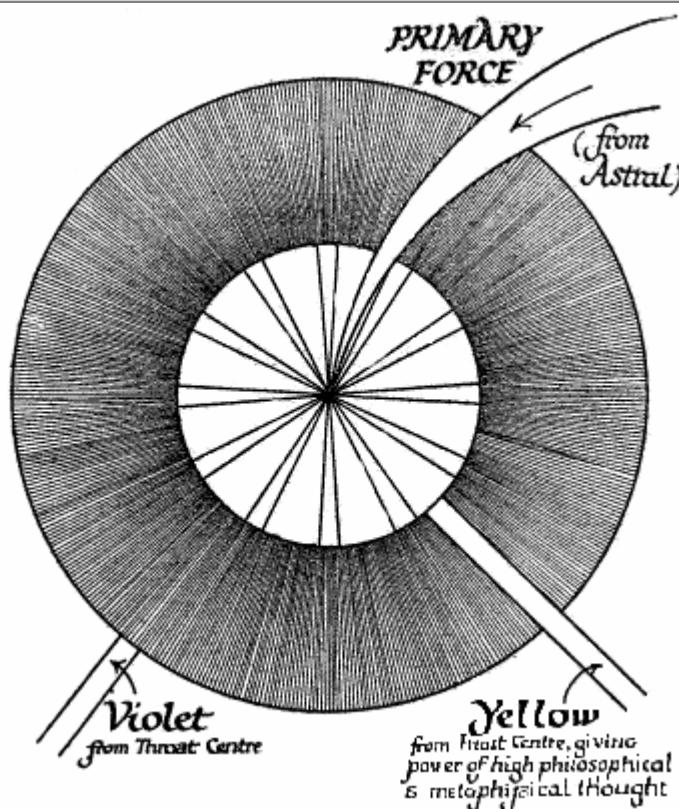
The centre receives in its outer portion the violet ray which passes through the throat centre, while in its central portion it receives the yellow ray from the heart centre.

The arousing of the corresponding astral centre rounds off and completes the astral life, endowing a man with the perfection of his faculties.

With one type of individual, the astral chakrams corresponding to the sixth and seventh etheric chakrams both converge upon the pituitary body, the latter organ being practically the only direct link between the physical and higher planes.

With another type of person however, while the sixth chakram is still attached to the pituitary body, the seventh is bent or slanted until it coincides with the atrophied organ known as the pineal gland, which with people of this type becomes a line of direct communication with the lower mental, without apparently passing through the intermediate astral plane in the ordinary way. This explains the emphasis sometimes laid on the development of the pineal gland.

**DIAGRAM X**  
Top of Head Centre



**Appearance:**

**Central portion:** "gleaming white, flushed with gold".

**Outer portion:**

"most resplendent of all, full of indescribable chromatic effects".

**Number of "spokes":** Central portion 12, outer portion 960.

**Function of Astral Centre:** perfects and completes faculties.

**Function of Etheric Centre:** gives continuity of consciousness.

The awakening of the etheric centre enables a man through it to leave the physical body in full consciousness, and also to re-enter it without the usual break, so that his consciousness will be continuous through night and day.

The real reason for tonsure, as practised by the Roman Church, was to leave uncovered the brahma-randra chakram, so that there might be not even the slightest hindrance in the way of psychic force which in their meditations the candidates were intended to try to arouse.

## CHAPTER XI

### DISCHARGES

Just as the dense physical body uses up its materials, and discharges its waste products through the five excretory organs – the skin, lungs, liver, intestines and kidneys – so does the etheric body use up the material with which it is supplied, through physical food and the absorption of the Vitality Globule, and discharge its waste particles in various ways.

A Chart of these discharges is appended, the results it shows being described as follows.

Through the breath and the pores of the skin are expelled both the bluish-white particles from which the Prâna has been extracted, such particles still charged with rose-coloured Prâna as are superfluous to the requirements of the body, and also the atoms from the blue rays used by the throat centre.

Through the excretory organs pass the emptied atoms of the green ray, from the digestive system, and also, in the case of the ordinary man, those of the red-orange ray.

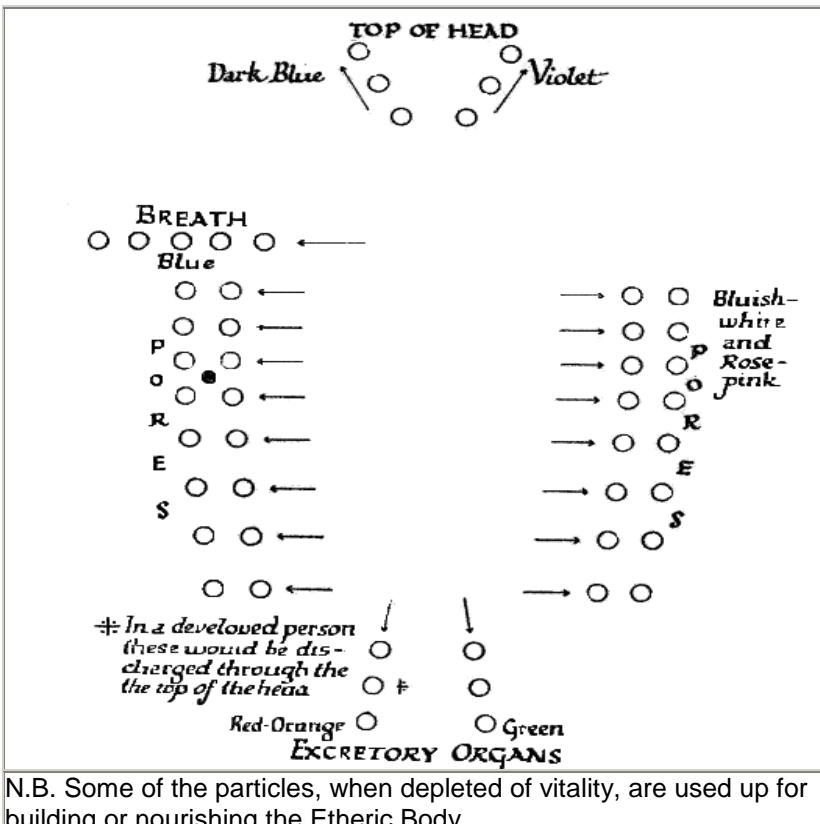
Through the top of the head pass the atoms from the dark blue and violet rays.

In a developed person, however, who has achieved the deflection upwards of the red-orange ray, the particles from this ray are discharged through the top of the head. These form a fiery cascade, frequently shown as a flame in ancient statues of Buddha and other saints.

Atoms which have been emptied of Prâna become once more precisely like any other atoms. Some of them are absorbed by the body and enter into the various combinations which are constantly being made, while others which are not required are thrown off through any convenient channel.

#### DIAGRAM XI

#### Discharges



N.B. Some of the particles, when depleted of vitality, are used up for building or nourishing the Etheric Body.

In addition to the above, the matter of the Etheric Double itself is also constantly being thrown out of the body through the pores of the skin, just as is gaseous matter. Consequently persons who are near one another are liable to absorb each other's etheric emanations.

The radiation of etheric matter is strongest from the ends of the fingers and toes: hence great importance of scrupulous cleanliness in these parts of the body: a person with dirt under the finger nails, for example, is continually pouring forth a stream of unhealthy influence into the etheric world.

The physical emanations of the body, consisting largely of finely-divided salts, appear to clairvoyant sight as multitudes of tiny forms, such as dice, stars, and double pyramids. The character of these tiny particles may be affected by loss of health, by a wave of emotion, or even a definite train of thought. In this connection Professor Gates is reported as saying (a) that the material emanations of the living body differ according to the states of the mind as well as the conditions of physical health; (b) that these emanations can be tested by the chemical reactions of some salts of selenium; (c) that these reactions are characterised by various tints or colours according to the nature of the mental impressions; (d) that forty different emotion-products, as he calls them, have already been obtained.

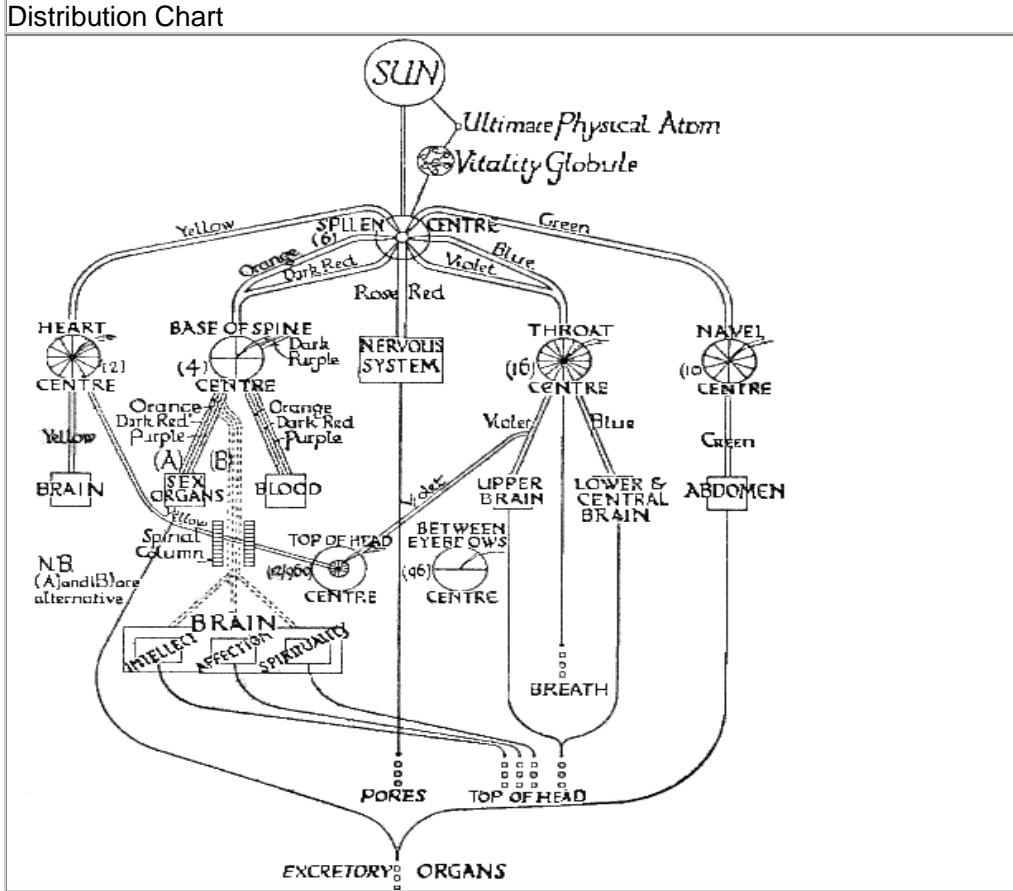
## CHAPTER XII

### TABULATION OF RESULTS

For the convenience and ready reference of the student, a summary of the processes described –

#### DIAGRAM XII

Distribution Chart

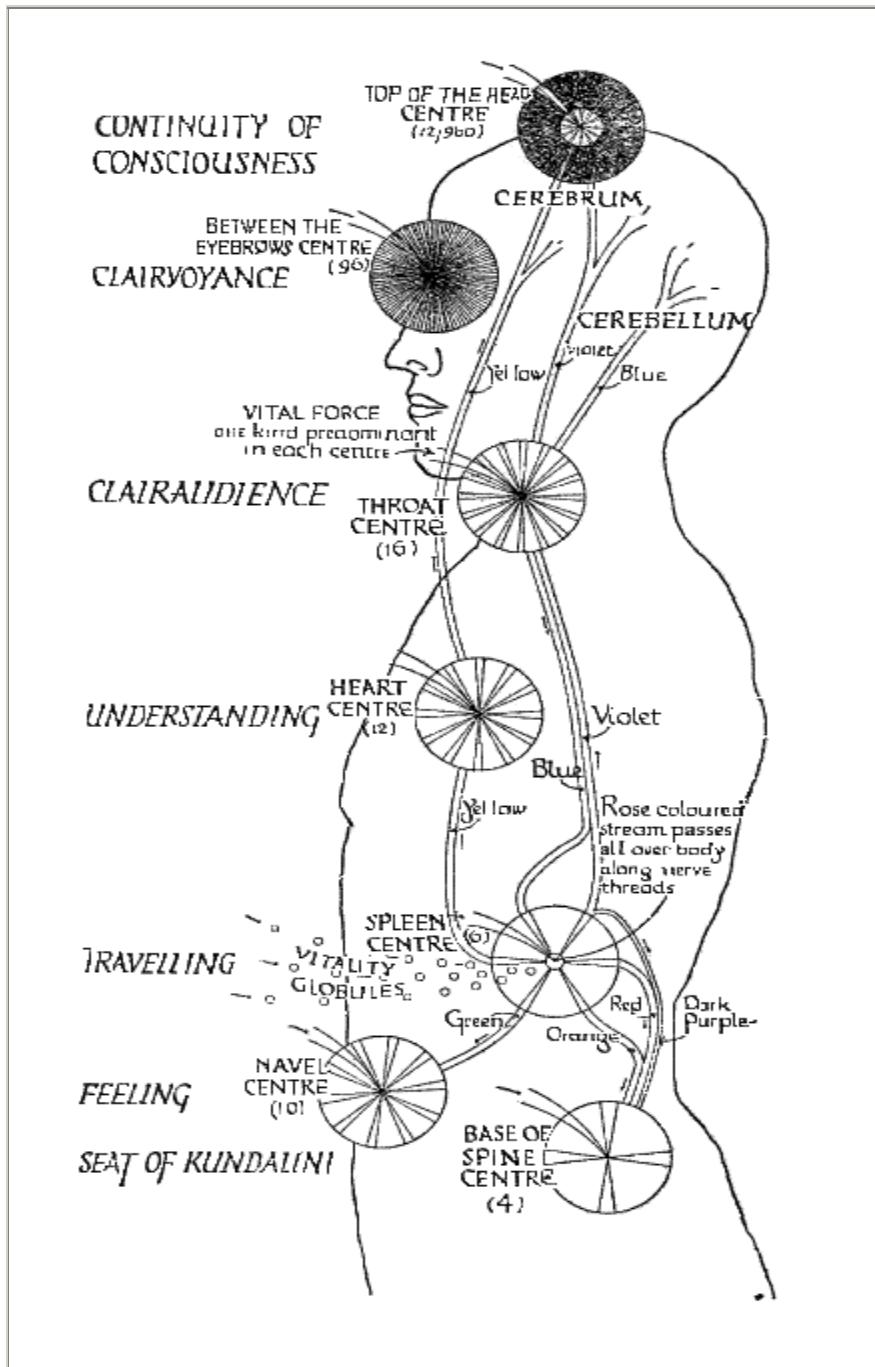


No.	Place	Spokes	Appearance	Vitality Received	Vitality sent out	Region vitalised	Function of Astral Centre	Function of Etheric Centre
1	Base of Spine	4	Fiery orange-red	Orange and red, from Spleen Centre: also some dark purpose	"	Sex organs. Blood, for heat of body	Seat of Kundalini. Kundalini goes to each Centre in turn and vivifies it.	Seat of Kundalini. Kundalini goes to each Centre in turn and vivifies it.
2	Navel	10	Various shades of red, with much green	Green from Spleen Centre	"	Solar plexus. Liver, Kidneys, Intestines and Abdomen generally.	Feeling: general sensitiveness.	Feeling astral influences.
3	Spleen	6	Radiant and sun-like	"	(1) Violet-blue to Throat	"	Vitalises Astral Body. Power to travel consciously.	Vitalises Physical Body. Memory of astral journeys.

					(2) Yellow, to Heart. (3) Green to Solar Plexus (4) Rose, to Nervous System. (5) Orange- Red, to Base of Spine, with some dark purple			
4	Heart	12	Glowing golden	Yellow, from Spleen Centre.	Yellow to Blood, Brain and middle of Top of Head Centre	Heart	Comprehension of Astral Vibrations	Consciousness of feelings of others
5	Throat	16	Silvery and gleaming with much blue.	Violet-blue, from Spleen Centre	Dark blue, to Lower and Central Brain. Violet, to Upper Brain and outer part of Top of Head Centre	"	Hearing	Etheric and Astral hearing.
6	Between eyebrows	96	Half: Rose, with much yellow. Half: Purplish-blue	'	"	"	Sight	Clairvoyance. Magnification.
7	Top of Head	12 960	Centre: gleaming white and gold	Yellow, from Heart Centre.	"	"	Perfects and completes faculties	Continuity of consciousness.

			Outer part: full of indescribable chromatic effects	Violet, from Throat Centre				
8								
9								
10								
1	<i>In Developed Person</i> Base of Spine	4	Fiery orange-red	Orange and red, from Spleen Centre, and some dark purple		Orange, through Spinal Column, to Brain: becomes yellow and stimulates intellect. Dark red, through Spinal Column to Brain: becomes crimson and stimulates affection. Dark purple, through Spinal Column, to Brain: becomes pale violet and stimulates spirituality.		

Diagram XIII



Chapters II to XI, is given in the tabular statement appended.

The same information is also given in the form of a Distribution Chart, which gives a synthesis of these processes in graphic form, from the emanation of Prâna from the sun to the discharge from the body of the particles from which the Prâna has been extracted.

In a still further diagram is shown an outline of the human body with the approximate position of the etheric centres, the streams of vitality and other useful information.

## CHAPTER XIII

### KUNDALINI

As we have already seen, Kundalini, or the Serpent-Fire, is one of the forces which emanate from the sun, and is entirely separate and distinct from both Fohat and Prâna, being so far as is known, incapable of being converted into any form of these other forces.

Kundalini has been variously called the Serpent-Fire, the Fiery Power, and the World's Mother. To clairvoyant vision it appears in very truth like liquid fire as it rushed through the body, and the course through which it ought to move is a spiral one like the coils of a serpent. The name of the World's Mother is appropriate because through it our various vehicles may be vivified.

An ancient symbol of the spinal column and Kundalini is that of the thyrsus, which is a staff with a pine cone on its top. In India the same symbol is found, but instead of the staff a stick of bamboo with seven knots is used, the knots of course representing the seven chakrams or force centres. In some modifications of the mysteries a hollow iron rod, said to contain fire, was used instead of the thyrsus. It is said that the modern barber's pole, which is certainly a very ancient symbol, with its spiral bands and a knob at the end, has a similar significance, the modern barber being descended from the ancient chirurgeons or surgeons, who also practised alchemy, a science originally spiritual rather than material.

Kundalini exists on all planes of which we know anything, and it also appears to have seven layers of degrees of force.

The astral body originally was an almost inert mass, with only the vaguest consciousness, with no definite power of doing anything, and no clear knowledge of the world which surrounds it. Kundalini was then awakened at the astral level, in the centre corresponding to the base of the spine centre. It moved to the second centre, near the navel, and vivified it, thereby awakening in the astral body the power of feeling, of sensitiveness without definite comprehension.

Kundalini then passed to the third (spleen), fourth (heart), fifth (throat), sixth (eyebrows) and seventh (top of the head) centre in turn, awakening in each the various powers already described in previous chapters.

The mechanism by means of which we become aware of astral happenings is interesting and should be clearly grasped by the student. Although in the physical body we have special organs, each located in a definite and fixed part of the body, for seeing, hearing, and the rest, an entirely different arrangement is made in the astral body, specialised organs not being necessary for the attainment of the result aimed at.

The matter of the astral body is in a condition of constant movement, the particles flowing and swirling about like those of boiling water, and all of them pass in turn through each of the force-centres. Each of these centres then has the power of evoking from the particles of the astral body the ability to respond to a certain set of vibrations, corresponding to what in the physical world we call vibrations of light, sound, heat, and so forth. When therefore, the astral centres are vivified and in working order, they confer these various powers on the whole of the matter of the astral body, so that the latter is enabled to exercise its powers in every part of itself. Consequently a man functioning in his astral body can see equally well objects in front of him, behind, above and below. The chakrams or centres, therefore, cannot be described as organs of sense in the ordinary sense of that term, though they do convey the powers of sense to the astral body.

But even when these astral senses are fully awake, it by no means follows that the man will be able to bring into his physical body any consciousness of their action. He may in fact, in his physical consciousness know nothing whatever of it. The only way in which the consciousness of these astral experiences can be brought into the physical brain is by means of the corresponding etheric centres which must first be awakened and made active.

The method of awakening is precisely similar to that adopted in the astral body, *i.e.*, by arousing Kundalini, which lies dormant in etheric matter in the centre near the base of the spine.

The arousing is achieved by a determined and long-continued effort of the will, bringing the centre at the base of the spine into activity being, in fact, precisely the awakening of Kundalini. When once this is aroused, it is by its tremendous force that the other centres are vivified in turn. The effect on the centres is to bring into the physical consciousness the powers which were aroused by the development of the corresponding astral centres.

In order to bring about these results, however, it is necessary that the serpent-fire move to the chakrams in a certain order, and in a certain way, which varies with different types of people. Occultists who understand these matters from firsthand knowledge are always exceedingly careful to give no clue to the order in which the serpent-fire should be passed through the centres. The reason for this is on account of the very serious dangers, the gravity of which can scarcely be exaggerated, awaiting those who arouse Kundalini accidentally or prematurely. The most solemn warnings are uttered against attempting anything of the kind until the time is fully ripe and unless under the guidance of a Master or an experienced occultist.

Before Kundalini is aroused it is absolutely essential that a definite stage of moral purity be reached and also that the will be strong enough to control the force. Some of the dangers connected with the serpent-fire are purely physical. Its uncontrolled movement often produces intense physical pain, and it may readily tear tissues and even destroy physical life. It may also do permanent injury to vehicles higher than the physical.

One very common effect of arousing it prematurely is that it rushes downwards into the lower centres of the body instead of upwards, resulting in the excitation of the most undesirable passions, which are apt to be intensified to such a degree that it is quite impossible for the man to resist them. In the grip of such a force he is as helpless as a swimmer in the jaws of a shark. Such men become satyrs, monsters of depravity, being at the mercy of a force out of all proportion to the human power of resistance. It is probable that they will attain certain supernormal powers, but these will serve only to bring them into contact with subhuman beings with which humanity is intended to hold no commerce, and to escape from this thraldom may take more than one incarnation. There is a school of black magic which purposely uses this power in this way, but the lower force-centres which in this school are used are always left severely alone by followers of the Good Law or White Magic.

The premature unfoldment of Kundalini intensifies also everything in the nature, reaching in fact the lower evil qualities more readily than the good. Ambition, for example, in the mental body is very readily aroused and grows to an inordinate degree. Together with great intensification of intellectual power there comes abnormal and satanic pride. The force of the Kundalini is no ordinary force, but something resistless. If an uninstructed man has the misfortune to arouse it, he should at once consult someone who fully understands such matters. As the *Hathayogapradipika* says, "It gives liberation to Yogis and bondage to fools".

There are some cases where Kundalini wakes spontaneously, so that a dull glow is felt: it may even, though rarely, begin to move of itself. In this case it would probably cause severe

pain, as, since the passages are not prepared for it, it would have to clear its way by actually burning up a great deal of etheric dross, a process necessarily painful. In such cases the force would usually rush up the interior of the spine, instead of following the spiral course into which the occultist is trained to guide it. An effort of will should be made, if possible, to arrest such an upward rush, but if that proves to be impossible, as is most likely, it will probably rush out through the head and escape into the atmosphere probably doing no harm further than causing a slight weakening. It may also cause a temporary loss of consciousness. The really serious dangers, however, are connected, not with the upward, but with the downward rush.

As already briefly mentioned, the principal function of Kundalini in occult development is to pass through the etheric force centres and vivify these so that they bring through into the physical consciousness astral experiences. Thus *The Voice of The Silence* teaches that a vivification in this manner of the eyebrows centre enables one to hear the voice of the Master, that is, of the Ego or Higher Self. The explanation of this is that the pituitary body when fully working affords a perfect link between astral and physical consciousness.

The mastery of Kundalini has to be repeated in each incarnation, because in each life the bodies are new, but after it has once been thoroughly achieved, repetition becomes an easy matter.

The formation of the link between the physical consciousness and that of the Ego has its correspondences also at higher levels, meaning for the Ego a link with the consciousness of the Monad , and for the Monad a link with the consciousness of the Logos.

Age does not appear to affect the development of the chakrams by means of Kundalini, but health is a necessity, as only a strong body could endure the strain.

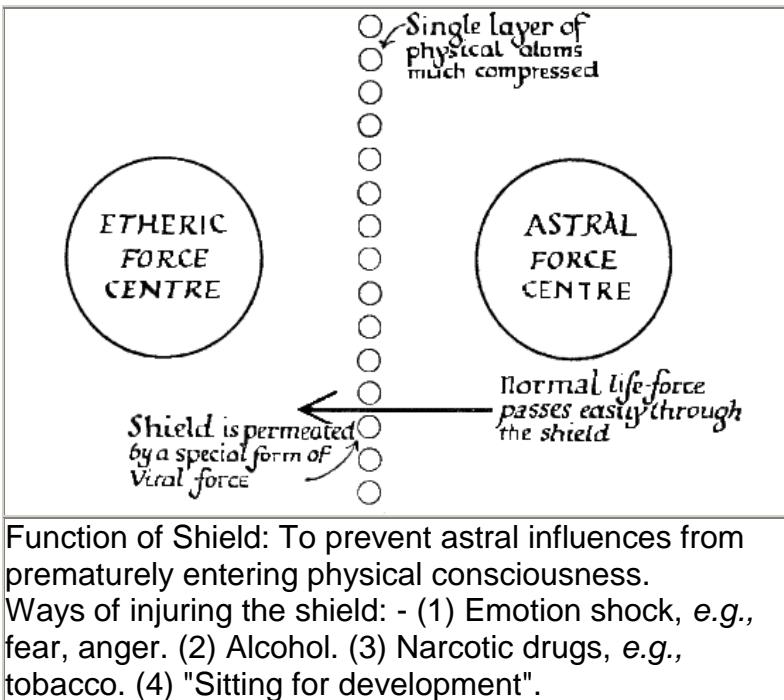
## CHAPTER XIV

### THE ATOMIC WEB

We have already seen that there is a very close connection between the chakrams in the astral body and those in the Etheric Double. Between these two sets of centres, and interpenetrating them in a manner not easy to describe, there is a web or sheath, composed of a single layer of physical atoms, closely woven, much compressed, and permeated with a special variety of Prâna. The Prâna which normally comes from the astral into the physical is such that it can pass with perfect ease through the atomic shield, but the latter is an absolute barrier to all other forces which cannot use the atomic matter of both planes.

#### DIAGRAM XIV

#### The Atomic Shield



The shield is thus a protection provided by nature to prevent premature opening up of communication between the astral and physical planes. Were it not for this wise provision, all kinds of astral experiences might pour into the physical consciousness where, in the case of most men, they could be productive of nothing but harm.

At any moment an astral entity might introduce forces which ordinary man would be quite unprepared to meet, and which would be entirely beyond his strength to cope with. A man would be liable to obsession by any astral entity who desired to seize his vehicle.

The atomic shield thus serves as an effective safeguard against these undesirable happenings. It also serves under normal conditions to prevent clear recollection of the sleep life from reaching the physical brain consciousness; and it accounts for the momentary unconsciousness which always occurs at death. Occasionally the returning astral body succeeds in making a momentary impression on the Etheric Double and dense body, so that when the latter awake there is a touch of vivid memory. This usually quickly vanishes, effort to recall it rendering success more impossible, as each effort sets up physical brain vibrations which tend to overpower the subtler astral vibrations.

It is clear, therefore, that any injury to the shield is a serious disaster. Such injury may occur in several ways. Any emotional shock, or any strong emotion of an evil character, which produces a kind of explosion in the astral body, may produce such an effect, rending apart the delicate web and, as we say, driving the man mad. A terrible fright may do this, or an outburst of anger.

Sitting for development, as spiritualists call the process, may also injure the web and throw open the doors which nature intended to keep closed.

Certain drugs, notably alcohol and all the narcotics, of which tobacco is one, contain matter which on breaking up volatilises, some of it passing from the physical to the astral state. Students of dietetics, especially those who have studied the effect of toxins, will be interested to learn that even tea and coffee contain the class of material described, though in quantities so small that only after long-continued abuse of them would the effect manifest itself. When

this takes place, these constituents rush out through the chakrams in the direction opposite to that for which they are intended, and after doing this repeatedly they injure and finally destroy the delicate web.

There are only two ways in which this deterioration or destruction may be brought about, according to the type of person concerned and the proportion of the constituents in his etheric and astral bodies. In the first type the rush of volatilising matter actually burns away the web, and thus breaks down nature's barrier.

In the second type the volatile constituents harden the atom, checking and crippling its pulsations, so that it can no longer carry the special form of Prâna which welds it into the web. The web thus becomes as it were ossified so that instead of too much coming through from one plane to another, we have very little of any kind coming through.

The two types are readily recognisable. In the former case we have instances of delirium tremens, obsession, and certain forms of insanity. In the latter case, which is by far the more common, we notice a general deadening of the higher feelings and qualities, resulting in materialism, brutality, animalism, and loss of self-control. It is well known that those who indulge excessively in narcotics, such as tobacco, will persist in their self-indulgence even at the expense of the pain or discomfort of their neighbours. Their finer susceptibilities have to that extent become blunted.

As the consciousness of the ordinary man cannot normally use atomic matter, either physical or astral, there is normally no possibility of conscious communication between the two planes. As, however, he purifies his vehicles, he becomes able to function in the atomic matter and then is able to carry his consciousness along a direct road from one atomic level to another. In this case the atomic web fully retains its position and activity, permitting the consciousness to pass from one plane to another, while at the same time fulfilling its purpose of preventing close contact with those lower sub-planes from which many kinds of undesirable influences are liable to come.

The only safe way, therefore, for genuine students of occultism, is not to force in any way the development of psychic powers, but to wait for these to unfold, as they will unfold, in the normal course of evolution. By this way all the benefits will be obtained and the dangers avoided.

## CHAPTER XV

### BIRTH

It will now be useful to study the Etheric Double in its connection with the birth and death of the physical body.

Those who have studied the mechanism of reincarnation will be familiar with the fact that, in the case of the etheric body, a factor comes into play which does not operate in the case of the astral or mental bodies. The Etheric Double is actually built in advance for the incoming Ego, by an elemental which is the joint thought-form of the four Devarâjas, each of whom presides over one of the four etheric sub-planes of physical matter. The primary business of this building elemental is to construct the etheric mould into which the physical particles of the new baby-body are to be built.

The form and colour of this elemental vary in different cases. At first it accurately expresses in shape and size the infant body it has to build; clairvoyants sometimes see this doll-like

figure hovering about, and afterwards within, the body of the mother, and have occasionally mistaken it for the soul of the coming baby instead of the mould of its physical body.

As soon as the foetus has grown to the size of the mould, and is ready for birth, the form of the next stage at which it has to aim is unfolded – the size, shape and condition of the body as it is to be, so far as the work of the elemental is concerned, at the time when it proposes to leave it. After the elemental has retired, all further growth of the body is under the control of the Ego himself.

In both these cases the elemental uses itself as the mould. Its colours largely represent the qualities required in the body it has to build, and its form is also usually that destined for it. As soon as its work is done, there is no power left to hold together its particles and the elemental disintegrates.

In determining the quality of etheric matter to be used in building the etheric body, we have two things to consider: first, the type of matter, regarded from the point of view of the seven Rays or *vertical* divisions, and secondly, the quality of matter, regarded from the point of view of its coarseness or fineness, or *horizontal* divisions. The former, the ray-type, is determined by the physical permanent atom, which has the type and subtype impressed upon it. The latter is determined by the past karma of the man, the building elemental being charged with the production of the type of physical body suited to the man's requirements. The elemental, in fact, consists of that portion of the (prârabda) *karma* of the individual which is to express itself in the physical body. On the selection made by the building elemental depends, for example, whether the body will be naturally clever or stupid, placid or irritable, energetic or lethargic, sensitive or unresponsive. The potentialities of heredity are latent in the maternal ovum and the paternal spermatozoon, and from these the elemental makes his selection according to the requirements of the case.

Although the elemental in charge of the body from the first, the Ego only comes into contact with his future habitation later, some time before physical birth. If the characteristics the elemental has to impose are few in number, it is able to withdraw early and leave the Ego in full control of the body. Where however, much time is required to develop the limitations needed, the elemental may retain its position until the body is seven years old.

Etheric matter for the infant body is taken from the body of the mother; hence the importance of the latter supplying her body with only the purest materials. Unless the elemental is charged with some special development in the way of features, such as unusual beauty or the reverse, the principal agency at work in this direction will be the thoughts of the mother and the thought-forms which float around her.

The new astral body comes into connection with the Etheric Double at a very early stage, and exercises considerable influence over its formation, the mental body also working through it upon the nervous organisation.

## CHAPTER XVI

### DEATH

We have previously seen that, under certain conditions, the Etheric Double may be separated from the dense body, though it is always connected with it by a thread or cord of etheric matter. At death the double finally withdraws from the dense body and may be seen as a violet mist, gradually condensing into a figure which is the counterpart of the expiring person and attached to the dense body by a glistening thread. This thread or magnetic cord is snapped at the moment of death.

As the buddhic life-web, accompanied by Prâna, disentangles itself from dense physical matter at death, it draws itself together in the heart round the permanent atom. The atom, web and Prâna then rise along the secondary Sushumna-nadi into the third ventricle of the brain, thence to the point of junction of the parietal and occipital sutures, and finally out of the body. The life-web remains enshrouding the physical permanent atom, in the causal body, until the time comes for a new physical body to be built.

The withdrawal of the Etheric Double, and with it of course Prâna, destroys the integral unity of the physical body, thus leaving it merely as a collection of independent cells. The Life of the separate cells themselves continues, as evidenced by the well known fact that hairs on a corpse will sometimes continue to grow.

The moment the Etheric Double withdraws, and consequently Prâna ceases to circulate, the lower lives, i.e., the cells, run rampant and begin to break down the hitherto definitely organised body. The body is thus never more alive than when it is dead: but it is alive in its units, and dead in its totality ; alive as a congeries, dead as an organism. As Eliphas Levi says: "The corpse would not decompose if it were dead; all the molecules which compose it are living and struggle to separate." (*Isis Unveiled*, I, 480).

When the double finally quits the dense body, it does not go far away but usually floats over it. In this condition it is known as the wraith, and sometimes appears to those with whom it is closely bound up as a cloudy figure, very dully conscious and speechless. Unless disturbed by tumultuous distress or violent emotion, the state of consciousness is dreamy and peaceful.

It is during the withdrawal of the double, as well as afterwards, that the whole of the man's past life passes swiftly in review before the Ego, every forgotten nook and corner of the memory yielding up its secrets, picture by picture, event by event. In these few seconds the Ego lives over again his whole life, seeing his successes and failures, loves and hatreds: he perceives the predominant tendency of the whole, and the ruling thought of the life asserts itself, marking the region in which the chief part of the post-mortem life will be spent. As the *Kaushitakopanishat* describes it, at death Prâna gathers everything together and, withdrawing from the body, hands everything onwards to the Knower, who is the receptacle of all.

This stage is usually followed by a brief period of peaceful unconsciousness, due to the withdrawal of the etheric matter and its entanglement with the astral body, thus preventing the man from functioning either in the physical or the astral world. Some men shake themselves free from the etheric envelope in a few moments; others rest within it for hours, days, or even weeks, though usually the process does not take longer than a few hours.

As the days pass, the higher principles gradually disengage themselves from the double, and the latter then becomes in its turn an etheric corpse, which remains near the dense one, both disintegrating together. These etheric wraiths are often seen in churchyards, sometimes as violet or bluish-white mists or lights, but often presenting an unpleasant appearance as they pass through various stages of decomposition.

One of the great advantages of cremation is that by destroying the dense body, the etheric body also loses its nidus and so rapidly disintegrates.

If a man is so misguided as to wish to cling to the physical life, and even to his own corpse, the preservation of the dead body, either by burial or embalming, offers a distinct temptation to him to do so, and immensely facilitates his unfortunate purpose. Cremation entirely prevents any attempt at partial and unnatural temporary reunion of the principles. In addition, there are certain unpleasant forms of black magic, fortunately rare in Western countries at

least, which make use of the decaying physical body; the etheric body of a dead person may also be similarly used in a variety of ways. All of these possibilities are avoided by the wholesome practice of cremation. It is quite impossible for a dead person to feel the effects of the fire on his discarded body, for, so long as it is death, the astral and etheric matter have been completely separated from the dense physical.

Although it is quite impossible for a dead person to get back entirely into his dead body, yet, in the case of one who knows nothing beyond purely physical life and is crazy with fear at being entirely cut off from it, it is possible for him, in his frantic effort to keep in touch with physical life, to get hold of the etheric matter of the discarded body and drag it about with him. This may be the cause of considerable suffering, entirely unnecessary, and easily avoided by the practice of cremation.

In the case of people who cling desperately to physical existence, the astral body cannot altogether separate from the etheric, and they awaken still surrounded by etheric matter. The condition is very unpleasant, as such a person would be shut out from the astral world by the shell of etheric matter, and at the same time the loss of physical sense organs prevents him from coming fully in touch with earth life. Consequently he drifts about, lonely and dumb and terrified, in a thick and gloomy fog, unable to hold intercourse with either plane.

In process of time the etheric shell wears out, in spite of his struggles, though usually not until after he has suffered intensely. Kindly people among the dead, and others, endeavour to help the class of person described, but seldom with success.

Sometimes a person in this condition may endeavour to get in touch once again with the physical plane through a medium, though usually the medium's "spirit guides" sternly forbid them access, knowing that the medium runs the risk of being obsessed or maddened. Occasionally an unconscious medium – usually a sensitive young girl – may be seized upon, but the attempt can be successful only if the girl's Ego has weakened his hold on his vehicles by indulging in undesirable thoughts and passions. Occasionally also a human soul wandering in this grey world may succeed in partially obsessing an animal, those most commonly seized upon being the less developed – cattle, sheep or swine, though cats and dogs or monkeys may also be used in this way. This appears to be the modern, i.e., Fifth Race, substitute for the awful life of the vampire, found in Fourth Race peoples. Once entangled with an animal, it is possible to disentangle oneself only gradually and by considerable effort, extending probably for many days. Freedom usually comes only at the death of the animal, and even then there remains an astral entanglement to shake off.

## CHAPTER XVII

### HEALING

We have already seen that a man in vigorous health is continually throwing off from his body vital emanations which may be absorbed by others. In this way the latter will be strengthened, and minor illnesses may be cured, or, at least, recovery expedited.

As, however, the currents of Prâna are amenable to the will, it is possible for a man consciously to direct the streams of vitality which pour out of him, as well as greatly to augment their natural flow. By directing the currents on to a patient who is depleted of strength, owing to the fact that his spleen is not doing its work properly, considerable help towards recovery may be given, the additional vitality poured in by the healer keeping the patient's bodily machinery working until it is sufficiently recovered to manufacture supplies of Prâna itself.

The healing of the weak by the strong may thus be achieved, in certain cases, merely by physical proximity, the process being either entirely unconscious and automatic, or it may be assisted and expedited to almost any extent by conscious effort. Much benefit may often be given merely by pouring into the patient copious streams of vitality, which will flood the patient's system with vitalising energy; or the operator may direct the flow to the particular portion of the body which is out of health. Merely to increase the circulation of Prâna is sufficient to cure many minor diseases. All nervous diseases imply a jangled condition of the Etheric Double, and that is also the cause of digestive troubles and sleeplessness. Headaches are usually caused by congestion, either of blood or of the vital fluid, sometimes called magnetism. A strong current directed by the healer through the head of the sufferer will wash away the congested matter and the headache will disappear.

These methods are comparatively simple and by no means difficult to apply, though a skilful healer, especially if clairvoyant, can improve on them enormously. One such improvement, which demands some knowledge of anatomy and physiology, is to make a mental picture of the diseased organ, and then image it as it should be in health. The strong thought will mould etheric matter into the desired form, which will help nature to build us new tissues much more rapidly than would otherwise be possible.

A still more thorough method is to create the organ in mental matter: then to build into it astral matter: then to densify it with etheric matter: and finally to build into the mould gases, liquids and solids, utilising materials available in the body and supplying from outside an deficiencies.

A methodical and effective way to set to work to heal magnetically is as follows: The patient assumes a comfortable position, either sitting or lying down, and is instructed to relax as thoroughly as possible. A very convenient method is for the patient to sit in an easy chair, with solid flat arms, the operator sitting sideways on the arms and thus slightly above the patient. The operator then makes passes with his hands over the patient's body, or over that portion of it which he proposes to treat magnetically, making an effort of will to withdraw from the patient the congested or diseased etheric matter. These passes may be made without actually touching the patient, though it is often an assistance to lay the whole hand on the skin gently and lightly. After each pass the operator must take care to throw off from himself the etheric matter he has withdrawn, otherwise some of it may remain in his own system and he may presently find himself suffering from a complaint similar to that of which he has cured his patient. Many cases of this kind are on record; thus, an operator may remove pain from a patient's tooth, or elbow, only to find himself presently suffering from toothache or pain in the elbow. In some cases, where repeated treatments are given, an operator who neglects to throw off the diseased matter which he has extracted may make himself seriously ill and even become a chronic sufferer.

A.P.Sinnett gives a curious case of a lady who was cured of chronic rheumatism and then went to live in a part of Europe other than that in which the mesmeric operator resided. Four years afterwards the operator died, and the old rheumatic trouble at once returned to the lady with its former virulence. In this case, it would seem that the unhealthy magnetism which the operator had withdrawn from the patient, but had not destroyed, had for years been hanging around the aura of the operator, and on his death, had at once flown back to where it originally belonged.

Usually it is sufficient to jerk the hands sharply downwards and away from oneself, or the magnetism may be thrown into a basin of water, the water afterwards of course being thrown away. The process may be assisted after this preliminary portion of the treatment is completed by washing the hands in water before commencing the next and more positive part of the treatment.

It is also said to be possible to direct the unhealthy magnetism to certain classes of elementals, where it will find its appropriate sphere. The Bible parable of the herd of swine may well be an allegorical description of the process. It would certainly seem to be preferable for something of this kind to be done than for the unhealthy magnetism to be left floating about near the aura either of the healer or of others who may happen to be near.

A slight variation of the above method, especially useful in the case of local congestion, is to place the hands, one on either side of the affected area, and to direct a stream of cleansing magnetism from the right hand to the left hand, this magnetism driving out the patient's congested material.

The way having been prepared, the next stage is to pour into the patient one's own magnetic fluid and Prâna. This is done by making similar passes, though this time with a strong effort of will to pour out one's own force into the patient. This, as before, may be done by means of long sweeping passes over the whole body, or by shorter passes over a special area: or again, the two hands may be used, the current being passed from the right hand to the left, through the area that is being treated.

The student will readily recognise the desirability of the healer being himself perfectly healthy, because otherwise he is liable to pour into the patient some of his own unhealthy magnetism.

It should be noted that in magnetic healing clothing is somewhat of a barrier, silk being in this respect the worst. The minimum possible, therefore, according to circumstances, should be worn by the patient.

From the fact that certain forms of insanity are due to defects in the etheric brain, its particles not corresponding perfectly with the denser physical particles and thus being unable to bring through properly vibrations from the higher vehicles, we may surmise that such cases might lend themselves to cure by magnetic treatment.

There are, of course, other methods of affecting the etheric body, because the connection between mental, astral and etheric bodies is so close that any one of the three may affect any of the others.

Generally speaking, it may be said that anything which promotes physical health also reacts favourably on the higher vehicles. Unused muscles, for example, not only tend to deteriorate, but produce a congestion of magnetism: this means a weak place in the Etheric Double, through which unpleasant germs, such as those of infection, may enter.

Similarly, mental or astral ill-health will almost surely, sooner or later, be reflected as physical disease. A person who is astrally "fussy". i.e., who allows his astral body to fritter away his strength on petty little emotions, troubles and worries, not only is apt to produce unpleasant and disturbing effects on the astral bodies of other sensitive persons, but frequently the perpetual astral disturbance reacts through the etheric upon the dense physical body, and all sorts of nervous diseases are produced.

Nearly all nerve troubles, for example, are the direct result of unnecessary worry and emotion, and would soon disappear if the patient could be taught to hold his vehicles still and peaceful. Magnetic healing blends almost imperceptibly into mesmerism, which we shall therefore now proceed to examine.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### MESMERISM

The student should recognise the perfectly clear and definite distinction between hypnotism and mesmerism. Hypnotism, derived from the Greek *hypnos*, meaning sleep, stands literally for the art of putting to sleep. It usually results from a nervous paralysis brought about by a slight strain either to the nerves of the eye or in some other way. It is not, in itself, an injurious state to be in, though it may of course be turned to ends either good or bad. It frequently makes the subject insensible to pain, and it may give the system a rest which may be highly beneficial. It is primarily a self-induced condition: its main result is that it usually places the subject to a greater or lesser extent under the control of the operator who, within certain limits which vary according to the nature and character of the subject and the degree of the hypnosis as well as the power and skill of the operator, may be compelled to do what the operator wishes.

Mesmerism depends upon quite a different principle. The word itself is derived from Frederick Mesmer (1734-1815) a doctor of Vienna, who, towards the end of the eighteenth century, discovered that he could effect cures by means of influences proceeding from the hand, to which he gave the name "animal magnetism". The essence of Mesmerism is that the operator drives out or forces back the patient's own magnetism or vital fluid, and replaces it with his own fluid. The natural effect of this is that the patient loses all power of feeling in that portion of his body from which his own fluid has been expelled. We have previously seen that the power of feeling depends on the transmission of contacts to the astral centres, through the matter of the Etheric Double. When therefore, the etheric matter is removed, the connection between the dense physical body and the astral body is broken, and consequently there can be no sensation experienced.

The withdrawal of the vital fluid does not in any way interfere with the circulation of the blood, for the portion of the body concerned remains warm.

It is thus possible to drive out a patient's own etheric matter from, say an arm or a leg, so that complete anaesthesia in the limb results. The mesmeric process being in such a case purely local, the patient will retain full normal consciousness in the brain; all that happens is that a local anaesthetic has been applied to the limb concerned. Under such mesmeric anaesthetic surgical operations, both major and minor, have been performed. Perhaps the best known collection of such operations is recorded in the book *Mesmerism in India*, first published in 1842, by Dr. Esdaile. Another surgeon, one Dr. Elliotson, also performed large numbers of operations under mesmeric anaesthesia in London about three-quarters of a century ago. At this time chloroform was unknown, and every operating room was a torture chamber. Graphic and interesting accounts of the work of these two pioneers may be found in *The Rationale of Mesmerism*, by A. P. Sinnett, a book strongly recommended to the student.

The mesmeric process may be pushed further, to the extent of driving out the subject's own magnetic fluid from the brain and replacing it by that of the operator. In this case, the subject entirely loses control of his own body, and the control passes to the operator, who can then make the subject's body do what the operator wishes.

An interesting consequence of replacing a subject's magnetic fluid by that of the operator is that a stimulus applied to the operator may appear to be felt by the subject, or, on the other hand, a stimulus applied to the subject may be felt by the operator.

Thus, for example, suppose that an arm has been mesmerised, the subject's own magnetic fluid being replaced by that of the operator. Then if the operator's hand be pricked, the

subject may receive the feeling, owing to the fact that the nerve-ether of the operator has been connected to the subject's brain : the subject therefore, receiving the message from the operator's nerve-ether, supposes it to have come from his own nerve-ether and so responds accordingly. This phenomenon is usually known as magnetic sympathy, and many cases may be read of in the literature of the subject.

It is not essential to make passes with the hands in order to mesmerise. The only use of the hands is to concentrate the fluid, and perhaps to help the imagination of the operator, anything which assists the imagination making it easier that belief upon which the action of the will so largely depends. A skilful mesmerist, however, can manage quite well without any passes whatever, achieving his results merely by looking at his subject and using his will.

It would appear that the etheric mechanism of the body consists of two distinct divisions, the one unconscious and connected with the sympathetic, the other conscious and voluntary, and connected with the cerebro-spinal system, and that it is possible to mesmerise the latter, but not the former. A mesmerist would not, therefore, usually be able to interfere with the ordinary vital processes of a patient's body, such as breathing or the circulation of the blood.

This may, perhaps be the explanation of the statement in *Theosophy* that Prâna exists in two main forms in the physical body : energising Prâna in the Etheric Double, and Automatic Prâna in the dense body.

As in the case of magnetic healing, it is obviously eminently desirable that a mesmerist should be physically healthy. For a healer or magnetiser pours into the patient not only Prâna, but also his own emanations, and in this way it is possible for the operator to convey physical disease to the subject. Further, as astral and mental matter are also thrown into the subject, moral and mental diseases may likewise be transferred.

For similar reasons a mesmerist may thus, even unconsciously, gain great influence over his subject – a far greater power than is generally known. Any quality of heart or mind possessed by the mesmerist is very readily transferred to the subject, hence the avenues of possible danger in this respect are apparent.

Mesmerism purely for curative purposes, by those who understand what they are doing and can be trusted not to abuse their powers, has much to be said for it; but mesmerism for other purposes is distinctly not advisable.

An advantage possessed by mesmerism over healing of disease by will is that when will-forces are poured down into the physical, there is a danger of driving the disease back into the subtler vehicles from which it came, thus inhibiting the final working out to the physical plane of evil which has its origin in mind and emotion. Curative mesmerism is free from this danger.

An interesting example of magnetic or mesmeric healing is the Buddhist Paritta or Pirit ceremony (meaning literally "blessings"), in which the monks sit in a circle or hollow square and hold in their hands a rope about as thick as a clothes line, from which strings run to a large pot of water. Relays of monks recite texts from the scriptures for many days continuously, keeping clearly in their minds the will to bless. The water becomes very highly charged with magnetism and it is then distributed to the people, or a sick man may hold a thread connected to the rope.

It may be noted, in passing, that it is possible to mesmerise plants and procure specific and distinct results in stimulation of their growth. There are probably very few who practise this consciously, at least in Western countries, though the fact that some persons have a "lucky hand" with plants and flowers, etc., may perhaps be partially explained on the lines indicated.

A more common cause, however, of such phenomena has to do with the composition of the etheric and other bodies and the relationship of the person to the elementals, the most friendly to him being those whose element is preponderant in his vehicles.

Nature-spirits, possessing little sense of responsibility and wills not strongly developed, can usually readily be dominated mesmerically, and can then be employed in many ways to carry out the will of the magician : so long as the tasks given to them are within their powers they will be faithfully and surely executed.

It is also possible to mesmerise persons who have recently died and who are still hovering close about us in their astral bodies.

## CHAPTER XIX

### SHELLS AND SHIELDS

There are certain circumstances in which it is both permissible and desirable to form either a shell or a shield of etheric matter, to protect oneself or other people from unpleasant influences of various kinds.

Thus for example, in a mixed crowd there is quite likely to be present some physical magnetism distasteful, if not positively injurious, to a student of occultism. Some persons, also, being themselves low in vitality, have the faculty, usually unconscious, of depleting others in their vicinity of their stores of Prâna. Provided these vampire-like people took from others only those etheric particles which are normally expelled from the body as not needed, no harm would be done, but often the suction is so intense that the whole circulation of Prâna in the victim is hastened, the rose-coloured particles also being drawn out of the system before their Prânic content has been assimilated by their owner. A capable vampire can thus drain a person of all his strength in a few minutes.

The vampire is not appreciably benefited by the vitality of which he has robbed others, because his own system tends to dissipate what he acquires without proper assimilation. A person in this condition needs mesmeric treatment, strictly limited quantities of Prâna being supplied to him, until the elasticity of his etheric double is restored, so that both the suction and the leakage cease. The leakage of vitality takes place through every pore of the body rather than through any one portion of it.

In certain abnormal cases another entity may attempt to seize and obsess the physical bodies of others. Or, again, it may be necessary to sleep, e.g., in a railway carriage, in close proximity with people of the vampire type or whose emanations are coarse and undesirable ; or the student may have to visit persons or places where disease is rampant.

Some people are so sensitive that they are apt to reproduce in their own bodies the symptoms of others who are weak and diseased ; others, again, suffer considerably from the incessant play of the multiplex vibrations of a noisy city.

In all these cases an etheric shell may be utilised with advantage to protect oneself. It is important to note, however, that an etheric shell which keeps *out* etheric matter will also keep it *in*, and that therefore one's own etheric emanations, many of which are poisonous, will be kept within the shell.

The shell is made by an effort of will and imagination. It may be done in two ways. Either the periphery of the etheric aura, which follows the shape of and is slightly larger than the physical body, may be densified, or an ovoid shell of etheric matter may be manufactured out

of the surrounding atmosphere. The latter is preferable, though it demands a far greater exertion of the will and a more definite knowledge of the way in which physical matter is moulded by it.

Students who wish to guard their physical bodies during sleep by means of an etheric shell must be careful to make the latter of etheric, not astral, matter. A case is recorded of a student who made this mistake, with the consequence that the physical body was left entirely unprotected, while he himself floated away in an impenetrable astral shell which permitted nothing to pass either to or from the consciousness imprisoned within.

The formation of an etheric shell before going to sleep may be of assistance in helping the experiences of the Ego to come through into the waking consciousness by preventing the thoughts which are always floating in the etheric world, and constantly bombarding the vehicles, from entering into the sleeping etheric brain and becoming mixed up with the thoughts of that etheric brain itself.

The etheric part of the brain, being the playground of the creative imagination, takes an active part in dreams, especially those caused by impressions from outside, or from any internal pressure from the cerebral vessels. Its dreams are usually dramatic, for it draws on the accumulated contents of the physical brain, and arranges, dissociates, and recombines these after its own fancies, thus creating the lower world of dream.

The best method of remaining, whilst awake, practically impervious to the impingement of thought from without is to keep the brain fully employed instead of leaving it idle, the door wide open for the streams of inconsequent chaos to pour into it.

In sleep the etheric part of the brain is of course even more at the mercy of outside thought-currents. By the means suggested above the student should be able to keep himself free from such troubles. In some cases it is not necessary to make a shell to surround the whole body, but merely a small local shield to guard oneself against a special contact.

Thus some sensitive people suffer acutely merely shaking hands with others. In such cases a temporary shield of etheric matter may be formed, by an effort of will and imagination, which will completely protect the hand and arm from the entry of a single particle charged with undesirable magnetism.

Similar shields are used for protection against fire, though for this purpose a far greater knowledge of practical magic is needed. Such shields of etheric matter, the thinnest layer of which can be so manipulated as to be absolutely impervious to heat, may spread over the hands, the feet, or over the hot stones or other substances used in fire walking ceremonies still practised in some parts of the world. This phenomenon is occasionally seen at spiritual séances, the sitters being enabled to handle red-hot coals with impunity.

It will, of course, be recognised that the shells and shields we have been speaking about are purely etheric, and therefore have no effect in keeping off astral or mental influences, for which purpose shells of the material of those planes would have to be employed; with these, however, we are not here concerned.

## CHAPTER XX

### MEDIUMSHIP

A MEDIUM is an abnormally organised person in whom dislocation of the etheric and dense bodies easily occurs. The Etheric Double, when extruded, largely supplies the physical basis for "materialisations."

Such materialised forms are usually strictly confined to the immediate neighbourhood of the medium, the matter of which they are composed being subject to an attraction which is constantly drawing it back to the body from which it came, so that if kept away from the medium too long the figure collapses, the matter which composes it instantly rushing back to its source.

Such forms are able to exist for a few moments only amidst the intense vibrations of brilliant light.

The condition of mediumship is, on the whole, dangerous, and fortunately comparatively rare : it gives rise to such nervous strain and disturbance. When the Etheric Double is extruded, the double itself is rent in twain; the whole of it could not be separated from the dense body without causing death, since the life-force, or Prâna, cannot circulate without the presence of etheric matter. Even the partial withdrawal of the double produces lethargy in the dense body and almost suspends the vital activities : this dangerous condition is usually followed by extreme exhaustion (see Chapter I., p. 5)

The terrible drain on the vitality, set up by a withdrawal of the means by which the Prâna is circulated, is the reason why mediums are so often in a state of collapse after a séance, and also why so many mediums eventually become drunkards, stimulants being taken in order to satisfy the terrible craving for support by the sudden loss of strength.

Sir William Crookes, on page 41 of his *Researches*, writes : "After witnessing the painful state of nervous and bodily prostration in which some of these experiments have left Mr. Home – after seeing him lying in almost fainting condition on the floor, pale and speechless – I could scarcely doubt that the evolution of psychic force is accompanied by a corresponding drain on vital force."

The condition closely resembles the shock which follows a surgical operation.

At a spiritual séance a clairvoyant can see the Etheric Double oozing usually out of the left side of the medium, though sometimes from the whole surface of the body, and it is this which often appears as the "materialised spirit", easily moulded into various shapes by the thoughts of the sitters, and gaining strength and vitality as the medium sinks into a deep trance. Usually of course, this takes place without any conscious effort on the part of the sitters : it may, however, be achieved deliberately. Thus, H.P.Bлавatsky stated that during the remarkable phenomena at the Eddy homestead she deliberately moulded the "spirit" form which appeared into various likenesses, these being seen by the sitters present.

Although etheric matter, moulded into such "spirit" forms, is invisible to ordinary sight, it may nevertheless be able to affect a photographic plate, the latter being sensitive to certain wavelengths of light which leave the human eye unaffected. This is the rationale of the many cases on record where "spirit forms" have appeared on the negative of an ordinary photographic portrait.

In addition, to the matter of the Etheric Double of the medium, it frequently happens at séances that etheric matter is withdrawn also from the bodies of the sitters : hence the lassitude frequently felt by those who attend such séances.

It is only in conditions of perfect passivity that much matter can be withdrawn from the physical body without danger to life. Although the medium is usually conscious all the time in

the background, yet any attempt to assert the individuality, or to think connectedly, immediately weakens the materialised form, or brings it back to the "cabinet." A sudden shock or disturbance, or any attempt to seize the "spirit form" is apt to be in the highest degree dangerous and may even result in death.

In addition to the extrusion of etheric matter, in many cases the dense physical matter, probably chiefly gases and liquids, is also removed at the same time from the body of the medium. Many cases are on record where, during a materialisation, the body of the medium shrivelled perceptibly, the shrunken, wizened appearance of the face being said to be singularly ghastly and unpleasant to see. By actual weighing, the physical body of the medium has been found to be as much as 40 pounds less than normal, whilst the weight of the materialised form has been found to be at least as much as the diminution of the medium's weight, and usually more than this, presumably owing to the extraction of some dense matter from the bodies of the sitters. In one well known case a materialised form carried the diminished body of the medium – Mr. Eglington.

To an astral entity, who wishes to "manifest" himself or to produce some phenomenon on the physical plane, a medium serves the purpose of providing the necessary etheric matter, which acts as an intermediary to convey the astral forces into physical matter.

A somewhat similar process takes place when a dead drunkard, hovering about a gin-shop, draws round himself a veil of etheric matter, in order that he may absorb the odour of the alcohol for which he craves. Being unable to smell alcohol in the same way as we do, he tries to induce others to become drunk, so that he may be able partially to enter their physical bodies and obsess them, thus once more directly experiencing the taste and other sensations he so ardently desires.

Sometimes only sufficient etheric is withdrawn from a medium to produce an etheric hand, or even just sufficient of the fingers to hold a pencil and write, or to enable "raps" to be made, objects to be overturned or moved, and so forth. Usually, etheric matter, as well as dense physical matter, is withdrawn from the medium and utilised so as to cover an astral shape just sufficiently to make the latter visible to the sitters, the form seen thus not being solid but merely a thin film.

"Spirit" drapery, however, so usual at séances, is frequently made from the clothing of the medium or of a sitter. The texture may be quite coarse, or exceedingly fine, finer in fact than any product of Eastern looms. Occasionally such drapery may be removed from the séance room, sometimes lasting for years, at other times fading away in an hour or so, or even in a few minutes.

There can be no question that, except possibly in very rare cases, and where every possible precaution is taken, the practise of mediumship is harmful, and may be exceedingly dangerous. Nevertheless, it must be admitted that by its means large numbers of people have acquired knowledge of, or belief in, the reality of the unseen world and of the continuance of life after death. On the other hand, it may be urged that such knowledge or such belief could have been secured in other and less harmful ways.

A trained occultist, for example, connected with any school of "white magic", would never interfere with the Etheric Double of any man in order to produce a materialisation; nor would he disturb his own if he wished to make himself visible at a distance. He would simply condense and build into and around his astral body a sufficient quantity of the surrounding ether to materialise it, and hold it in that form by an effort of will as long as he needed it.

Most "spirit guides" are well aware of the dangers to which their mediums are exposed, and take every precaution in their power to protect the mediums. Even the "spirits" themselves

may occasionally suffer when, for example, a materialised form is struck or wounded, owing to the intimate connection established between the etheric matter of the materialised form and the astral matter of the "spirit's body."

It is of course, true that no physical weapon could affect an astral body, but an injury to a materialised form may be transmitted to the astral body by the phenomenon known as "repercussion."

Owing to the fact that during a materialisation matter may be borrowed from all the sitters present as well as from the medium, a considerable intermixture of such matter may take place, and consequently undesirable qualities or vices in any one of the sitters are liable to react upon the others and most of all upon the medium, who is most drawn upon and is almost certainly the most sensitive person present. Nicotine and alcohol poisoning appear to be especially liable to produce unpleasant effects in this manner.

Mediums of low type inevitably attract eminently undesirable astral entities, who may reinforce their own vitality at the expense of mediums and sitters. Such a "spook" may even attach itself to any one present, who is of low development, with deplorable results.

Cases are known where some outside entity, either incarnate or excarnate, has seized upon the body of a sleeping man and used it, perhaps in sleepwalking, for his own ends. This would be most likely to happen with a person who is mediumistic.

## CHAPTER XXI

### THE WORK OF DR. WALTER J. KILNER

In the book called *The Human Atmosphere* (1911), Dr. W.J.Kilner describes the investigations he has made on the human aura by means of coloured screens. Dr. Kilner's main principles and discoveries are summarised in this chapter. For further details, especially of the manner of using the screens, the reader is referred to the book mentioned.

It is interesting to note that Dr. Kilner expressly disclaims all clairvoyant power and did not even read accounts of the aura until over sixty of his patients had been examined. He claims that his methods are purely physical and can be employed with success by any one who takes the necessary pains.

The screens are thin, flat glass cells, containing dicyanin dyes in alcohol. Various colours are employed, for different purposes, such as dark and light carmine, blue, green and yellow.

The operator looks through a dark screen at the light for half a minute or longer, and then at the patient through a pale screen, when he finds he is able to perceive the aura. Use of the screens appears to affect the eyes, at first temporarily and later permanently, so that after a time the operator is able to perceive the aura even without the screens. Great care, however, is advised in using the screens, as the eyes tend to become very painful.

A dull diffused light, from one direction only, preferably from behind the observer, should be used, generally sufficient to enable the body to be seen distinctly. A dead black background is usually necessary, though for some observations a white one is required. The person being observed, should be about 12 inches in front of the background, to avoid shadows and other optical illusions.

In addition to the coloured screens, Dr. Kilner has employed another ingenious method of investigating the aura, which he terms that of Complimentary Colours. A band of colour, 2

inches by  $\frac{3}{4}$  in., fairly well illuminated, is looked at steadily for thirty to sixty seconds. This has the effect of fatiguing the powers of the eye to perceive that particular colour, and in addition, the eyes are found to become abnormally sensitive to other colours. When then, the gaze is transferred to the patient, a belt or band of complimentary colour is seen, the same size and shape as the original strip: this "spectre" persists for some little time. In practice it is found that colour changes in the auras produce the effect of changing the appearance of the C.C. band. By this means, in skilful hands, a number of facts about the aura can be ascertained, which, by means of the screens alone, would remain undetected. The colours employed by Dr. Kilner are : -

1. Gamboge having a C.C. Prussian Blue
2. Antwerp Blue having a C.C. Gamboge
3. Carmine having a C.C. Transparent Emerald green
4. Emerald Green having a C.C. Carmine

The aura is observed to consist of three distinct parts, called by Dr. Kilner:-

1. The Etheric Double
2. The Inner Aura
3. The Outer Aura

The *Etheric Double* appears through the screens as a dark band adjacent to and following exactly the contours of the body. Its width is uniform throughout and is usually from  $1/16^{\text{th}}$  to  $3/16^{\text{th}}$ 's of an inch. It varies in size with different people, and also with the same person under altered conditions. It appears to be quite transparent and distinctly striated, with very delicate lines of a beautiful rose colour, these appearing to tint the portions between the striations. The rose colour certainly contains more blue than there is carmine. It seems probable that the lines are self-luminous. Up to the present no attributes or changes in the Etheric Double have been found which are likely to be a help in diagnosis.

The *Inner Aura* commences from the outer edge of the Etheric Double, though frequently it appears to touch the body itself. It is usually of a uniform width of 2 to 4 inches throughout, though sometimes slightly narrower down the limbs, and follows the contours of the body. It is relatively wider in children than in adults. Its structure is granular, the granules being exceedingly fine and so arranged as to appear striated. The striæ are parallel to one another, being at right angles to the body, and in bundles, the longest in the centre and the shortest on the outside, with a rounded margin. The bundles are massed together, thus creating a crenated outline of the aura. The striæ have not been observed to possess any colour. In ill-health they are less apparent.

The *Inner Aura* is the densest portion of the aura proper. It is usually more distinctly marked and broader in persons in robust physical health.

The *Outer Aura* commences from the outer edge of the Inner Aura and, unlike the Inner Aura, varies in size considerably. Round the head it extends usually about 2 inches beyond the shoulders: by the sides and back of the trunk it is about 4 or 5 inches wide, in front of the body it is a little narrower. It follows closely the contours of the body, being sometimes a little narrower down the lower limbs. Around the arms it corresponds to that encircling the legs, but is generally broader round the hands and frequently projects a long distance from the finger tips. The outline is not absolutely sharp, but gradually vanishes into space. The Outer Aura appears structureless and non-luminous. The inner portion of the Outer Aura has larger granules than the outer portions, the different sizes graduating imperceptibly into one another.

The auras of boys and girls up to the age of about twelve or thirteen appear similar except that the texture of the female aura is usually finer than that of the male. From adolescence onwards the male and female auras become distinctive : in both, however, considerable peculiarities occur. The female aura is usually much wider at the sides of the body, the maximum width being at the waist, and it is also wider at the back than at the front, the widest part being at the small of the back, where frequently it bulges out.

Dr. Kilner considers that a form approximating to an egg-shaped oval is the most perfect, deviations from this being due to undevelopment. Fineness and transparency may be considered indications of a higher type of aura.

Children have auras relatively broader in proportion to their height than adults. Children also, especially males, have an Inner Aura almost as wide as the Outer, so that it may be difficult to differentiate the two.

Persons of intelligence usually have larger auras than those of low intellect. This is especially marked round the head. The more grey there is in the aura, the more dull or mentally affected is the owner.

Sometimes an exceedingly faint haze can be seen extending outwards a very long distance beyond the Outer Aura. This has been observed only where the aura is unusually extensive, and it appears probable that it is a continuation of the Outer Aura. Dr. Kilner calls this the Ultra Outer Aura.

Bright patches, rays or streams have been observed, emanating from various parts of the body. Sometimes they appear and disappear rapidly, at other times they persist. Patches never seem to be coloured : rays are usually colourless, though occasionally tinted with different hues. Where they occur the aura usually becomes denser.

There are three varieties :-

*First* : - Rays or Patches, lighter than the surrounding aura, entirely separated from but close to the body, appearing in and enveloped by the aura itself. In their most common form they are elongated, their long axes parallel with the body. Their sides are usually distinct, exactly coincident with the edge of the Inner Aura, but the ends, usually contracted and less bright, often fade into the adjacent aura.

The Inner Aura within the Ray usually, but not always, loses its striated appearance, and becomes granular. The longer the Ray persists the coarser become the granules.

*Second* : - Rays emanating from one part of the body and running to another part, not very distant. These Rays are usually the most brilliant. They may be perceived running, e.g., from the body to an arm, or, if the arm be bent, from the armpit to the wrist.

If the observer holds his hand near the patient, the auras of both almost invariably become brighter locally, and in a short time a complete Ray will be formed between the hand and the nearest part of the patient. Such Rays are formed more easily between points than between surfaces.

In one instance a Ray from the hand of one person to that of another was a bright yellow, changing to a liquid ruby colour.

*Third* : - Rays projecting at right angles from the body into space, brighter than and as far as, or even beyond, the Outer Aura. The sides of the Rays are usually, though not always,

parallel, and rarely fan-shaped; the ends become pointed and fade away, especially when issuing from the tips of the fingers.

Rays have never been observed other than straight. Their normal direction is perpendicular to the body, but they may take any direction, as, for example, when flowing from the tips of the fingers of one person to those of another.

In addition to the bluish-grey colour, red and yellow have been observed to tinge Rays. The facts that their structure resembles that of the Inner Aura, and that they have never been observed to diminish the adjacent Outer Aura, either in density or brightness, justify the conclusion that the Rays and the Inner Aura have a common origin – the body, and that therefore a Ray is merely an extended bundle of striæ of the Inner Aura.

Dr. Kilner has found also that, under similar conditions, though with more difficulty, he was able to perceive a haze or Aura surrounding magnets, particularly the poles, having a bluish colour : a yellow Aura round a crystal of uranium nitrate; a bluish Aura around the poles of galvanic cells, around any conductor joining the poles, and in the space between two wires connected each to one of the poles and to one another.

From the facts (1) that the Inner Aura has a striated structure, whilst the Outer Aura is entirely nebulous; (2) that the Inner Aura has a fairly well-marked border, that of the Outer Aura being ill-defined; (3) that the outer margin of the Inner Aura is crenated, but that of the Outer Aura does not in any way correspond; (4) that Rays proceed from the Inner Aura but in no case have been observed to commence in the Outer Aura and pass through to the Inner Aura – Dr. Kilner concludes (1) that the Outer Aura is most probably derived from the Inner; and (2) that the two Auras are most probably not the product of one and the same force.

Dr. Kilner thus posits (1) No. 1 Auric Force (for short 1 AF) which originates the Inner Aura, and (2) No. 2 Auric Force (2 AF), which originates the Outer Aura. 1AF acts apparently very intensely within a prescribed area. Through local increase of force, rays may be projected consciously by an effort of will. 2AF is more mobile and has a wider range of action than 1AF. It appears to be entirely independent of the will.

Different states of health, general or local, act on the forces, and through them on the Auras, though not necessarily in the same manner on both Inner and Outer Auras.

A local affection may cause all the striæ to disappear from the Inner aura, the latter becoming more opaque and dense, and changing its colour ; it may also appear roughly rayed, in a manner quite different from the fine striæ of health; or it may form a space devoid of the Inner Aura.

An affection over a large portion of the body may make the Inner Aura narrower on one side of the body than on the other; this is accompanied by an alteration of texture in the Inner Aura and often also the colour.

Variations in the Outer Aura, consequent upon 2AF, are less than is the case with the Inner Aura. The width may contract, but never quite disappear, and the colour may change. A change over a large area of the body may completely alter the shape of the Outer Aura. The Outer Aura may become narrower, the Inner Aura being unaffected; but if the Inner shrinks, the Outer does also.

Changes in the Auras may be produced by disease. In hysteria, the Outer Aura is wider at the sides of the trunk : its width contracts suddenly near the pubes; a bulge occurs at the back in the lumbar region.

In epilepsy, one side of both Inner and Outer Auras for their whole length is usually contracted : the Inner Aura becomes opaque, the texture coarser, and striation diminishes or disappears. The colour is usually grey.

A contraction of the Inner Aura invariably implies a grave malady. Occasionally an absolute break in the Aura is observed.

The Inner Aura does not alter in shape or size to any great extent, but it changes considerably in texture. The Outer Aura varies more frequently and more extensively in shape and size, but almost imperceptibly in texture.

In case of disease, the earliest morbid symptom is diminution or complete loss of striation ; together with this, the granules become coarser, this being apparently due to amalgamation of smaller granules.

Derangement of the Inner Aura is accompanied by a *pari passu* alteration of the Outer Aura.

The preparation of the eye by means of the screens renders it difficult to appreciate accurately variations in the colour of the aura. The colour in the main appears to range from blue to grey, the colour depending more on temperament and mental powers than on changes in bodily health. The greater the mental vigour the bluer becomes the Aura ; deficiency of mental power tends to greyness in the Aura.

Dr. Kilner carried out a few experiments which demonstrated not only that Rays could be projected by an effort of will from various parts of the body, but also that the colour of a Ray or a part of the Aura could be varied by an effort of will. Red, yellow and blue colours have been produced in this way ; blue was found to be the easiest to produce, and yellow the most difficult.

A careful study of Dr. Kilner's results reveals that these agree with considerable accuracy with those obtained by clairvoyance. Dr. Kilner, however, appears to have studied more minutely, in some respects, the structure of the Aura and the effects on it of disease. That which Dr. Kilner terms the Etheric Double is evidently identical with that which is described under the same name as clairvoyants. The striations of Dr. Kilner's Inner Aura are clearly the same as the health Aura (see Chapter IV, p. 32). That which Dr. Kilner describes as the Outer Aura would appear to the present writer to consist of etheric particles from which the Prâna has been withdrawn and other etheric matter discharged from the body (see Chapter XI, Discharges). The student should compare the outlines of Auras given in Dr. Kilner's book with Plate XXIV, of the Health Aura in *Man, Visible and Invisible*.

It would appear legitimate to surmise that further improvement of Dr. Kilner's methods would lead to the physical perception of (1) the Etheric Chakrams; (2) the flow of Prâna into and through the body; (3) the nature and structure of the Etheric Double *within* the body. Dr. Kilner having referred to the difficulty of perceiving the Aura against a background of flesh, the present writer has wondered whether a suitable background could not be obtained by colouring in some way the skin of the person being observed.

Dr. Kilner states that his one objective in making his investigations has been to utilise the Aura as a means of diagnosis. It is therefore, more than probable that further investigations would reveal properties of the Aura which, while perhaps having no diagnostic utility, would, nevertheless, be of scientific interest.

From the observed facts – (1 ) that ill-health deranges the Aura; (2) that the etheric matter of adjacent Auras flows together, forming Rays; (3) that such Rays can be formed and directed by an effort of the will; (4) that the will can determine even the colour of such Rays – it would appear but a very short step to the subject of magnetic or mesmeric healing, and it is to be

hoped that some investigator will make a study of this important and interesting subject in the same painstaking manner that has characterised Dr. Kilner's own researches.

## CHAPTER XXII

### ETHERIC FACULTIES

Etheric faculties are extensions of the ordinary physical senses, enabling the possessor to appreciate "vibrations" pertaining to the etheric portion of the physical plane. Such impressions will be received through the retina of the eye, affecting of course its etheric matter.

In some abnormal cases other parts of the etheric body may respond as readily as, or even more readily than, the eye. This would usually be due to partial astral development, the sensitive areas of the etheric double nearly always corresponding to the astral chakrams.

There are roughly, two main kinds of clairvoyance, the lower and the higher. The lower variety appears sporadically in undeveloped people, such as savages of Central Africa, and is a sort of massive sensation vaguely belonging to the whole etheric body, rather than an exact and definite sense-perception communicated through a specialised organ. It is practically beyond the man's control. The Etheric Double being in exceedingly close relationship with the nervous system, any action on one of them reacts speedily on the other. In the lower clairvoyance the corresponding nervous disturbance is almost entirely in the sympathetic system.

In more developed races the vague sensitiveness usually disappears as the mental faculties are developed. Later on, when the spiritual man begins to unfold, he regains clairvoyant power. This time, however, the faculty is precise and exact, under the control of the will, and exercised through a sense organ. Any nervous action set up is almost exclusively in the cerebro-spinal system.

The lower forms of psychism are most frequent in animals and very unintelligent human beings. Hysterical and ill-regulated psychism is due to the small development of the brain and the dominance of the sympathetic system, the large nucleated ganglionic cells in this system containing a very large proportion of etheric matter, and thus being easily affected by the coarser astral vibrations.

Etheric vision may be temporarily stimulated, e.g., by delirium tremens, so that the sufferer may see etheric (as well as astral) creatures: the snakes and other horrors seen in such cases are almost invariably creatures of low type which feast on alcoholic fumes exuding from the drunkard's body.

It should be noted that the Etheric Double is peculiarly susceptible to the volatile constituents of alcohols.

Clairvoyant faculty may also sometimes be exhibited under the influence of mesmerism; also by an increased tenseness of the nerves, caused by excitement, hysteria, ill-health, drugs, or certain ceremonial rites which induce self-hypnotism.

It is not, however, advisable to allow oneself to be thrown into mesmeric sleep in order to obtain clairvoyant experiences, because domination of the will by that of another person tends to make the will of the subject weaker and thus more liable to be acted upon by others.

Occasionally a person fortunate enough to have gained the friendship of etheric nature-spirits may be helped by these creatures to attain flashes of temporary clairvoyance, in order that the person may see them. In order to cultivate such friendship, it must be remembered that these nature-spirits are intensely shy and distrustful of men: they object to the physical emanations of the average man – of meat, tobacco, and alcohol; also to low selfish feelings,

such as lust, anger, or depression. Strong, unselfish feelings of a lofty nature create the kind of atmosphere in which nature-spirits delight to bathe.

Almost all nature-spirits are fond of music, and some are especially attracted by certain melodies. C.W. Leadbeater writes that he has seen shepherd-boys in Sicily playing on their home-made Panpipe, with an appreciative audience of fairies frisking around them, of which they were probably blissfully unconscious. Sometimes, however, peasants do see nature-spirits, as the literature of many peoples affirms.

One method of developing etheric sight is by utilising the imagination. An endeavour is made to "imagine" what the inside of a physical object, such as a closed box, would be like, i.e., to "guess" with an effort of strained attention, trying to see that which by ordinary sight could not be seen. After many attempts it is said that the "guessing" becomes more frequently correct than the theory of probability would demand, and presently the man begins actually to see etherically that which at first he only imagined. It is said that this practice is followed by the Zuni tribe of American Red Indians (see *Service Magazine*, April, 1925, article by Beatrice Wood).

Great numbers of people, if they will take the trouble to look, under suitable conditions of light, can see the mesmeric fluid, i.e., the nerve-ether, as it streams from the hands of the mesmerist. Baron Reichenbach, in the middle of the nineteenth century, records that he found over sixty persons able to see these emanations, and some could see also a somewhat similar emanation proceeding from physical magnets, from crystals, and from a copper wire, one end of which was exposed to sunlight. The observers were usually shut up in a dark room for some hours in order to make the retina more sensitive.

It is reported that some French scientists, who could not normally see the N Rays, became able to do so after sitting in darkness for three or four hours.

We may here note that N Rays are due to vibrations in the Etheric Double, causing waves in the surrounding ether. The student will recollect that N Rays are given off by animals, flowers and metals, but that all alike, when under the influence of chloroform, cease to emit them. They are also never emitted by a corpse. It will also be recollected that anaesthetics – such as chloroform – expel etheric matter from the physical body (see p. 5), thus of course preventing the emanation of the Rays.

A full and controlled possession of etheric sight enables a man to see through physical matter: a brick wall, for example, seems to have the consistency of a light mist: the contents of a closed box could be accurately described and a sealed letter read: with a little practice it is also possible to find a passage in a closed book.

When the faculty is perfectly developed it is completely under control, and may be used or not used at will. It is said to be easy to change from ordinary to etheric vision as to alter the focus of the eyes – the change being in reality a focusing of consciousness.

The earth is transparent to etheric vision to a certain extent, so that a man can see to a considerable depth, much as in fairly clear water. A creature burrowing underground could thus be seen, or a vein of coal or metal could be seen, if not too far below the surface. The medium through which we are looking is thus not perfectly transparent.

Bodies of men and animals are, in the main, transparent, so that the action of the internal organs can be seen, and to some extent disease may be diagnosed in this manner.

Etheric sight makes visible many entities, such as the lower orders of nature-spirits, which have etheric bodies: in this class are nearly all the fairies, gnomes and brownies, of which many stories are told in the highlands of Scotland, Ireland and other countries.

There is a class of beautiful fairies with etheric bodies who live upon the surface of the earth, and who have come up the ladder of evolution through grasses and cereals, ants and bees,

and tiny nature-spirits. After their time as etheric fairies they become salamanders or fire-spirits, then sylphs or air-spirits, and later still they pass into the kingdom of the angels.

The forms of fairies are many and various, but most frequently human in shape and somewhat diminutive in size, usually with a grotesque exaggeration of some particular feature or limb. Etheric matter being plastic and readily moulded by the power of thought, they are able to assume almost any appearance at will, but, nevertheless, they have definite forms of their own which they wear when they have no special reason for taking any other.

In order to take a form other than his own a fairy must conceive it clearly and keep his mind fixed upon it : as soon as his thought wanders he will at once resume his natural appearance.

Etheric matter does not obey the power of thought as instantaneously as does astral matter. We might say that mental matter changes *with* the thought, astral matter so quickly after that the ordinary observer can scarcely note any difference, but with etheric matter one's vision can follow the growth or diminution without difficulty. An astral sylph *flashes* from one shape to another ; an etheric fairy swells or decreases quickly, but *not* instantaneously.

There are also limits, though wide ones, within which a fairy can alter his size. Thus a fairy naturally 12 inches high might expand himself to 6 feet high, but only with a considerable strain which he could not maintain for more than a few minutes.

One of the streams of evolving life, after leaving the mineral kingdom, instead of passing into the vegetable kingdom, assumes etheric vehicles, which inhabit the interior of the earth, living actually within solid rock, which offer no impediment to their motion or their vision. At a later stage, though still inhabiting the solid rock, they live close to the surface of the earth, and the more developed of them can occasionally detach themselves from it for a short time. These gnomes, which have sometimes been seen, and perhaps more frequently heard, in caves or mines, become visible either by materialising themselves by drawing around them a veil of physical matter, or, of course by the spectator becoming temporarily etherically clairvoyant. They would be seen more frequently than they are,, were it not for the rooted objection to the proximity of human beings which they share with all but the lowest types of nature-spirits.

Some of the lower types of etheric nature-spirits are not pleasing to the aesthetic sense. There are shapeless masses with huge red gaping mouths, which live upon the loathsome etheric emanations of blood and decaying flesh ; rapacious red-brown crustacean creatures which hover over houses of ill-fame; and savage octopus-like monsters which gloat over the orgies of the drunkard and revel in the fumes of alcohol.

The entities posing or accepted as tribal deities, for whom blood sacrifices are made, or food, preferably of flesh, is burnt, are very low-grade creatures, possessing etheric bodies, for it is only through etheric bodies that they can absorb physical fumes and derive either nourishment or pleasure from them.

The stories told of ointments and drugs which, when applied to the eyes, enable a man to see the fairy people have a basis in truth. No anointing of the eyes could open the astral vision, though, if rubbed over the whole body, some ointments assist the astral body to leave the physical in full consciousness. But the application to the physical eyes might stimulate etheric sight.

Etheric sight would of course make the Etheric Doubles of men visible : these doubles would often be seen hovering over newly made graves : at séances etheric matter could be seen oozing from the left side of the medium, and one could perceive the various ways in which the communicating entities make use of it.

Etheric sight makes visible several entirely new colours, quite different from those in the spectrum, as we know it, and therefore indescribable in words we use at present. In some cases these other colours are combined with colours that we know, so that two surfaces which to ordinary eyes appear to match perfectly would appear different to etheric sight.

For the chemist a whole fresh world would come under observation, and he could deal with ethers as he now deals with liquids or gases.

There are, belonging to the mineral kingdom, many etheric substances, the existence of which is unknown to Western science. Even the bodies of men, in the First Round, were constructed of etheric matter only, and resembled vague, drifting and almost shapeless clouds.

Etheric sight would inform us of the healthiness or otherwise of our surroundings, and we should be able to detect disease germs or other impurities.

The beneficial effects of travel are partially due to the change of the etheric and astral influences connected with each place and district. Ocean, mountain, forest or waterfall –each has its own special type of life, astral and etheric as well as visible, and, therefore its own special set of impressions and influences. Many of the unseen entities are pouring out vitality, and in any case the vibrations which they radiate, awaken unaccustomed portions of men's Etheric Doubles, and of their astral and mental bodies, the effect being like that of exercising muscles which are not ordinarily called into activity – somewhat tiring at the time, yet distinctly healthy and desirable in the long run. Such amusements as rowing for example, or swimming, especially in the sea, are of especial value, for the reasons named.

There is a basis of truth in the tradition that it is strengthening to sleep under a pine tree with the head to the north, for the magnetic currents flowing over the surface of the earth, by steady gentle pressure, gradually comb out the entanglements and strengthen the particles both of the astral body and of the Etheric Double, and thus give rest and calm. The radiations of the pine tree make the man sensitive to the magnetic currents, and, in addition, the tree is constantly throwing off vitality in that special condition in which it is easiest for man to absorb it.

There is a kind of magnetic tide, and outflow and back-flow of magnetic energy between the sun and earth, the turning points of which are at noon and midnight.

The great etheric currents which are constantly sweeping over the surface of the earth from pole to pole possess a volume which makes their power as irresistible as that of the rising tide, and there are methods by which this stupendous force may be safely utilised, though unskilful attempts to control it would be fraught with danger. It is also possible to use the tremendous force of etheric pressure.

In addition, by changing matter from a grosser to a subtler kind the vast store of potential energy which lies dormant may be liberated and utilised, somewhat as latent heat-energy may be liberated by a change of condition of visible matter.

A reversal of the above process enables one to change matter from the etheric to the solid condition, and thus to produce a "materialisation" phenomenon.

This faculty is sometimes employed in cases of emergency, where a man in his astral body, an "invisible helper", is in need of means of acting on physical matter. The faculty demands considerable power of sustained concentration, and the mind must not be taken off for one half-second, or the matter of the materialised form will instantly fly back into its original condition.

The reason why a physical object, after being reduced to the etheric condition, can afterwards be restored to its former shape, is that the elemental essence is retained in the same shape, and when the will-force is removed the essence acts as a mould which the

solidifying particles re-aggregate. If however, a solid object be raised to a gaseous condition by heat, the elemental essence which informed the object would be dissipated – not because the essence itself can be affected by heat, but because when its temporary body is destroyed as a solid, it pours back into the great reservoir of such essence, much as a man's higher principles, though entirely unaffected by heat and cold, are yet forced out of a physical body when the latter is destroyed by fire.

Means must then be employed to reduce a physical object to etheric condition, and then to move it from one place to another, even through solid matter, such as a brick wall, by an astral current, with great rapidity. As soon as the disintegrating force is withdrawn, the matter is forced by the etheric pressure into its original condition.

When a man becomes etherically sensitive, in addition to sight, in most cases a corresponding change would at the same time take place in the other senses. Thus it is claimed by astrologers that planetary influences, by expanding or congesting the etheric atmosphere, make the conditions for meditation respectively more or less favourable.

**Incense** is said to act on the etheric body somewhat as colours do on the astral body, and so may be employed to bring a man's vehicles rapidly into harmony. It appears that certain odours may be used to act on various parts of the brain.

The effect of etheric sight is quite different from that of astral sight. In the case of astral sight an entirely new element is introduced, often described as that of a fourth dimension. With such vision, for example, a cube would be seen as though it were all flattened out, all its sides being equally visible as well as every particle within it.

With etheric sight, however, one merely sees *through* objects, and the thickness of matter through which one is looking makes a great difference to the clearness of the sight. Such considerations have no effect whatever on astral vision.

The word "throughth" used by W.T. Stead in referring to four-dimensional sight, is a perfect description, not of astral, but of etheric vision.

Etheric sight can also be used for purposes of magnification. The method is to transfer impressions from the etheric matter of the retina direct to the etheric brain: the attention is focused in one or more etheric particles, and thus is obtained a similarity of size between the organ employed and some minute object being observed.

A commoner method, though one demanding higher development, is to project a flexible tube of etheric matter from the centre of the chakram between the eyebrows, having one atom at its end which serves as a lens. Such an atom must have all its seven spirillae fully developed. The atom can be expanded or contracted at will. This power belongs to the causal body, so that when an etheric atom forms the lens a system of reflecting counterparts must be introduced.

By a further extension of the same power, the operator, by focusing his consciousness in the lens, can project it to distant points.

The same power, by a different arrangement, can be used for diminishing purposes, this giving a vision of something too large to be taken in at once by ordinary vision.

This power was symbolised by a small snake projecting from the centre of the forehead in the head-dress of the Pharaoh of Egypt.

Much of the clairvoyance shown by dead people at a spiritualistic séance, enabling them to read passages out of a closed book, is of the etheric type.

One of the varieties of telepathy is etheric, and may take either of two forms. In the first an etheric image is made which can be seen by a clairvoyant; in the second the etheric waves,

which the creation of the image generates, radiate out and, striking upon another etheric brain, tend to reproduce in it the same image.

The organ in the brain for thought transference, both transmitting and receiving, is the pineal gland. If any one thinks intently on an idea, vibrations are set up in the ether which permeates the gland, thereby causing a magnetic current, which gives rise to a slight quiver or creeping feeling. This feeling indicates that the thought is clear and strong enough to be capable of transmission. With most people the pineal gland is not yet fully developed, as it will be in the course of evolution.

There is known to occult students a process by which rays of light may be bent, so that after passing round an object they may resume exactly their former course. This would, of course, make the object round which the rays were bent invisible to ordinary sight. It may be surmised that this phenomenon would result from a power to manipulate the particular form of etheric matter which is the medium for the transmission of light.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### MAGNETISATION OF OBJECTS

A man may employ his magnetism or vital fluid not only for mesmerising or healing other persons, but he may also use it to impregnate physical objects in a somewhat similar manner. Any object, in fact, which has been in close contact with an individual will absorb that individual's magnetism, and consequently will tend to reproduce in the person who wears it something of the same state of feeling or thought with which it is charged. This, of course, is part of the rationale of talismans, charms and reliques, as well as of the feelings of devotion and reverential awe which sometimes quite literally exude from the walls of cathedrals and churches, each stone of which is a veritable talisman, charged with the reverence and devotion of the builder, consecrated by the bishop, and reinforced by the devotional thought-forms of successive generations for thousands of years.

The process is continually at work, though few are conscious of it. Thus, for example, food tends to become charged with the magnetism of those who handle or come near it, a fact which is at the back of the strict rules which Hindus observe regarding eating food in the presence of, or which has been subjected to the magnetism of, one of the lower cast. To the occultist, magnetic purity is as important as physical cleanliness. Such food as bread and pastry are especially liable to be charged with the magnetism of the person who prepares them, owing to the fact that magnetism flows out most strongly through the hands.

Fortunately the action of fire in baking or cooking removes most kinds of physical magnetism. Some occult students, in order to prevent any avoidable mixture of magnetism, insist upon using only their own private eating utensils, and even would not permit their hair to be cut except by some one whose magnetism they approved, the head of course being the part of the body where alien magnetism would be most objectionable.

Books, especially those in a public library, tend to become loaded with all kinds of mixed magnetism.

Precious stones, being the highest development of the mineral kingdom, have very great power of receiving and retaining impressions. Many jewels are saturated with feelings of envy and greed and, in the case of some of the great historical jewels, are impregnated with physical and other emanations associated with crimes that have been committed in order to possess them. Such jewels retain these impressions unimpaired for thousands of years, so that psychometers may see around them pictures of indescribable horror. For this reason, most occultists would discourage the wearing of jewels, as a general rule.

On the other hand, gems may be powerful reservoirs of good and desirable influence. Thus, for example, the Gnostic gems employed at Initiation ceremonies two thousand years ago

retain even to this day powerful magnetic influence. Some Egyptian scarabœi are still effective, though much older even than the Gnostic gems.

Money, in the form of coins and notes, is frequently charged with highly unpleasant magnetism. Not only does it become charged with a great mixture of different kinds of magnetism, but it is, in addition, surrounded by the thoughts and feelings of those who have handled it. The disturbing and irritating effect of such emanations on astral and mental bodies has been compared to that produced by the bombardment of radium emanations on the physical body. The worst offenders are copper and bronze coins, and old and dirty bank notes. Nickel is less receptive of evil influences than copper, while silver and gold are better still in this respect.

Bedding affords another example of physical objects absorbing and emanating magnetic influence, many people having observed that unpleasant dreams may often be caused by sleeping on a pillow which has been used by a person of unpleasant character. If wool is used of bedding or clothing, it is better not to let it touch the skin, owing to it being saturated with animal influence.

The method of deliberately manufacturing a talisman is, first thoroughly to cleanse the object of its present etheric matter by passing it through a film of etheric matter which has been created for the purpose by an effort of will. The old etheric matter or magnetism having been thus removed, the ordinary ether of the surrounding atmosphere replaces it; for there is an etheric pressure somewhat corresponding to, though immensely greater than, atmospheric pressure.

A similar process is then effected for astral and mental matter, the object thus becoming, as it were, a clean sheet on which one may write as one wills. The operator then, placing his right hand on the object, fills himself with the particular qualities which he wishes to convey to the talisman, and wills that those qualities shall flow into it. An experienced occultist can perform the whole process almost instantaneously by a strong effort of will, but others will need to spend more time on it.

The above would constitute one of the class of *General* talismans. An *Adapted* talisman is one specially charged to meet the requirements of a particular individual – almost like an individual prescription, rather than a general tonic. An *Ensouled* talisman is one designed to continue as a source of radiation for centuries. There are two varieties. In one there is placed in the talisman a fragment of a higher mineral, which throws out a ceaseless stream of particles. These particles become charged with the force stored in the talisman, the actual work of distribution being done by the mineral, thereby greatly economising energy.

The second variety is one in which the ingredients are so arranged as to make it a means of manifestation of one of certain classes of undeveloped nature-spirits, these latter providing the force necessary for the dissemination of the influence. Such talismans may last for thousands of years, to the intense delight of the nature-spirit, and the great benefit of all who approach the magnetised centre.

A *Linked* talisman is one so magnetised as to bring it in close *rapport* with its maker, so that it becomes a kind of outpost of his consciousness. The wearer of the talisman could thus through his link send a cry for help to its builder, or the builder could direct a stream of influence through it to the wearer. Such a talisman would facilitate what Christian Scientists call “absent treatment”.

In rare cases a physical talisman may be connected with the causal body of an Adept, as was done with those talismans buried in various countries by Apollonius of Tyana, about 1,900 years ago, in order that the force which they radiated might prepare those places to be the centres of great events in the future. Some of those centres have already been utilised,

others are to be employed in the immediate future in connection with the work of the coming Christ.

Great shrines are usually erected on the spot where some holy man lived, where some great event, such as an Initiation, took place, or where there is a relic of a great person. In any of these cases, a powerful magnetic centre of influence has been created which will persist for thousands of years. Even if the "relic" does not happen to be a very powerful one, or is not even genuine, the centuries of devotional feeling poured out upon it by the hosts of visitors would make the place an active centre for beneficent radiation. The influence of all such places on visitors and pilgrims is unquestionably good.

It has already been mentioned that precious stones are naturally suited to be made into talismans or amulets. The rudraksha berry, used frequently for necklaces in India, is eminently adapted for magnetisation where spiritual thought or meditation is required and disturbing influences are to be kept away. The beads made from the tulsi plant are another example, though the influence they give is of a somewhat different character. An interesting set of talismans are those objects which produce strong scents. The gums of which incense is made, for example, can be chosen so as to be favourable to spiritual and devout thought. It is also possible so to combine ingredients as to produce the opposite effect, as was sometimes done by mediaeval witches.

A trained occultist makes a regular practice of charging many things which pass from him to others with beneficent influences : such, for example, as letters, books, or presents. By a single effort of will he may charge even a typed letter far more effectively than it would be unconsciously charged when written by hand by some one not familiar with these truths.

Similarly a trained occultist, by a mere wave of the hand, coupled with a strong thought, may almost instantaneously demagnetise food, clothing, bedding, rooms, etc. Such demagnetisation, while removing magnetism which has been externally impressed, would not affect the innate magnetism of objects, such, for example, as the inherently unpleasant vibrations of dead flesh, which even cooking could not destroy.

The process of demagnetising rooms, etc., may be facilitated by the burning of incense or pastilles, or by sprinkling water, the incense and water being first passed through the process recommended for making talismans.

It should also be born in mind that as physical matter in man is in exceedingly close touch with the astral and mental, coarseness and grossness in the physical vehicle almost necessarily imply a corresponding condition in the other vehicles : hence the great importance to the occultist of physical as well as magnetic or etheric cleanliness.

The "holy water" used in certain Christian churches affords a clear example of magnetisation, water being very readily charged with magnetism. The instructions given in the Roman rite make it quite evident that the priest is required, first, to "exorcise" the salt and water, i.e., to cleanse them from all objectionable influences, and then, making the sign of the cross, he is directed to "bless" the elements, i.e., to pour his own magnetism into them, his will being directed to the purpose of driving away all evil thoughts and feelings.

It is worth nothing that salt contains chlorine, a "fiery" element, and hence the combination of water, the great solvent, with fire the great consumer, is highly effective as a cleansing agency.

Precisely similar ideas underlie many other ceremonies in the Christian Church : such as baptism, in which the water is blessed and the sign of the cross made over it ; the consecration of churches and burial grounds, of the vessels of the altar, the vestments of the priests, bells, incense ; confirmation, the ordination of priests and consecration of bishops.

In the Eucharist, the wine has a very powerful influence upon the higher astral levels, while the water sends out even etheric vibrations.

At baptism, in the Liberal Catholic Church, the priest makes the sign of the cross over the forehead, throat, heart and solar plexus of the child. This has the effect of opening up these etheric chakrams, so that they grow to, perhaps, the size of a crown piece, and begin to sparkle and whirl as they do in grown-up people.

In addition, the magnetised water, as it touches the forehead, sets violently in vibration the etheric matter, stimulates the brain, and through the pituitary body affects the astral body, and through that the mental body.

Later the priest, by anointing the top of the head with chrism, makes the chakram there serve as a kind of sieve, which rejects the coarser feelings, influences or particles, and also, by an effort of will, he closes the four centres which have been opened.

At confirmation, the effect which has been produced on the âtmic principle is reflected into the Etheric Double.

At the ordination of the priest, it is intended to clear the way between the higher principles and the physical brain. The blessing floods the etheric brain, and is meant to run up through the pituitary body, which is the point of closest junction between the dense physical, the etheric and the astral.

The anointing of the head of the bishop with chrism is intended so to act on the brahmaṇḍa chakram that, instead of the usual saucer-like depression, it becomes more like a projecting cone, such as is often seen in statues of the Lord Buddha.

The ordination of the cleric is intended principally to act on the etheric body, that of the doorkeeper on the astral, that of the reader or lector on the mental, and that of the exorcist on the causal body. The exorcist is helped at his ordination to strengthen his power of healing.

There seems to have been an old custom – out of which has arisen the present Roman method of anointing the organs of the senses – of sealing all the chakrams in the body of a dying man, lest objectionable entities should seize upon that body as the owner left it and employ it for purposes of evil magic.

It is probable that many nervous affections could be helped by anointing with consecrated oil, and etheric disease might well be cured by means of “Unction”.

In a Bishop's crozier, in the knob of which the consecrated jewels are placed, the etheric energy which radiates from the jewels is the outermost and the most prominent – so prominent in fact that it would not be surprising if physical cures could be affected by its touch.

Mediaeval alchemists also employed somewhat similar methods in their use of magnetised swords, drugs, etc. In the Ancient Mysteries, the thrysus was a powerfully magnetised instrument, which was laid against the spinal cord of the candidate, giving him in that way some of the magnetism with which it was charged.

## CHAPTER XXIV

### ECTOPLASM

ECTOPLASM (from the Greek *ektos*, outside, and *plasma*, mould, i.e., that which is moulded *outside* the human body) is a name given to the matter, mainly if not wholly etheric, which exudes from a medium, and is employed for séance-room phenomena.

The late W.J.Crawford, D.Sc., in his books (*The Reality of Psychic Phenomena* (1916), *Experiments in the Psychical Science* (1918), *Psychic Structures* (1921) ), describes the painstaking and masterly researches he undertook into such phenomena as table-lifting, or "levitation", and rapping. For full details students are referred to those books, it being possible here to give a brief summary of such results as are directly pertinent to our present study.

During all the experiments the medium was fully conscious.

W.J.Crawford approached the problems of table-lifting, etc., purely as problems of mechanics ; and, by means of force-registering appliances, both mechanical and electrical, he succeeded in discovering, by deduction from his observations, the *modus operandi* of the "psychic structures" employed. At a much later stage he was able completely to verify his deductions by direct vision and by photography, as will be explained in due course.

Briefly, it was found that the ectoplasm, exuding from the medium, was prepared and shaped by the "operators" who control the production of the phenomena, into what he terms "rods". These rods or bars are attached at one end to the medium, and at the other, by suction, to table-legs or other objects, psychic force being then applied through the rods, and tables, etc., moved in various ways, without any purely physical contact with any person present. Raps and many other noises are produced by the rods striking on floor, table, a bell, etc.

By far the greater portion of the ectoplasm is usually obtained from the medium, though this is supplemented by a small portion from all, or most, of the other sitters present.

The ectoplasm can sometimes, even though quite invisible to ordinary sight, be felt. It is described as clammy, cold, reptilian, almost oily, as though the air were mixed with particles of dead and disagreeable matter.

The psychic rods issuing from the medium may vary in diameter at their extremities from  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch to 7 or 8 inches, and the free end of each rod seems able to assume various shapes and degrees of hardness. The end may be flat or convex, circular or oval ; it may be soft as the flesh of a baby, or as hard as iron. The body of the rod feels solid a few inches from the free end, but then becomes intangible, though it resists, pulls, pushes, shear and torque.

In this intangible portion, nevertheless, a flow of cold, spore-like particles can be felt, the flow being outwards from the medium. There appears to be reason to believe that in some cases, though not in levitations, there is a complete circulation of etheric matter out from the medium and back to her again at a different part of the body. The condition of the end of the rod as regards size and hardness can be varied on demand. The larger rods are usually fairly soft at the end, the smaller ones only becoming dense and hard.

W.J. Crawford considers it probable that the rods consist of a bundle of fine threads, intimately connected and adhering to one another. The psychic force passes along the threads, stiffening the whole structure into a rigid girder, which can then be moved as desired by forces applied within the body of the medium.

Certain experiments seem to indicate that the end of a rod consists of a thick and more or less elastic film or skin, stretched over a thin, somewhat serrated, elastic frame. The elasticity of the film is limited, and if too highly stressed the film may rupture, leaving the serrated frame exposed.

The fact that an electroscope can be discharged by being touched by a rod indicates that the rod acts as a conductor of high tension electricity, discharging to earth through the medium's body to which it is attached. On the other hand, a rod placed across the terminals of a bell circuit does not cause the bell to ring, thus showing that it offers high resistance to low-tension current.

White light usually destroys rod formations : even rays reflected from a surface on which psychic force is exerted interfere with the phenomena. Red light, however, if not too strong, does not appear to injure the psychic structure, neither does light emanating from luminous paint which has been exposed for some hours to sunlight.

Usually the structures are quite invisible, though occasionally glimpses of them may be obtained. The structures have been successfully photographed by flashlight, but great care must be taken not to injure the medium. The shock to the medium when the flashlight impinges on the ectoplasm is much greater when the structure is under stress than when it is not stressed.

The large number of photographs taken confirm in every detail the conclusions arrived at by deduction from the phenomena themselves.

The rigidity of a rod varies with the amount of light to which it is subjected, the hard end being, as it were, partially melted when exposed to light.

In the case of objects being moved by psychic force there are two principal methods employed. In the first, one or more rods are projected from the medium, very frequently from the feet or ankles, sometimes from the lower part of the trunk, and are attached direct to the object to be moved, thus forming cantilevers. When tables are moved horizontally, the rods would usually be attached to the table-legs ; where they are lifted into the air, the rod or rods are often spread out like a mushroom at the ends and attached to the under surface of the table.

In the second method, the rod or rods projecting from the medium are attached to the floor, and from the point of attachment they are continued to the object to be moved, thus forming no longer a cantilever but something similar to a lever of the "First Order," the Fulcrum being between the Weight and the Power.

Rods may be either straight or curved. They may also be held suspended in the air in a rigid condition, thus showing that they do not require to be pressing on material bodies in order to remain rigid.

In the case of the cantilever method, the whole of the mechanical stress is transferred to the medium ; or, more accurately, the greater portion to the medium, and a much smaller portion to the sitters. This can be ascertained by ordinary mechanical appliances, such as weighing machines and spring balances. If a table is levitated, for example, by means of a cantilever, the weight of the medium will be increased by about 95% of the weight of the table, and that of the other sitters proportionately.

When, on the other hand, the rods are attached to the floor, the weight of a levitated table is transmitted direct to the floor, and the medium's weight, instead of being increased, is decreased, the decrease being due to the weight of the ectoplasm forming the rod, one end of which rests on the floor.

When force is transmitted along a rod in order to hold an object, such as a table, firmly to the floor, the weight of the medium has been observed to be reduced by as much as 35 ½ lbs. On another occasion, when the ectoplasmic structure was not stressed, the weight of the medium has been reduced by 54 ½ lbs., nearly half the normal weight of the medium.

Cantilevers are usually employed to move or lift light objects, but for heavy objects or for the transmission of great force, the rod or rods are attached to the floor. Often a force approximating to a hundred weight is exerted.

During levitation of objects the stress on the medium is often apparent in the stiffness, and even iron-like rigidity of the muscles, principally of the arms, but also of the whole muscular system. Later in his investigations, however, W.J.Crawford found that the muscular rigidity had apparently entirely disappeared.

The production of these phenomena appears to result in a permanent loss of weight, both of mediums and sitters, but only to the extent of a few ounces. The sitters may lose more weight than the medium.

As a rule, the placing of any material object within the space occupied by a rod, immediately breaks the line of communication, destroying the rod, as a rod. A thin object, however, such as a pencil, may be passed through the vertical portion of a rod with impunity, but not through the portion between the medium and the table. Interference with this portion may cause physical injury to the medium.

In order to make it possible for a rod to touch or adhere to, e.g., a floor or table, the end of the rod has to be specially prepared, being made denser than the rest of the rod. The process appears to be troublesome, or at least to consume time and force ; consequently the gripping portions of a structure are always kept to the minimum.

The method of gripping by suction, as can easily be demonstrated by soft clay, referred to below. Sometimes the "suckers" can be heard slipping over the surface of wood, or taking new grips.

Many instances, as well as photographs, are given by W.J.Crawford, of impressions on putty or soft clay, produced by impact of rods. These impressions are often covered with marks similar to the fabric of the medium's stockings. The resemblance, however, is superficial, it being impossible to produce such impressions by actually pressing a stocking foot on to the clay. The impression made by the rod is much sharper than can be obtained by ordinary means, and is such as could be obtained if a fine viscous material were to cover the stocking fabric, to harden, and then to be pressed on the clay.

Further, the stocking marks may be greatly modified ; the delicate pattern and tracery of the threads may be distorted, thickened, partly covered over, or broken, though still remaining recognisable as that of the stocking fabric. The deduction is that the ectoplasm is at first in a state like that of a semi-liquid : that it oozes through and round the holes in the fabric and partly sets on the outside of the stocking. It is of a glutinous, fibrous nature, and takes almost the exact form of the fabric. It is then pulled off the stocking and built round the end of the rod. For a large impression, the skin is thickened and strengthened by the addition of more materialising matter, and thus the original imprint may be twisted, distorted, or partially obliterated.

Similarly, finger impressions may be made by a rod, though these may be different in size from normal ones, and may be much more clearly and regularly cut than would be possible with ordinary finger impressions.

Raps, ranging from the slightest taps to blows of sledgehammer strength, as well as many other sounds, are produced by semi-flexible rods, with suitably prepared ends, being struck against material objects. The production of raps is accompanied by decrease of the medium's weight, the amount of decrease, which may be as much as 20 lbs. – or more, being apparently directly proportional to the intensity of the rap. The reason is apparent : the rods being formed of matter from the medium's body, the striking of such matter on the floor, etc., necessarily transfers some of the medium's total weight through the rod to the floor. The loss of weight is temporary only, being restored when the material of the rods returns to the medium.

The production of raps causes a mechanical reaction on the medium, as though she were being pushed backwards or struck. This reaction may cause her to make slight motions with her feet. The stress on the medium, however, is nothing like that caused by the levitation of objects.

Heavy blows, produced by a large rod, are not usually delivered quickly. Light raps, however, usually produced by two or more thin rods, may be produced with incredible rapidity, the "operators" appearing to have great command over the rods.

In general, the production of these phenomena throws stress on all the sitters, as is apparent by spasmodic jerks, sometimes quite severe, which go round the whole circle previous to levitation. It would appear that the process of loosening and removing etheric matter from the bodies of the sitters takes place in jerks, and, to some extent, affects them altogether.

W.J.Crawford reports that an entity, purporting to have been whilst alive a medical man, and so to speak through the medium (on this occasion entranced for the purpose), stated that there are two kinds of substance used in the production of phenomena. One is taken in comparatively large quantities from the medium and sitters, all, or nearly all, being returned to them at the close of a séance. The other can be obtained only from the medium, and as it consists of the most vital material from the interior of her nerve-cells, it can be taken only in minute quantities without injury to the medium. Its structure is broken up by the phenomena, and therefore it cannot be returned to the medium. This statement has not been verified or confirmed in any way and is given purely on its merits.

W.J. Crawford devised and used with great success the "staining method" of tracing the movements of ectoplasm. Ectoplasm possessing the property of adhering strongly to such a substance as powdered carmine, the latter is placed in its path, when a coloured track will be found. By this means, it was discovered that ectoplasm issues from and returns to the lower part of the trunk of the medium. It has considerable consistency, for it has a strong tearing action on the stockings and of other clothing and will sometimes pull out whole threads, several inches long, from a stocking, carry, and deposit the same in a vessel of clay placed some distance from the medium's feet.

The ectoplasm follows a path down the legs and enters the shoes, passing between stocking and shoe, wherever there is space. If it has picked up dye on its way it will deposit this at any place where foot, stocking and shoe are in close contact, i.e., where there is not sufficient room for it to pass.

The solidification, as well as the de-materialisation, of the hard end of a rod is effected immediately the rod issues from the medium's body. For this reason, the free end of the rod, unless it be one of the thinnest, cannot penetrate closely woven cloth, or even wire netting of 1 inch mesh, if placed more than an inch or two in front of the medium. If such screens, however, are very close to the medium's body, an imperfect materialisation of the end of the rod may take place and limited psychic phenomena may occur.

The evolution of ectoplasm from the body of a medium is accompanied by strong muscular movements all over the body, and the fleshy parts of the body, especially from the waist downwards, become reduced in size, as though the flesh had caved in.

W.J. Crawford is convinced that in the production of séance-room phenomena there are at least two substances employed : (1) a component, forming the basic part of the psychic structure, which is invisible, impalpable, and generally outside the range of physical things altogether, and (2) a whitish, transparent, nebulous substance, mixed with (1) in order to enable (1) to act on physical matter ; (2) he considers, is in all probability identical with the material used in materialisation phenomena.

Many phenomena of materialisation are described, with that scrupulous and minute attention to detail so characteristic of German investigators, in a large work entitled *Phenomena of Materialisation*, by Baron von Schrenck Notzing (1913), and translated by E.E. Fournier d'Albe, D.Sc.(1920).

In addition, to elaborate descriptions of large numbers of séances and phenomena, there are given some 200 photographs of materialised forms, or apparitions of many kinds, ranging

from threads or masses of ectoplasm to fully-formed faces. The main conclusions may be epitomised as follows. These are taken largely, for convenience, from a lecture on "Supra-normal Physiology and the Phenomena of Ideoplastics," by Dr. Gustave Geley, a Paris psychologist and physician, which is printed at the end of baron Notzing's book.

From the body of the medium there emanates a substance which at first is amorphous or polymorphous. It may appear as ductile dough, a true protoplasmic mass, a kind of shaking jelly, simple lumps, thin threads, cords, narrow rigid rays, a broad band, a membrane, fabric, woven material or net with fringes and rucks.

The thread – or fibre-like nature of the substance has frequently been observed.

It maybe white, black or grey, sometimes all three appearing together : white is perhaps the most frequent. It appears to be luminous.

Usually it seems to be odourless, though sometimes it may have a peculiar smell, impossible to describe. There seems no doubt that it is subject to the influence of gravity.

To the touch, it may be moist and cold, viscous and sticky, more rarely dry and hard. When expanded it is soft and slightly elastic, when formed as cords it is hard, knotty and fibrous. It may feel like a spider's web passing over the hand : the threads are both rigid and elastic. It is mobile, with a creeping, reptilian motion, though sometimes it moves suddenly and quickly. A draught may set it in motion. Touching it produces a painful reaction on the medium. It is extremely sensitive and appears and disappears with lightning rapidity. It is usually sensitive to light, though sometimes the phenomena will withstand full daylight. Flashlight photographs of it can be taken, though the flash acts like a sudden blow on the medium.

During the production of the phenomena the cabinet, containing the medium, is usually in darkness, but the curtains are frequently drawn aside, and outside the cabinet, red light is used, and sometimes even white light up to 100 candlepower.

The substance has an irresistible tendency towards organisation. It assumes many forms, sometimes indefinite and non-organised, but most frequently organic. Fingers, including nails, all perfectly modelled, complete hands, faces, and other shapes may be formed.

The substance emanates from the whole body of the medium, but especially from the natural orifices and extremities, from the top of the head, the breasts, and the fingertips. The most usual origin, and most easily observed, is the mouth, the inner surface of the cheeks, the gums and the roof.

The materialised forms have a certain independence, a hand, for example, being able to move its fingers and grasp the hand of the observer, though sometimes the human skin seems to repel the phantoms. The structures are sometimes smaller than in nature, being really miniatures. The back of the materialisations has been observed to be without organic form, being merely a mass of amorphous substance, the forms containing a minimum of substance necessary to make them appear real. The forms may disappear very gradually, fading away, or almost instantaneously. During the whole time it is clear that the forms are in physiological and psychical connection with the medium, the sensation reflex of the structures coalescing with that of the medium. Thus, a pin inserted into the substance would cause pain to the medium.

It seems that the substance can be influenced both by the general direction and the subject-matter of the thoughts of the sitters. In addition, the medium usually in the hypnotic state, is exceedingly open to the influence of suggestion.

Pieces of materialised forms have been seized in a porcelain dish and retained. On one occasion, when examined afterwards, two pieces of skin were found which, under the microscope, were recognised as human. On another occasion, 3 or 4 c.c. of a transparent liquid, without air bubbles, were found. Analysis revealed a colourless, slightly turbid, non-

viscous, odourless liquid, slightly alkaline, with a whitish precipitate. The microscope disclosed the components of cell detritus and saliva, the substance evidently originating from the mouth. On yet another occasion, a bundle of hair, not in any way resembling the darker hair of the medium, was found, the hand of the observer being covered with mucus and moisture. In addition, fragments of other substances are sometimes found, such as face powder or shreds of the medium's clothing.

## CHAPTER XXV

### CONCLUSION

Considerable as is the total of information at present available regarding man's etheric body and etheric phenomena in general, nevertheless, the serious student will at once perceive that the field for future research is vastly greater than the fragments of it which have so far been explored.

In view of the intimate bearing which the structure, nourishment and health of the etheric body have on physical health, and on the functioning, not only of the physical body, but also of the other bodies in their connection with the physical, it is abundantly evident that research into every class of etheric phenomena should lead to discoveries of great scientific interest and beneficent import to man.

A number of methods of conducting such research is open to us. First, we have the method of direct clairvoyant observation, at different levels, it being probable, in view of the rapid development of certain sections of the human race at the present time, that large numbers of persons will find themselves, in the not distant future, in possession of etheric faculties.

In addition to etheric faculties, normally unfolded in the ordinary course of evolution, Dr. Kilner's line of work appears to indicate that these faculties may be stimulated by the use of screens, such as he employed, and possibly by other physical means yet to be devised. Both mesmerism and hypnotism might also, with adequate safeguards, be employed to make available latent etheric faculty. The use of photography may in the future become very extensive and important, the salts used in the photographic plate being sensitive to wavelengths and degrees of light beyond the reach of the normal eye. A further method of research, using ultraviolet light, also offers great promise. A laboratory for this purpose has recently been opened at Leeds through the initiative and farseeing enterprise of some members of the Theosophical Society in that town.

The methods employed by W.J. Crawford may well be pursued by other workers, and additions thus be made to the exceedingly valuable results obtained by the able investigator named.

As to the desirability of utilising the séance room for obtaining such materialisation phenomena as those obtained, e.g., By Baron von Notzing, there is likely to be divergence of opinion. It is fairly generally admitted that phenomena of this nature may easily be highly injurious to the medium, both physically and in other ways, and there is also something distinctly unsavoury about the materialisations produced by these means. On the other hand, it may be urged that if mediums are willing to sacrifice themselves in the cause of science, science is justified in accepting such sacrifices; and, further, that science as such has no concern with the savouriness, or otherwise, of natural phenomena. It seems fairly certain, however, that the highest spiritual teachers of the present day do not look with favour on the séance-room. Yet it may be argued that in other ages the use of vestal virgins, soothsayers, "prophets" and other mediums, received the sanction and approval of high authorities. The present writer, therefore, refrains from offering any dogmatic conclusion on this point.

The possibility of utilising knowledge of etheric phenomena for purposes of healing would appear to be almost limitless. For many cases of disease, physical, emotional and mental,

the employment of vital or magnetic healing, and also mesmerism and hypnotism, would seem to be in line with the general progress of thought in this direction. In particular, the use of mesmerism to produce anæsthesia for surgical or other purposes, in place of ether, gas, or chloroform, would appear to possess many recommendations.

It may also be surmised that the science of Osteopathy, in conjunction with the study of the force-centres and the flow of vitality in the human body, should lead to valuable results.

The remarkable discoveries of Dr. Abrams, which appear to have been accepted, at least partially, by the medical profession, would seem to be capable of conferring almost incalculable benefit on the disease ridden human race of today. Although it is not -, the present writer believes, rigidly proved, yet it would appear to be almost certain that the methods employed in the Abrams system act, directly or indirectly, on and through the etheric body.

The recent revival of healing by various Christian churches would also seem to have a great future, and there can be little doubt that such methods, while far from being wholly physical, yet do work, to some extent, through etheric matter.

The possibility of utilising our knowledge of etheric phenomena extends, however, even further afield than is roughly indicated above. Thus it seems more than probable that an important, and hitherto almost unrecognised, factor in the treatment of disease and the preservation of health would derive from the etheric, apart from the purely physical properties of drugs, waters, gases, the air, emanations of soils and minerals, fruit, flowers and trees. It is possible in the future that we may discover health resorts, either on land, lake or sea, which depend for their curative powers on their etheric properties.

The attention which has recently been devoted to the wider use of sunlight obviously has a close bearing on what we know concerning the emanations of Prâna from the sun, and its diffusion in the atmosphere, and its absorption by living beings.

It may be that further knowledge of etheric and vital phenomena may lead to a profound change of attitude towards the use in medicine and dietetics of substances which have passed through, or are derived from, animal organisms.

It is a reasonable conjecture that those elusive substances known as vitamins may owe their beneficent properties to the presence in them, in one form or another of Prâna, or possibly to the quality of the etheric matter they contain.

A recognition of the fact that the vitality of the body is derived, not from food, but direct from the atmosphere, may well lead to a radical change in the dietetic treatment of sick persons, and also to a much greater use of fasting as a curative energy. Those who are familiar with the literature of fasting will no doubt be aware that several writers on this interesting subject have already deduced from actual observation that the connection between assimilation of food and the acquirement of vital energy is very far from being simple or direct.

It is now generally recognised that the use of electricity for curative purposes has not fulfilled all that was at first hoped for it. It may be that a deeper knowledge of etheric phenomena will be of assistance in devising better methods of utilising electricity for curative purposes : the association of electricity with etheric matter ( of which the Etheric Double is composed) is a phenomenon which may thus be turned to valuable account.

In fact, it would scarcely be too much to say, that in the future the etheric body, being the habitat, so to say, of the life-principle in its physical aspect, may receive as much attention as, or even more than, is now given to the material physical body. The utilisation eventually, of energy associated with the physical ether, for many purposes, is obvious, and needs no insistence here. The student of occultism, however, will recollect the warning that men will not be permitted to release the almost incalculable forces latent in atomic matter until it is

assured that such forces will be used beneficently, and not for the purposes of destruction, as has unfortunately happened in the case of so many discoveries in the past.

It is further evident that the discovery of the etheric grades of matter will open up new vistas in chemistry and physics, and may even be turned to useful account in the production of food substances of all kinds, of electrical conductors or insulators, materials for clothing , and many other substances used in daily life.

Finally, both on its own intrinsic account and also as a steppingstone to knowledge of even higher things, a recognition by orthodox scientists of the existence of the etheric body, and a study of its constitution and behaviour – both of which we venture to think cannot now be long delayed – may prove a firm foundation on which may be raised a vast superstructure of knowledge of ultra-physical things. For (to adapt and abridge the closing paragraphs of the *Idyll of the White Lotus* ), that which is to come is grander, more majestically mysterious, than the past. By slow and imperceptible progress, the teachers of men drink their life from purer sources, and take their message more directly from the soul of existence. Life has in it more than the imagination of men can conceive. The real blossom of life grows above the stature of man, and its bulb drinks deep from the river of life. In the heart of that flower man will read the secrets of the controlling forces of the physical plane, and will see, written within it, the science of mystic strength. He will learn how to expound spiritual truths, and to enter into the life of his highest self, and he can learn also how to hold within him the glory of that higher self, and yet to retain life upon this planet so long as it shall last, if need be ; to retain life in the vigour of manhood, till his entire work is completed, and he has taught to all who look for light these three truths :-

1. The soul of man is immortal, and its future is the future of a thing whose growth and splendour has no limit.
2. The principle which gives life is in us and without us, is undying and eternally beneficent, is not heard or seen or smelt, but is perceived by the man who desires perception.
3. Each man is his absolute lawgiver, the dispenser of glory or gloom to himself ; the decreer of his life, his reward, his punishment.

These truths, which are as great as life itself, are as simple as the simplest mind of man. Let the food of knowledge be given to all those who are hungry for it.

# THE ASTRAL BODY AND OTHER ASTRAL PHENOMENA

by *Arthur A. Powell*

The Theosophical Publishing House, London, England; Wheaton, Ill., U.S.A.;  
Adyar, Chennai, India

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## DEDICATION

This book is dedicated with gratitude and appreciation to all those whose  
painstaking labour  
and researches have provided the materials out of which it has been compiled

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"To know man is to know God.  
To know God is to know man.  
To study the universe is to learn both God and man;  
for the universe is the expression of the Divine Thought,  
and the universe is mirrored in man.  
Knowledge is necessary if the SELF would become free  
and know Itself as Itself alone."

Annie Besant

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## **PUBLISHER'S PREFACE**

THE author's purpose in compiling the books in this series was to save students much time and labour by providing a condensed synthesis of the considerable literature on the respective subjects of each volume, coming mostly from the pens of Annie Besant and C. W. Leadbeater. The accompanying list shows the large number of books from which he drew. So far as possible, the method adopted was to explain the form side first, before the life side: to describe the objective mechanism of phenomena and then the activities of consciousness that are expressed through the mechanism. There is no attempt to prove or even justify any of the statements. Marginal references give opportunity to refer to the sources.

The works of H. P. Blavatsky were not used because the author said that the necessary research in The Secret Doctrine and other writings would have been too vast a task for him to undertake. He added: "The debt to H. P. Blavatsky is greater than could ever be indicated by quotations from her monumental

volumes. Had she not shown the way in the first instance, later investigators might never have found the trail at all."

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## INTRODUCTION

THE purpose of this book is to present to the student of Theosophy a condensed synthesis of the information at present available concerning the Astral Body of man, together with a description and explanation of the astral world and its phenomena. The book is thus a natural sequel of *The Etheric Double and Allied Phenomena* published in 1925.

As in the case of *The Etheric Double*, the compiler has consolidated the information obtained from a large number of books, a list of which is given, arranging the material, which covers a vast field and is exceedingly complex, as methodically as lay within his power. It is hoped that by this means present and future students of the subject will be saved much labour and research, being able not only to find the information they require presented in a comparatively small compass, but also, with the help of the marginal references, to refer, should they so desire, to the original sources of information.

In order that the book may fulfil its purpose by being kept within reasonable dimensions, the general plan followed has been to expound the principles underlying astral phenomena, omitting particular examples or instances. Lecturers and others who wish specific illustrations of the principles enunciated, will find the marginal references useful as a clue to the places where the examples they seek may be found.

Again, so far as the complexities and ramifications of the subject permit, the method has been to explain the *form* side first, before the *life* side: i.e., to describe first the objective mechanism of phenomena, and then the activities of consciousness which are expressed through that mechanism. The careful student, bearing this in [Page xiv] mind, will thus recognise many passages, which at first glance might appear to be repetitive, in which the same phenomenon is described first from the point of view of the outer material form and then again later from the point of view of the spirit or consciousness.

It is hoped that the present volume may be followed by similar ones dealing with man's Mental and Causal bodies, thus completing the consolidation of all information so far available regarding man's constitution up to the Causal or Higher Mental level.

There is today a great deal of information on these and similar subjects, but it is for the most part scattered over large numbers of books. In order, therefore, to make the whole of it available for the student, whose time for intensive study is limited, such books as the present is intended to be, are (in the writer's opinion) urgently needed. "The proper study of mankind is man : " and the subject is so

vast, so absorbing, and so important that everything possible should be done to make readily accessible to all who thirst for such knowledge the whole of the information which has so far been accumulated.

Arthur E. Powell

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## CHAPTER I

### GENERAL DESCRIPTION

[Page 1] BEFORE proceeding to a detailed study of the astral body, and of phenomena associated with it, it may be useful to lay before the student a brief outline of the ground it is proposed to cover, in order to give in proper perspective a view of the whole subject and of the relative dependence of its several parts.

Briefly, the astral body of man is a vehicle, to clairvoyant sight not unlike the physical body, surrounded by an aura of flashing colours, composed of matter of an order of fineness higher than that of physical matter, in which feelings, passions, desires and emotions are expressed and which acts as a bridge or medium of transmission between the physical brain and the mind, the latter operating in the still higher vehicle — the mind-body.

While every man possesses and uses an astral body, comparatively few are conscious of its existence or can control and function in it in full consciousness. In the case of large numbers of persons it is scarcely more than an inchoate mass of astral matter, the movements and activities of which are little under the control of the man himself—the Ego. With others, however, the astral body is a well-developed and thoroughly organised vehicle, possessing a life of its own and conferring on its owner many and useful powers.

During the sleep of the physical body, an undeveloped man leads a dreamy, vague existence, in his relatively primitive astral body, remembering little or nothing [Page 2] of his sleep-life when he re-awakens in his physical body.

In the case of a developed man, however, the life in the astral body, whilst the physical body is wrapped in slumber, is active, interesting and useful, and the memory of it may, under certain conditions, be brought down into the physical brain. The life of such a man ceases to be a series of days of consciousness and nights of oblivion, becoming instead a continuous life of unbroken consciousness, alternating between the physical and the astral planes or worlds.

One of the first things a man learns to do in his astral body is to travel in it, it being possible for the astral body to move, with great rapidity, and to great distances from the sleeping physical body. An understanding of this phenomenon

throws much light on a large number of so-called "occult" phenomena, such as "apparitions" of many kinds, knowledge of places never visited physically, etc.

The astral body being *par excellence* the vehicle of feelings and emotions, an understanding of its composition and of the ways in which it operates is of considerable value in understanding many aspects of man's psychology, both individual and collective, and also provides a simple explanation of the mechanism of many phenomena revealed by modern psycho-analysis.

A clear understanding of the structure and nature of the astral body, of its possibilities and its limitations, is essential to a comprehension of the life into which men pass after physical death. The many kinds of "heavens", "hells" and purgatorial existences believed in by followers of innumerable religions, all fall naturally into place and become intelligible as soon as we understand the nature of the astral body and of the astral world.

A study of the astral body will be of assistance also in our understanding of many of the phenomena of the séance room and of certain psychic or non-physical methods of healing disease. Those who are interested [Page 3] in what is termed the fourth dimension will find also a confirmation of many of the theories which have been formulated by means of geometry and mathematics, in a study of astral world phenomena, as described by those who have observed them.

A study of the astral body of man thus takes us far afield and expands enormously a conception of life based solely on the physical world and the purely physical senses. As we proceed, we shall see that the physical senses, invaluable as they are, by no means represent the limit of what man's vehicles may teach him of the worlds in which he lives. The awakening into functioning activity of astral faculties reveals a new world within the old world and, when a man becomes able to read aright its significance, he will obtain such an expanded view of his own life, and all nature, as will reveal to him the almost limitless possibilities latent in man. From this, sooner or later but inevitably, there will come the impulse, and later the unshakable determination, to master these worlds, and himself, to rise superior to his earthly destiny, and to become an intelligent co-operator with what has been aptly termed the Supreme Will in Evolution.

We will now proceed to study, in detail, the astral body and many astral phenomena [Page 4]

## CHAPTER 2

### COMPOSITION AND STRUCTURE

ASTRAL matter exists in seven grades or orders of fineness, corresponding to the seven grades of physical matter, which are solid, liquid, gaseous, etheric, super-etheric, sub-atomic and atomic. No names for these astral states, however, having so far been devised, it is usual to describe them, either by the

number of the grade or sub-plane, the finest being Number 1, the coarsest Number 7, or by the corresponding physical grade. E.g., we speak of astral solid matter, meaning thereby the seventh or lowest variety: astral etheric matter, meaning the fourth from the finest: and so on.

Astral matter, being much finer than physical matter, interpenetrates it. Every physical atom, therefore, floats in a sea of astral matter, which surrounds it and fills every interstice in physical matter. It is of course, well known that even in the hardest substance no two atoms ever touch one another, the space between two adjacent atoms being in fact enormously larger than the atoms themselves. Orthodox physical science long ago has posited an ether which interpenetrates all known substances, the densest solid as well as the most rarefied gas; and just as this ether moves with perfect freedom between the particles of densest matter, so does astral matter interpenetrate it in turn, and moves with perfect freedom among its particles. Thus a being living in the astral world might be occupying the same space as a being living in the physical world ; yet each would be entirely unconscious of the other, and would in no way impede the free movement of the other. The student should thoroughly familiarise himself with this fundamental conception, [Page 5] as, without grasping it clearly, it is not possible to understand large numbers of astral phenomena.

The principle of interpenetration makes it clear that the different realms of nature are not separated in space, but exist about us here and now, so that to perceive and investigate them no movement in space is necessary, but only an opening within ourselves of the senses by means of which they can be perceived.

The astral world, or plane, is thus a condition of nature, rather than a locality.

It must be noted that a physical atom cannot be directly broken up into astral atoms. If the force which whirls the (approximately) fourteen thousand million " bubbles in kilon " into an ultimate physical atom be pressed back by an effort of will over the threshold of the astral plane, the atom disappears, releasing the " bubbles." The same force, working then on a higher level, expresses itself, not through one astral atom, but through a group of forty-nine such atoms.

A similar relationship, represented by the number 49, exists between the atoms of any two other contiguous planes of nature: thus an astral atom contains  $49_5$  or 282,475,249 " bubbles," a mental atom,  $49_4$  bubbles, and so on.

There is reason to believe that electrons are astral atoms. Physicists state that a chemical atom of hydrogen contains probably from 700 to 1000 electrons. Occult research asserts that a chemical atom of hydrogen contains 882 astral atoms. This may be a coincidence, but that does not seem probable.

It should be noted that ultimate physical atoms are of two kinds, male and female : in the male, force pours in from the astral world, passes through the

atom and out into the physical world : in the female, force passes in from the physical world, through the atom, and out into the astral world, thus vanishing from the physical world.

Astral matter corresponds with curious accuracy to [Page 6] the physical matter which it interpenetrates, each variety of physical matter attracting astral matter of corresponding density. Thus solid physical matter is interpenetrated by what we call solid astral matter: liquid physical by liquid astral, i.e., by matter of the sixth sub-plane : and similarly with gaseous and the four grades of etheric matter, each of which is interpenetrated by the corresponding grade of astral matter.

Precisely as it is necessary that the physical body should contain within its constitution physical matter in all its conditions, solid, liquid, gaseous and etheric, so it is indispensable that the astral body should contain particles of all the seven astral sub-planes, though, of course, the proportions may vary greatly in different cases.

The astral body of man thus being composed of matter of all seven grades, it is possible for him to experience all varieties of desire to the fullest possible extent, the highest as well as the lowest.

It is the peculiar type of response possessed by astral matter which enables the astral matter to serve as the sheath in which the Self can gain experience of *sensation*.

In addition to the ordinary matter of the astral plane, that which is known as the Third Elemental Kingdom, or simply as the Elemental Essence of the astral plane, also enters largely into the composition of man's astral body, and forms what is called the " Desire-Elemental," which we shall deal with more fully in later chapters.

Astral elemental essence consists of matter of the six lower levels of the astral plane, vivified by the Second Outpouring, from the Second Person of the Trinity. Astral matter of the highest or atomic level, similarly vivified, is known as Monadic Essence.

In an undeveloped man, the astral body is a cloudy, loosely organised, vaguely outlined mass of astral matter, with a great predominance of substances from the lower grades; it is gross, dark in colour, and dense — often so dense that the outline of the physical [Page 7] body is almost lost in it — and is thus fitted to respond to stimuli connected with the passions and appetites. In size, it extends in all directions about ten or twelve inches beyond the physical body.

In an average moral and intellectual man the astral body is considerably larger, extending about 18 inches on each side of the body, its materials are more balanced and finer in quality, the presence of the rarer kinds giving a certain luminous quality to the whole, and its outline is clear and definite.

In the case of a spiritually developed man the astral body is still larger in size and is composed of the finest particles of each grade of astral matter, the higher largely predominating.

There is so much to be said regarding the colours of astral bodies that the subject is reserved for a separate chapter. Here, however, it may be stated that in undeveloped types the colours are coarse and muddy, gradually becoming more and more luminous as the man develops emotionally, mentally and spiritually. The very name "astral," inherited from mediaeval alchemists, signifies "starry," being intended to allude to the luminous appearance of astral matter.

As already said, the astral body of a man not only permeates the physical body, but also extends around it in every direction like a cloud.

That portion of the astral body which extends beyond the limits of the physical body is usually termed the astral "aura."

Intense feeling means a large aura. It may here be mentioned that increased size of the aura is a prerequisite for Initiation, and the "Qualifications" should be visible in it. The aura naturally increases with each Initiation. The aura of the Buddha is said to have been three miles in radius.

The matter of the physical body having a very strong attraction for the matter of the astral body, it follows that by far the greater portion (about 99 per cent.) of the astral particles are compressed within the periphery of the physical body, only the remaining [Page 8] 1 per cent, filling the rest of the ovoid and forming the aura.

The central portion of the astral body thus takes the exact form of the physical body and is, in fact, very solid and definite, and quite clearly distinguishable from the surrounding aura. It is usually termed the astral *counterpart* of the physical body. The exact correspondence of the astral body with the physical, however, is merely a matter of external form, and does not at all involve any similarity of function in the various organs, as we shall see more fully in the chapter on Chakrams.

Not only man's physical body, but everything physical, has its corresponding order of astral matter in constant association with it, not to be separated from it except by a very considerable exertion of occult force, and even then only to be held apart from it as long as force is being definitely exerted to that end. In other words, every physical object has its astral counterpart. But as the astral particles are constantly moving among one another as easily as those of a physical liquid, there is no permanent association between any one physical particle and that amount of astral matter which happens at any given moment to be acting as its counterpart.

Usually the astral portion of an object projects somewhat beyond the physical

part of it, so that metals, stones, etc., are seen surrounded by an astral aura.

If some part of a man's physical body be removed, e.g., by amputation, the coherence of the living astral matter is stronger than its attraction towards the severed portion of the physical. Consequently the astral counterpart of the limb will not be carried away with the severed physical limb. Since the astral matter has acquired the habit of keeping that particular form, it will continue to retain the original shape, but will soon withdraw within the limits of the maimed form. The same phenomenon takes place in the case of a tree from which a branch has been severed. [Page 9]

In the case of an inanimate body, however, such as a chair or a basin, there is not the same kind of individual life to maintain cohesion. Consequently, when the physical object is broken the astral counterpart would also be divided.

Quite apart from the seven grades of matter, arranged in order of fineness, there is also a totally distinct classification of astral matter, according to its *type*. In Theosophical literature the degree of fineness is usually designated the *horizontal* division, and the type the *vertical* division. The types, of which there are seven, are as thoroughly intermingled as are the constituents of the atmosphere, and in every astral body there is matter of all seven types, the proportion between them showing the disposition of the man, whether he be devotional or philosophic, artistic or scientific, pragmatic or mystic.

The whole of the astral portion of our earth and of the physical planets, together with the purely astral planets of our System, make up collectively the astral body of the Solar Logos, thus showing that the old pantheistic conception was a true one.

Similarly each of the seven types of astral matter is to some extent, regarded as a whole, a separate vehicle, and may be thought of as also the astral body of a subsidiary Deity or Minister, who is at the same time an aspect of the Deity, a kind of ganglion or force-centre in Him. Hence the slightest thought, movement or alteration of any kind in the subsidiary Deity is instantly reflected in some way or other in all the matter of the corresponding type. Such psychic changes occur periodically: perhaps they correspond to in-breathing and out-breathing, or to the beating of the heart with us on the physical plane. It has been observed that the movements of the physical planets furnish a clue to the operation of the influences flowing from these changes: hence the rationale of astrological science. Hence, further, any such alteration must to some extent affect each man, in proportion to the amount of that type of matter which he [Page 10] possesses in his astral body. Thus, one change would affect the emotions, or the mind, or both, another might intensify nervous excitement and irritability, and so on. It is this proportion which determines in each man, animal, plant or mineral certain fundamental characteristics which never change — sometimes called his note, colour, or ray.

To pursue this interesting line of thought further would take us beyond the scope of this book, so the student is referred to *The Hidden Side of Things*, Vol. I, pp. 43-58.

There are seven sub-types in each type, making forty-nine sub-types in all.

The type or ray is permanent through the whole planetary scheme, so that an elemental essence (see p. 6) of type A will in due course ensoul minerals, plants and animals of type A, and from it will emerge also human beings of the same type.

The astral body slowly but constantly wears away, precisely as does the physical, but, instead of the process of eating and digesting food, the particles which fall away are replaced by others from the surrounding atmosphere. Nevertheless, the feeling of individuality is communicated to the new particles as they enter, and also the elemental essence included with each man's astral body undoubtedly feels itself a kind of entity, and acts accordingly for what it considers its own interests.[Page 11]

## CHAPTER 3

### COLOURS

To clairvoyant sight one of the principal features of an astral body consists of the colours which are constantly playing through it, these colours corresponding to, and being the expression in astral matter of feelings, passions and emotions.

All known colours, and many which are at present unknown to us, exist upon each of the higher planes of nature, but as we rise from one stage to another they become more delicate and more luminous, so that they may be described as higher octaves of colour. As it is not possible to portray these octaves physically on paper, the above facts should be borne in mind when considering the coloured illustrations of the astral body which are referred to below.

The following is a list of the principal colours and the emotions of which they are an expression:—

*Black*: in thick clouds: hatred and malice.

*Red*: deep red flashes, usually on a black ground: anger.

*A scarlet cloud* : irritability.

*Brilliant scarlet*: on the ordinary background of the aura: " noble indignation".

*Lurid and sanguinary red*: unmistakable, though not easy to describe: sensuality.

*Brown-grey* : dull, hard brown-grey: selfishness: one of the commonest colours in the astral body.

*Brown-red*: dull, almost rust-colour: avarice, usually arranged in parallel bars across the astral body.

*Greenish-brown*: lit up by deep red or scarlet flashes : jealousy. In the case of an ordinary man there is usually much of this colour present when he is "in love".

[Page 12]

*Grey*: heavy, leaden : depression. Like the brown-red of avarice, arranged in parallel lines, conveying the impression of a cage.

*Grey, livid*: a hideous and frightful hue: fear.

*Crimson*: dull and heavy: selfish love.

*Rose-colour*: unselfish love. When exceptionally brilliant, tinged with lilac : spiritual love for humanity.

*Orange*: pride or ambition. Often found with irritability.

*Yellow*: intellect: varies from a deep and dull tint, through brilliant gold, to clear and luminous lemon or primrose yellow. *Dull yellow ochre* implies the direction of faculty to selfish purposes: *clear gamboge* indicates a distinctly higher type; *primrose yellow* denotes intellect devoted to spiritual ends; *gold* indicates pure intellect applied to philosophy or mathematics.

*Green*: in general, varies greatly in its significance, and needs study to be interpreted correctly: mostly it indicates adaptability. *Grey-green*, slimy in appearance: deceit and cunning. *Emerald green*: versatility, ingenuity and resourcefulness, applied unselfishly. *Pale, luminous blue-green*: deep sympathy and compassion, with the power of perfect adaptability which only they can give. *Bright apple-green* seems always to accompany strong vitality.

*Blue*: dark and clear: religious feeling. It is liable to be tinted by many other qualities, thus becoming any shade from indigo or a rich deep violet to muddy grey-blue. *Light-blue*, such as ultramarine or cobalt: devotion to a noble spiritual ideal. A tint of *violet* indicates a mixture of affection and devotion. *Luminous lilac-blue*, usually accompanied by sparkling golden stars: the higher spirituality, with lofty spiritual aspirations.

*Ultra-violet*: higher and purer developments of psychic faculties.

*Ultra-red*: lower psychic faculties of one who dabbles in evil and selfish forms of magic.

Joy shows itself in a general brightening and radiancy [Page 13] of both mental and astral bodies, and in a peculiar rippling of the surface of the body. Cheerfulness shows itself in a modified bubbling form of this, and also in a steady serenity.

Surprise is shown by a sharp constriction of the mental body, usually communicated to both the astral and physical bodies, accompanied by an increased glow of the band of affection if the surprise is a pleasant one, and by an increase of brown and grey if the surprise is an unpleasant one. The constriction often causes unpleasant feelings, affecting sometimes the solar plexus, resulting in sinking and sickness, and sometimes the heart centre, causing palpitation and even death.

It will be understood that, as human emotions are hardly ever unmixed, so these colours are seldom perfectly pure, but more usually mixtures. Thus the purity of many colours is dimmed by the hard brown-grey of selfishness, or tinged with the deep orange of pride.

In reading the full meaning of colours, other points have also to be taken into consideration: viz., the general brilliance of the astral body: the comparative definiteness or indefiniteness of its outline: the relative brightness of the different centres of force (see Chapter 5).

The yellow of intellect, the rose of affection, and the blue of devotion are always found in the upper part of the astral body: the colours of selfishness, avarice, deceit and hatred are in the lower part: the mass of sensual feeling floats usually between the two.

From this it follows that in the undeveloped man the lower portion of the ovoid tends to be larger than the upper, so that the astral body has the appearance of an egg with the small end uppermost. In the more developed man the reverse is the case, the small end of the egg pointing downwards. The tendency always is for the symmetry of the ovoid to re-assert itself by degrees, so that such appearances are only temporary.

Each quality, expressed as a colour, has its own special type of astral matter, and the average position [Page 14] of these colours depends upon the specific gravity of the respective grades of matter. The general principle is that evil or selfish qualities express themselves in the comparatively slow vibrations of coarser matter, while good and unselfish qualities play through finer matter.

This being so, fortunately for us, good emotions persist even longer than evil ones, the effect of a feeling of strong love or devotion remaining in the astral body long after the occasion that caused it has been forgotten.

It is possible, though unusual, to have two rates of vibrations going on strongly in

the astral body at the same time, e.g., love and anger. The after-results will go on side by side, but one at a very much higher level than the other and therefore persisting longer.

High unselfish affection and devotion belong to the highest (atomic) astral sub-plane, and these reflect themselves in the corresponding matter of the mental plane. They thus touch the causal (higher mental) body, not the lower mental. This is an important point of which the student should take especial note. The Ego, who resides on the higher mental plane, is thus affected only by unselfish thoughts. Lower thoughts affect, not the Ego, but the permanent atoms (see p. 207).

Consequently, in the causal body there would be gaps, not bad colours, corresponding to the lower feelings and thoughts. Selfishness, for example, would show itself as the absence of affection or sympathy: as soon as selfishness is replaced by its opposite, the gap in the causal body would be filled up.

An intensification of the coarse colours of the astral body, representing base emotions, whilst finding no direct expression in the causal body, nevertheless tends somewhat to dim the luminosity of the colours representing the opposite virtues in the causal body.

In order to realise the appearance of the astral body, it must be borne in mind that the particles of which [Page 15] it is composed are always in rapid motion: in the vast majority of cases the clouds of colour melt into one another and are all the while rolling over one another, appearing and disappearing as they roll, the surface of the luminous mist resembling somewhat the surface of violently boiling water. The various colours, therefore, by no means retain the same positions, though there is a normal position towards which they tend to return.

The student is referred to the book, *Man Visible and Invisible*, by C. W. Leadbeater, for illustrations of the actual appearance of astral bodies : —  
Plate VII., p 88, Astral body of savage.  
Plate X., p. 94, Astral body of average man.  
Plate XXIII., p. 123, Astral body of developed man. (Edition 1902.)

The main characteristics of the three types illustrated — the savage, the average man and the developed man — may be briefly summarised as follows :—

**Savage Type.** — A very large proportion of sensuality, deceit, selfishness and greed are conspicuous: fierce anger is implied by smears and blots of dull scarlet: very little affection appears, and such intellect and religious feeling as exist are of the lowest possible kind. The outline is irregular and the colours blurred, thick and heavy. The whole body is evidently ill-regulated, confused and uncontrolled.

*Average Man.*—Sensuality is much less though still prominent: selfishness is also prominent and there is some capability of deceit for personal ends, though the green is beginning to divide into two distinct qualities, showing that cunning is gradually becoming adaptability. Anger is still marked: affection, intellect and devotion are more prominent and of a higher quality. The colours as a whole are more clearly defined and distinctly brighter, though none of them are perfectly clear. The outline of the body is more defined and regular.

*Developed Man.*— Undesirable qualities have almost entirely disappeared: across the top of the body there [Page 16] is a strip of lilac, indicating spiritual aspiration: above and enveloping the head there is a cloud of the brilliant yellow of intellect: below that there is a broad belt of the blue of devotion: then across the trunk there is a still wider belt of the rose of affection, and in the lower part of the body a large amount of the green of adaptability and sympathy finds its place. The colours are bright, luminous, in clearly marked bands, the outline is well defined, and the whole astral body conveys the impression of being orderly and under perfect control.

Although we are not in this book dealing with the mental body, yet it should be mentioned that as a man develops, his astral body more and more resembles his mental body, until it becomes little more than a reflection of it in the grosser matter of the astral plane. This, of course, indicates that the man has his desires thoroughly under the control of the mind and is no longer apt to be swept away by surges of emotion. Such a man will no doubt be subject to occasional irritability, and to undesirable cravings of various sorts, but he knows enough now to repress these lower manifestations and not to yield to them.

At a still later stage the mental body itself becomes a reflection of the causal body, since the man now learns to follow solely the promptings of the higher self, and to guide his reason exclusively by them.

Thus the mind body and the astral body of an Arhat would have very little characteristic colour of their own, but would be reproductions of the causal body in so far as their lower octaves could express it. They have a lovely iridescence, a sort of opalescent, mother-of-pearl effect, which is far beyond either description or representation.

A developed man has five rates of vibration in his astral body : an ordinary man shows at least nine rates, with a mixture of various shades in addition. Many people have 50 or 100 rates, the whole surface being broken up into a multiplicity of little whirlpools and cross-currents, all battling one against another [Page 17] in mad confusion. This is the result of unnecessary emotion and worries, the ordinary person of the West being a mass of these, through which much of his strength is frittered away.

An astral body which vibrates fifty ways at once is not only ugly but also a serious annoyance. It may be compared to a physical body suffering from an aggravated form of palsy, with all its muscles jerking simultaneously in different directions. Such astral effects are contagious and affect all sensitive persons who approach, communicating a painful sense of unrest and worry. It is just because millions of people are thus unnecessarily agitated by all sorts of foolish desires and feelings that it is so difficult for a sensitive person to live in a great city or move amongst crowds. The perpetual astral disturbances may even react through the etheric double and set up nervous diseases.

The centres of inflammation in the astral body are to it what boils are to the physical body — not only acutely uncomfortable, but also weak spots through which vitality leaks away. They also offer practically no resistance to evil influences, and prevent good influences from being of profit. This condition is painfully common: the remedy is to eliminate worry, fear and annoyance. The student of occultism must not have personal feelings that can be affected under any circumstances whatever.

Only a young child has a white or comparatively colourless aura, the colours beginning to show only as the qualities develop. The astral body of a child is often a most beautiful object — pure and bright in its colours, free from the stains of sensuality, avarice, ill-will and selfishness. In it may also be seen lying latent the germs and tendencies brought over from his last life (see p. 211), some of them evil, some good, and thus the possibilities of the child's future life may be seen.

The yellow of intellect, found always near the head, is the origin of the idea of the nimbus or glory round [Page 18] the head of a saint, since this yellow is much the most conspicuous of the colours of the astral body, and the one most easily perceived by a person on the verge of clairvoyance. Sometimes, owing to the unusual activity of the intellect, the yellow may become visible even in physical matter, so as to be perceptible to ordinary physical sight.

We have already seen that the astral body has a certain normal arrangement, into which its various portions tend to group themselves. A sudden rush of passion or feeling, however, may temporarily force the whole, or almost the whole, of the matter in an astral body to vibrate at a certain rate, thus producing quite striking results. All the matter of the astral body is swept about as if by a violent hurricane, so that for the time being the colours become very much mixed. Coloured examples of this phenomenon are given in *Man Visible and Invisible* :—

Plate XI., p. 96, Sudden rush of Affection.

Plate XII., p. 98, Sudden rush of Devotion.

Plate XIII., p. 100, Intense Anger.

Plate XIV., p. 103, Shock of Fear.

In the case of a sudden wave of pure affection, when, for example, a mother snatches up her baby and covers it with kisses, the whole astral body in a moment is thrown into a violent agitation, and the original colours are for the time almost obscured.

Analysis discovers four separate effects: —

(1) Certain coils or vortices of vivid colour are to be seen, well-defined and solid-looking, and glowing with an intense light from within. Each of these is in reality a thought-form of intense affection, generated within the astral body, and about to be poured forth from it towards the object of the feeling. The whirling clouds of living light are indescribably lovely, though difficult to depict.

(2) The whole astral body is crossed by horizontal pulsating lines of crimson light, even more difficult to represent, by reason of the exceeding rapidity of their motion. [Page 19]

(3) A kind of film of rose-colour covers the surface of the whole astral body, so that all within is seen through it, as through tinted glass.

(4) A sort of crimson flush fills the entire astral body, tinging to some extent the other hues, and here and there condensing itself into irregular floating wisps, like half-formed clouds.

This display would probably last only a few seconds, and then the body would rapidly resume its normal condition, the various grades of matter sorting themselves again into their usual zones by their specific gravities. Yet every such rush of feeling adds a little to the crimson in the higher part of the oval and makes it a little easier for the astral body to respond to the next wave of affection which may come.

Similarly, a man who frequently feels high devotion soon comes to have a large area of blue in his astral body. The effects of such impulses are thus cumulative: and in addition the radiation of vivid vibrations of love and joy produce good influences on others.

With the substitution of blue for crimson, a sudden access of devotion, surging over a nun engaged in contemplation, produces an almost identical effect.

In the case of intense anger, the ordinary background of the astral body is obscured by coils or vortices of heavy, thunderous masses of sooty blackness, lit up from within by the lurid glare of active hatred. Wisps of the same dark cloud are to be seen defiling the whole astral body, while the fiery arrows of uncontrolled anger shoot among them like flashes of lightning. These terrible flashes are capable of penetrating other astral bodies like swords and thus

inflicting injury upon other people.

In this instance, as in the others, each outburst of rage would predispose the matter of the entire astral body to respond somewhat more readily than before to these very undesirable vibrations.

A sudden shock of terror will in an instant suffuse the whole body with a curious livid grey mist, while horizontal lines of the same hue appear, but vibrating [Page 20] with such violence as to be hardly recognisable as separate lines. The result is indescribably ghastly: all light fades out for the time from the body and the whole grey mass quivers helplessly like a jelly.

A flood of emotion does not greatly affect the mental body, though for a time it may render it almost impossible for any activity from the mental body to come through into the physical brain, because the astral body, which acts as a bridge between the mental body and the brain, is vibrating so entirely at one rate as to be incapable of conveying any undulation which is not in harmony with it.

The above are examples of the effects of sudden and temporary outbursts of feeling. There are other somewhat similar effects of a more permanent character produced by certain dispositions or types of character.

Thus, when an ordinary man falls in love, the astral body is so completely transformed as to make it scarcely recognisable as belonging to the same person. Selfishness, deceit and avarice vanish, and the lowest part of the oval is filled with a large development of animal passions. The green of adaptability has been replaced by the peculiar brownish-green of jealousy, and the extreme activity of this feeling is shown by bright scarlet flashes of anger which permeate it. But the undesirable changes are more than counterbalanced by the splendid band of crimson which fills so large a part of the oval. This is, for the time, a dominant characteristic, and the whole astral body glows with its light. Under its influence the general muddiness of the ordinary astral body has disappeared, and the hues are all brilliant and clearly marked, good and bad alike. It is an intensification of the life in various directions. The blue of devotion is also distinctly improved, and even a touch of pale violet appears at the summit of the ovoid, indicating a capacity of response to a really high and unselfish ideal. The yellow of intellect, however, has entirely vanished for the time — a fact which the cynical might consider as characteristic of the condition ! [Page 21]

The astral body of an irritable man usually shows a broad band of scarlet as a prominent feature, and, in addition, the whole astral body is covered with little floating flecks of scarlet, somewhat like notes of interrogation.

In the case of a miser, avarice, selfishness, deceit and adaptability are naturally intensified, but sensuality is diminished. The most remarkable change, however, is the curious series of parallel horizontal lines across the oval, giving the

impression of a cage. The bars are a deep brown in colour, almost burnt sienna.

The vice of avarice seems to have the effect of completely arresting development for the time, and it is very difficult to shake off when once it has gained a firm hold.

Deep depression produces an effect in grey, instead of brown, very similar to that of the miser. The result is indescribably gloomy and depressing to the observer. No emotional condition is more infectious than the feeling of depression.

In the case of a non-intellectual man who is definitely religious, the astral body assumes a characteristic appearance. A touch of violet suggests the possibility of response to a high ideal. The blue of devotion is unusually well developed, but the yellow of intellect is scanty. There is a fair proportion of affection and adaptability, but more than the average of sensuality, and deceit and selfishness are also prominent. The colours are irregularly distributed, melting into one another, and the outline is vague, indicating the vagueness of the devotional man's conceptions.

Extreme sensuality and the devotional temperament are frequently seen in association: perhaps because these types of men live chiefly in their feelings, being governed by them instead of trying to control them by reason.

A great contrast is shown by a man of a scientific type. Devotion is entirely absent, sensuality is much below the average, but the intellect is developed to [Page 22] an abnormal degree. Affection and adaptability are small in quantity and poor in quality. A good deal of selfishness and avarice is present and also some jealousy. A huge cone of bright orange in the midst of the golden yellow of intellect indicates pride and ambition in connection with the knowledge that has been acquired. The scientific and orderly habit of mind causes the arrangement of the colours to fall into regular bands, the lines of demarcation being quite definite and clearly marked.

The student is urged to study for himself the admirable book from which the above information is taken, this being one of the most valuable of the many works produced by that great and gifted writer — C. W. Leadbeater.

As we have been dealing here with colours in the astral body, it may be mentioned that the means of communication with the elementals, which are associated so closely with man's astral body, is by sounds and colours. Students may recollect obscure allusions now and again to a language of colours, and the fact that in ancient Egypt sacred manuscripts were written in colours, mistakes in copying being punished with death. To elementals, colours are as intelligible as words are to men. [Page 23]

## CHAPTER 4

### FUNCTIONS

THE functions of the astral body may be roughly grouped under three headings:

---

1. To make sensation possible.
2. To serve as a bridge between mind and physical matter.
3. To act as an independent vehicle of consciousness and action.

We will deal with these three functions in sequence.

When man is analysed into "principles," i.e., into modes of manifesting life, the four lower principles, sometimes termed the "Lower Quaternary", are :—

Physical Body.

Etheric Body

Prâna, or Vitality.

Kâma, or Desire.

The fourth principle, Kâma, is the life manifesting in the astral body and conditioned by it: its characteristic is the attribute of feeling, which in rudimentary form is sensation, and in complex form emotion, with many grades in between these two. This is sometimes summed up as desire, that which is attracted or repelled by objects, according as they give pleasure or pain.

Kâma thus includes feelings of every kind, and might be described as the passionate and emotional nature. It comprises all animal appetites, such as hunger, thirst, sexual desire: all passions, such as the lower forms of love, hatred, envy, jealousy; it is the desire for sentient existence, for experience of material joys — "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, the pride of life".

Kâma is the brute in us, the "ape and tiger" of Tennyson, the force which most avails to keep us [Page 24] bound to earth and to stifle in us all higher longings by the illusions of sense. It is the most material in man's nature, and is the one that binds him fast to earthly life. "It is not molecularly constituted matter, least of all the human body, Sthûla Sharira, that is the grossest of all our 'principles', but verily the middle principle, the real animal centre; whereas our body is but its shell, the irresponsible factor and medium through which the beast in us acts all its life" (Secret Doctrine, Volume I, pages 280 and 281).

Kâma or Desire is also described as a reflection or lower aspect of Atma or Will, the distinction being that Will is Self-determined, whereas Desire is moved to activity by attractions to or repulsions from surrounding objects. Desire is thus Will discrowned, the captive, the slave of matter.

Another way of regarding Kâma has been well expressed by Mr. Ernest Wood in

his illuminating book The Seven Rays: Kâma " means all desire. And desire is the outward-turned aspect of love, the love of the things of the three worlds; while love proper is love of life and love of the divine, and belongs to the higher or inward-turned self."

For our purposes in this book desire and emotion are frequently used as practically synonymous: strictly, however, emotion is the product of desire and intellect.

The astral body is often known as the Kâma Rûpa: and sometimes, in the older nomenclature, as the Animal Soul.

Impacts from without, striking on the physical body, are conveyed as vibrations by the agency of Prâna or Vitality, but they would remain as vibrations only, merely motion on the physical plane, did not Kâma, the principle of sensation, translate the vibration into feeling. Thus pleasure and pain do not arise until the astral centre is reached. Hence Kâma joined to Prâna is spoken of as the "breath of life", the vital sentient principle spread over every particle of the body. [Page 25]

It appears that certain organs of the physical body are specifically associated with the workings of Kâma: among these are the liver and the spleen.

It may be noted here that Kâma, or desire, is just beginning to be active in the mineral kingdom, where it expresses itself as chemical affinity.

In the vegetable kingdom it is, of course, much more developed, indicating a far greater capacity of utilising lower astral matter. Students of botany are aware that likes and dislikes, *i.e.*, desire, are much more prominent in the vegetable world than in the mineral, and that many plants exhibit a great deal of ingenuity and sagacity in attaining their ends.

Plants are quick to respond to loving care and are distinctly affected by man's feelings towards them. They delight in and respond to admiration: they are also capable of individual attachments, as well as of anger and dislike.

Animals are capable to the fullest possible extent of experiencing the lower desires, though the capacity for the higher desires is more limited. Nevertheless it exists, and in exceptional cases an animal is capable of manifesting an exceedingly high quality of affection or devotion.

Passing now to the second function of the astral body — to act as a bridge between mind and physical matter — we note that an *impact* on the physical senses is transmitted inwards by Prâna, becomes a *sensation* by the action of the sense-centres, which are situated in Kâma, and is *perceived* by Manas, or Mind. Thus, without the general action through the astral body there would be no connection between the external world and the mind of man, no connection

between physical impacts and the perception of them by the mind.

Conversely, whenever we think, we set in motion the mental matter within us; the vibrations thus generated are transferred to the matter of our astral body, the astral matter affects the etheric matter, this, in turn, acting on the dense physical matter, the grey matter of the brain. [Page 26]

The astral body is thus veritably a bridge between our physical and our mental life, serving as a transmitter of vibrations both from physical to mental and from mental to physical, and is, in fact, principally developed by this constant passage of vibrations to and fro.

In the course of the evolution of man's astral body, there are two distinct stages: the astral body has first to be developed to a fairly high point as a *transmitting vehicle*: then it has to be developed as an independent body, in which the man can function on the astral plane.

In man, the normal brain-intelligence is produced by the union of Kâma with Manas, or Mind, this union being often spoken of as Kâma-Manas. Kâma-Manas is described by H. P. Blavatsky as "the rational, but earthly or physical intellect of man, encased in, and bound by matter, and therefore subject to the influence of the latter"; this is the "lower self" which, acting on this plane of illusion, imagines itself to be the real Self or Ego, and thus falls into what Buddhist philosophy terms the "heresy of separateness".

Kâma-Manas, that is Manas with desire, has also been picturesquely described as Manas taking an interest in external things.

It may, in passing, be noted that a clear understanding of the fact that Kâma-Manas belongs to the human personality, and that it functions in and through the physical brain, is essential to a just grasp of the process of reincarnation, and is sufficient of itself to show how there can be no memory of previous lives so long as the consciousness cannot rise beyond the brain-mechanism, this mechanism, together with that of Kâma, being made afresh each life, and therefore having no direct touch with previous lives.

Manas, of itself, could not affect the molecules of the physical brain cells: but, when united to Kâma, it is able to set the physical molecules in motion, and thus produce "brain-consciousness", including the brain memory and all the functions of the human [Page 27] mind, as we ordinarily know it. It is, of course, not the Higher Manas, but the Lower Manas, (*i.e.*, matter of the four lower levels of the mental plane), which is associated with Kâma. In Western psychology, this Kâma-Manas becomes a part of what in that system is termed Mind. Kâma-Manas, forming the link between the higher and lower nature in man, is the battleground during life, and also, as we shall see later, plays an important part in post-mortem existence.

So close is the association of Manas and Kâma that the Hindus speak of man having five sheaths, one of which is for all manifestations of working intellect and desire. These five are: -

1	Anandamayakosha	the Bliss sheath	Buddhi
2	Vignânamayakosha	the Discriminating sheath	Higher Manas and Kâma
3	Manomayakosha	the sheath of Intellect and Desire	Lower Manas and Kâma
4	Prânamayakosha	the Vitality sheath	Prâna
5	Annamayakosha	the Food sheath	Dense physical body

In the division used by Manu, the prânamayakosha and the annamayakosha are classed together, and known as the Bhûtâtman or elemental self, or body of action.

The vignânamayakosha and the manomayakosha he terms the body of feeling, giving it the name Jîva: he defines it as that body in which the Knower, the Kshetragña, becomes sensible of pleasure and of pains.

In their external relations, the vignânamayakosha and the manomayakosha, especially the manomayakosha, are related to the Deva world. The Devas are said to have "entered into" man, the reference being to the presiding deities of the elements (see page 188). Those presiding deities give rise to sensations in man, changing the contacts from without into [Page 28] sensations, or the recognition of the contacts, from within, this being essentially a Deva action. Hence the link with all these lower Devas, which, when supreme control has been obtained, makes man the master in every region of the Universe.

Manas, or mind, being unable, as said above, to affect the gross particles of the brain, projects a part of itself, *i.e.*, lower Manas, which clothes itself with astral matter, and then with the help of etheric matter permeates the whole nervous system of the child before birth. The projection from Manas is often spoken of as its reflection, its shadow, its ray, and is known also by other allegorical names. H. P. Blavatsky writes (Key to Theosophy, p. 184) : "Once imprisoned, or incarnate, their (the Manas) essence becomes dual; that is to say, the rays of the eternal divine Mind, considered as individual entities, assume a two-fold attribute, which is (a) their essential, inherent, characteristic, heaven-aspiring mind (higher Manas), and (b) the human quality of thinking, of animal cogitation, rationalised owing to the superiority of the human brain, the Kâma-tending or lower Manas".

Lower Manas is thus engulfed in the quaternary, and may be regarded as clasping Kâma with one hand, whilst with the other it retains its hold on its father, the higher Manas. Whether it will be dragged down by Kâma altogether and be torn away from the triad (atmâ-buddhi-manas) to which, by its nature it belongs, or whether it will triumphantly carry back to its source the purified experiences of

its earth life — that is the life-problem set and solved in each successive incarnation. This point will be considered further in the chapters on *After-Death Life*.

Kama thus supplies the animal and passional elements; lower Manas rationalises these and adds the intellectual faculties. In man these two principles are interwoven during life and rarely act separately.

Manas may be regarded as the flame, Kâma and the physical brain as the wick and fuel which feed the flame. The egos of all men, developed or undeveloped, [Page 29] are of the same essence and substance: that which makes of one a great man, and of another a vulgar, silly person, is the quality and make-up of the physical body, and the ability of the brain and body to transmit and express the light of the real inner man.

In brief, Kâma-Manas is the personal self of man: Lower Manas gives the individualising touch that makes the personality recognise itself as "I", Lower Manas is a ray from the immortal Thinker, *illuminating a personality*. It is Lower Manas which yields the last touch of delight to the senses and to the animal nature, by conferring the power of anticipation, memory and imagination.

Whilst it would be out of place in this book to encroach too far into the domain of Manas and the mental body, yet it may help the student at this stage to add that freewill resides in Manas, Manas being the representative of Mahat, the Universal Mind. In physical man, the Lower Manas is the agent of freewill. From Manas comes the feeling of liberty, the knowledge that we can rule ourselves, that the higher nature can master the lower. To identify the consciousness with the Manas, instead of with Kâma, is thus an important step on the road to self-mastery.

The very struggle of Manas to assert itself is the best testimony that it is by nature free. It is the presence and power of the ego which enables a man to choose between desires and to overcome them. As the lower Manas rules Kâma, the lower quaternary takes its rightful position of subservience to the higher triad — atmâ-buddhi-manas.

We may classify the principles of man in the following manner:—

-1-	Âtma	Immortal
	Buddhi	
	Higher Manas	
-2-	Kâma-Manas	Conditionally Immortal
-3-	Prâna	Mortal
	Etheric Double	
	Dense Body	

[Page 30] We come now to consider the third function of the astral body — as an independent vehicle of consciousness and action. The full treatment of this portion of our subject — the use, development, possibilities and limitations of the astral body on its own plane — will be dealt with step by step in most of the succeeding chapters. For the present it will suffice to enumerate very briefly the principal ways in which an astral body can be used as an independent vehicle of consciousness. These are as follows : —

1. During ordinary waking consciousness, *i.e.*, while the physical brain and senses are wide-awake, the powers of the astral senses may be brought into action. Some of these powers correspond to the senses and powers of action possessed by the physical body. They will be dealt with in the next chapter, on *Chakrams*.
2. During sleep or trance it is possible for the astral body to separate itself from the physical body and to move about and function freely on its own plane. This will be dealt with in the chapter on *Sleep-Life*.
3. It is possible so to develop the powers of the astral body that a man may consciously and deliberately, at any time that he chooses, leave the physical body and pass with unbroken consciousness into the astral body. This will be dealt with in the chapter on *Continuity of Consciousness*.
4. After physical death the consciousness withdraws itself into the astral body, and a life, varying greatly in intensity and duration, dependent upon a number of factors, may be led on the astral plane. This will be dealt with in the chapters on *After-Death Life*.

These divisions of our subject, with numerous ramifications, will constitute the major portion of the remainder of this treatise. [Page 31]

## CHAPTER V

### CHAKRAMS

THE word Chakram is Sanskrit, and means literally a wheel, or revolving disc. It is used to denote what are often called Force-Centres in man. There are such Chakrams in all man's vehicles, and they are points of connection at which force flows from one vehicle to another. They are also intimately associated with the powers or senses of the various vehicles.

The Chakrams of the etheric body are fully described in The Etheric Double, and the student is referred to that work, as a study of the etheric Chakrams will materially assist him to understand the astral Chakrams.

The etheric Chakrams are situated in the surface of the etheric double and are usually denoted by the name of the physical organ to which they correspond.

They are: —

1. Base of Spine Chakram.
2. Navel Chakram.
3. Spleen Chakram.
4. Heart Chakram.
5. Throat Chakram.
6. Between the Eyebrows Chakram.
7. Top of the Head Chakram.

There are also three lower Chakrams, but as these are used only in certain schools of "black magic," we are not concerned with them here.

The astral Chakrams, which are frequently in the interior of the etheric double, are vortices in four dimensions (see Chapter 18), thus having an extension in a direction quite different from the etheric: consequently, though they correspond to the etheric Chakrams, they are by no means always coterminous with them, though some part is always coincident. [Page 32]

The astral Chakrams are given the same names as those in the etheric double, and their functions are as follows:—

1. *Base of Spine Chakram.*—This is the seat of the Serpent Fire, Kundalini, a force which exists on all planes and by means of which the rest of the Chakrams are aroused.

Originally, the astral body was an almost inert mass, possessing but the vaguest consciousness, with no definite power of doing anything, and with no clear knowledge of the world surrounding it. The first thing that happened was the awakening of Kundalini at the astral level.

2. *Navel Chakram.*—Kundalini having been awakened in the first Chakram, it moved to the navel Chakram, which it vivified, thus awakening in the astral body the power of feeling — a sensitiveness to all sorts of influences, though without as yet anything like the definite comprehension that comes from seeing and hearing.

3. *Spleen Chakram.*—Kundalini then moved to the spleen Chakram, and through it vitalised the whole astral body, this Chakram having as one of its functions the absorption of Prâna, the Vitality Force, which also exists on all planes. The vivification of the spleen Chakram enables the man to travel in his astral body consciously, though with only a vague conception as yet of what he encounters on his journeys.

4. *Heart Chakram*.—This Chakram enables the man to comprehend and sympathise with the vibrations of other astral entities, so that he can instinctively understand their feelings.

5. *Throat Chakram*.—This Chakram confers the power in the astral world which corresponds to hearing in the physical world.

6. *Between the Eyebrows Chakram*.—This Chakram confers the power to perceive definitely the shape and nature of astral objects, instead of merely vaguely sensing their presence.

Associated with this Chakram appears also the power [Page 33] of magnifying at will the minutest physical or astral particle to any desired size, as though by a microscope. This power enables an occult investigator to perceive and study molecules, atoms, etc. The full control of this faculty, however, belongs rather to the causal body.

The power of magnification is one of the *siddhis* described in Oriental books as "the power of making oneself large or small at will." The description is apposite, because the method employed is that of using a temporary visual mechanism of inconceivable minuteness. Conversely, minification of vision may be obtained by the construction of a temporary and enormously larger visual mechanism.

The power of magnification is quite distinct from the faculty of functioning on a higher plane, just as the power of an astronomer to observe planets and stars is quite a different thing from the ability to move or function amongst them.

In the Hindu sutras it is stated that meditation in a certain part of the tongue will confer astral sight. The statement is a "blind," the reference being to the pituitary body, situated just over this part of the tongue.

7. *Top of the Head Chakram*.—This Chakram rounds off and completes the astral life, endowing the man with the perfection of his faculties.

There appear to be two methods in which this Chakram works.

In one type of man, the sixth and seventh Chakrams both converge upon the pituitary body, this body being for this type practically the only direct link between the physical and the higher planes.

In another type of man, however, while the sixth Chakram is still attached to the pituitary body, the seventh Chakram is bent or slanted until its vortex coincides with the pineal gland. In people of this type the pineal gland is thus vivified and made into a line of communication directly with the lower mental, without apparently passing through the intermediate astral plane in the ordinary way.  
[Page 34]

In the physical body, as we know, there are specialised organs for each sense, the eye for seeing, the ear for hearing, and so on. In the astral body, however, this is not the case.

The particles of the astral body are constantly flowing and swirling about like those of boiling water: consequently, there are no special particles which remain continuously in any of the Chakrams. On the contrary, all the particles of the astral body pass through each of the Chakrams.

Each Chakram has the function of awakening a certain power of response in the particles, which flow through it, one Chakram the power of sight, another that of hearing, and so on.

Consequently, any one astral sense is not, strictly speaking, localised or confined to any particular part of the astral body. It is rather the whole of the particles of the astral body which possess the power of response. A man, therefore, who has developed astral sight uses any part of the matter of his astral body in order to see, and so can see equally well objects in front, behind, above, below, or to either side. Similarly with all the other senses. In other words, the astral senses are equally active in all parts of the body.

It is not easy to describe the substitute for language by means of which ideas are communicated astrally. Sound in the ordinary sense of the word is not possible in the astral world - in fact it is not possible even in the higher part of the physical world. It would also not be correct to say that the language of the astral world is thought-transference: the most that could be said is that it is the transference of thoughts formulated in a particular way.

In the mental world a thought is instantaneously transmitted to the mind of another without any form of words : therefore in the mental world language does not in the least matter. But astral communications lies, as it were, half-way between the thought-transference of the mental world and the concrete speech of the physical, and it is still necessary to [Page 35] to formulate the thought in words. For this exchange it is therefore necessary that the two parties should have a language in common.

The astral and etheric Chakrams are in very close correspondence; but between them, and interpenetrating them in a manner which is not readily describable, there is a sheath or web of closely woven texture, composed of a single layer of physical atoms much compressed and permeated by a special form of Prâna. The divine life which normally descends from the astral body to the physical is so attuned as to pass through this shield with perfect ease, but it is an absolute barrier to all the forces which cannot use the atomic matter of both planes. The web is natural protection to prevent a premature opening up of communication between the planes, a development which could lead to nothing but injury.

It is this which normally prevents clear recollection of the sleep-life, and which also causes the momentary unconsciousness which always occurs at death. But for this provision the ordinary man could at any moment be brought by any astral entity under the influence of forces with which he could not possibly cope. He would be liable to constant obsession by astral entities desirous of seizing his vehicles.

The web may be injured in several ways : -

1- A great shock of the astral body, e.g., a sudden fright, may rend apart this delicate organism and, as it is commonly expressed, drive the man mad.

A tremendous outburst of anger may also produce the same effect, as may any other very strong emotion of an evil character which produces a kind of explosion in the astral body.

2- The use of alcohol or narcotic drugs, including tobacco. These substances contain matter which on braking up volatilises, some of it passing from the physical to the astral plane. Even tea and coffee contain this matter, but only in infinitesimal quantities, so that only long-continued abuse of them would produce the effect. [Page 36]

These constituents rush through the Chakras in the opposite direction to that for which they are intended, and in doing this repeatedly they seriously injure and finally destroy the delicate web.

This deterioration or destruction may take place in two ways, according to the type of person concerned and to the proportion of the constituents in his etheric and astral bodies.

In one type of person the rush of volatilising matter actually burns away the web, and therefore leaves the door open to all sorts of irregular forces and evil influences. Those affected in this way fall into delirium tremens, obsession of insanity.

In the other type of person, the volatile constituents, in flowing through, somehow harden the atom so that its pulsation is to a large extent checked and crippled, and it is no longer capable of being vitalised by the particular type of Prâna which welds it into a web. This results in a kind of ossification of the web, so that instead of too much coming through from one plane to another, we have very little of any kind coming through. Such subjects tend to a general deadening down of their qualities, resulting in gross materialism, brutality and animalism, in the loss of all finer feelings and of the power to control themselves. This type is said to be very common amongst slaves of the tobacco habit.

All impressions which pass from one plane to the other are intended to come only through the atomic sub-planes, but when the deadening process takes place it infects not only other atomic matter, but even matter of the second and third

sub-planes, so that the only communication between the astral and the etheric is from the lower sub-planes, upon which only unpleasant and evil influences are to be found.

The consciousness of the ordinary man cannot yet use pure atomic matter, either of the physical or astral and therefore there is normally for him no possibility of conscious communication at will between the two planes. The proper way to obtain it is to purify the vehicles [Page 37] until the atomic matter in both is fully vivified, so that all communications between the two may pass by that road. In that case the web retains to the fullest degree its position and activity, and yet is no longer a barrier to the perfect communication, while it still continues to prevent close contact with the lower and undesirable sub-planes.

3 - The third way in which the web may be injured is that known in spiritualistic parlance as "sitting for development".

It is quite possible, in fact very common, for a man to have his astral Chakras well developed, so that he is able to function freely on the astral plane, and yet he may recollect nothing of his astral plane when he returns to waking consciousness. With this phenomenon and its explanation we shall deal more appropriately in the Chapter on *Dreams*. [Page 38]

## CHAPTER 6

### KUNDALINI

The student is referred to *The Etheric Double* for a description of Kundalini with special reference to the etheric body and its Chakras. Here we are concerned with it in connection with the astral body.

The three known forces which emanate from the Logos are: -

1. Fohat : which shows itself as electricity, heat, light motion, etc.
2. Prâna ; which shows itself as vitality.
3. Kundalini : also known as the Serpent Fire.

Each of these three forces exists on all planes of which we know anything. So far as is known, no one of the three is convertible into any of the others: they each remain separate and distinct.

Kundalini is called in *The Voice of the Silence* "the Fiery Power", and "the World's Mother". The first, because it appears like liquid fire as it rushes through the body; and the course it should follow is a spiral one, like the coils of a serpent. It is called the World's Mother because through it our various vehicles may be vivified, so that the higher worlds may open before us in succession.

Its home in man's body is the Chakram at the base of the spine, and for the ordinary man it lies there unawakened and unsuspected during the whole of his life. It is far better for it to remain dormant until the man has made definite moral development, until his will is strong enough to control it and his thoughts pure enough to enable him to face its awakening without injury. No one should experiment with it without definite instruction from a teacher who thoroughly understands the subject, for the dangers [Page 39] connected with it are very real and terribly serious. Some of them are purely physical. Its uncontrolled movement often produces intense physical pain, and it may readily tear tissues, and even destroy physical life. It may also do permanent injury to vehicles higher than the physical.

One very common effect of rousing it prematurely is that it rushes downwards in the body instead of upwards, and thus excites the most undesirable passions - excites them and intensifies their effects to such a degree that it becomes quite impossible for the man to resist them, because a force has been brought into play in whose presence he is quite helpless. Such men become satyrs, monsters of depravity, the force being beyond the normal human power of resistance. They may probably gain certain supernormal powers, but these will be such as will bring them into touch with a lower order of evolution, with which humanity is intended to hold no commerce, and to escape from its thrall may take more than one incarnation.

There is a school of black magic which purposely uses this power in this way, in order that through it may be vivified those lower Chakrams which are never used by followers of the Good Law.

The premature unfoldment of Kundalini has other unpleasant possibilities. It intensifies everything in the man's nature, and it reaches the lower and evil qualities more readily than the good. In the mental body, ambition is very readily aroused, and soon swells to an incredibly inordinate degree. It would probably bring with it a great intensification of intellect, accompanied by abnormal and satanic pride, such as is quite inconceivable to the ordinary men.

An uninstructed man who finds that Kundalini has been aroused by accident should at once consult some one who fully understands these matters.

The arousing of Kundalini - the method of doing which is not publicly known - and the attempt to pass it through the Chakrams - the order of which is [Page 40] also deliberately concealed from the public - should never be attempted except at the express suggestion of a Master, who will watch over His pupil during the various stages of the experiment.

The most solemn warnings are given by experienced occultists against in any way attempting to arouse Kundalini, except under qualified tuition, because of the real and great dangers involved. As is said in the *Hathayogapradipika* ; "It gives liberation to Yogis and bondage to fools". (III, 107).

In some cases Kundalini wakes spontaneously, so that a dull glow is felt: it may even begin to move of itself, though this rare. In this latter case it would be likely to cause great pain, as, since the passages are not prepared for it, it would have to clear its way by actually burning up a great deal of etheric dross, which is necessarily a painful process. When it thus awakes of itself or is accidentally aroused, it usually tries to rush up the interior of the spine, instead of following the spiral course into which the occultist is trained to guide it. If it be possible, the will should be set in motion to arrest its onward rush, but if that proves to be impossible, as is most likely, no alarm need be felt. It will probably rush out through the head and escape into the surrounding atmosphere, and it is likely that no harm will result beyond a slight weakening. Nothing worse than a temporary loss of consciousness need be apprehended. The worst dangers are connected, not with its upward rush, but with its turning downwards and inwards.

Its principal function in connection with occult development is that by being sent through the Chakrams in the etheric body, it vivifies these Chakras between the physical and astral bodies. It is said in *The Voice of the Silence* that when Kundalini reaches the centre between the eyebrows and fully vivifies it, it confers the power of hearing the voice of the Master - which means, in this case, the voice of the ego or higher self. The reason is that when [Page 41] the pituitary body is brought into working order it forms a perfect link with the astral vehicle, so that through it all communications from within can be received.

In addition, all the higher Chakrams have to be awakened, in due course, and each must be made responsive to all kinds of astral influences from the various astral sub-planes. Most people cannot gain this during the present incarnation, if it is the first in which they have begun to take these matters seriously in hand. Some Indians might succeed in doing so, as their bodies are by heredity more adaptable than most others : but it is for the majority of men the work of a later Round altogether.

The conquest of Kundalini has to be repeated in each incarnation, since the vehicles are new each time, but after it has been once achieved these repetitions will be an easy matter. Its action will vary with different types of people. Some would see the higher self rather than hear its voice. Also this connection with the higher has many stages; for the personality it means the influence of the ego : but for the ego himself it means the power of the monad : and for the monad in turn it means to become a conscious expression of the Logos.

There does not appear to be any age limit with regard to the arousing of Kundalini: but physical health is a necessity owing to the strain involved.

An ancient symbol was the thyrsus - that is, a staff with a pine-cone on its top. In India the same symbol is found, but instead of the staff, a stick of bamboo with seven knots is used. In some modifications of the mysteries a hollow iron rod, said to contain fire, was used instead of the thyrsus. The staff, or stick, with seven knots represents the spinal cord, with its seven Chakrams. The hidden fire is, of course, Kundalini. The thyrsus was not only a symbol, but also an object of

practical use. It was a very strong magnetic instrument, used by initiates to free the astral body from the physical when they passed in [Page 42] full consciousness to this higher life. The priest who had magnetised it laid it against the spinal cord of the candidate and gave him in that way some of his own magnetism, to help him in that difficult life and in the efforts which lay before him. [Page 43]

## **CHAPTER 7**

### **THOUGHT-FORMS**

The mental and astral bodies are those chiefly concerned with the production of what are called thought-forms. The term thought-form is not wholly accurate, because the forms produced may be composed of mental matter, or, in the vast majority of cases, of both astral and mental matter.

Although in this book we are dealing primarily with the astral, and not with the mental body, yet thought-forms, as just said, are, in a vast majority of cases, both astral and mental. In order, therefore, to make the subject intelligible, it is necessary to deal very largely with the mental as well as with the astral aspect of the subject.

A purely intellectual and impersonal thought - such as one concerned with algebra or geometry - would be confined to mental matter. It on the other hand the thought has in it something of selfish or personal desire, it will draw round itself astral matter in addition to the mental. If, furthermore, the thought be of a spiritual nature, if it be tinged with love and aspiration or deep and unselfish feeling, then there may also enter in some of the splendour and glory of the buddhic plane.

Every definite thought produces two effects: first, a radiating vibration: second, a floating form.

The vibration set up in and radiating from the mental body is accompanied with a play of colour which has been described as like that in the spray of a waterfall as the sunlight strikes it, raised to the nth degree of colour and vivid delicacy.

This radiating vibration tends to reproduce its own rate of motion in any mental body on which it may [Page 44] impinge: i.e., to produce thoughts of the same type as those from which the vibration originated. It should be noted that the radiating vibration carries, not the subject of the thought, but its character. Thus, the waves of thought-emotion radiating from a Hindu sitting rapt in devotion to Shri Krishna would tend to stimulate devotional feeling in any who came under its influence, not necessarily towards Sri Krishna, but, in the case of a Christian, to the Christ, in the case of a Buddhist, to the Lord Buddha: and so on.

The power of the vibration to produce such effects depends principally upon the clearness and definiteness of the thought-emotion, as well, of course, as upon the amount of force put into it.

These radiating vibrations become less effective in proportion to the distance from their source, though it is probable that the variation is proportional to the cube of the distance instead of (as with gravitation and other physical forces) to the square, because of the additional (fourth) dimension involved.

The distance to which a thought-wave can radiate effectively also depends upon the opposition with which it meets. Waves in the lower types of astral matter are usually soon deflected or overwhelmed by a multitude of other vibrations at the same level, just as a soft sound is drowned in the roar of a city.

The second effect, that of a floating form, is caused by the mental body throwing off a vibrating portion of itself shaped by the nature of the thought, which gathers round itself matter of the corresponding order of fineness from the surrounding elemental essence (see page 6) of the mental plane. This is a thought-form pure and simple, being composed of mental matter only.

If made of the finer kinds of matter, it will be of great power and energy, and may be used as a most potent agent when directed by a strong and steady will.

When the man directs his energy towards external objects of desire, or is occupied with passional or [Page 45] emotional activities, a similar process takes place in his astral body : a portion of it is thrown off and gathers round itself elemental essence of the astral plane. Such thought-desire forms are caused by Kâma-Manas, the mind under the dominion of the animal nature, Manas dominated by Kâma

Such a thought-desire form has for its body the elemental essence, and for its animating soul, as it were, the desire or passion which threw it forth. Both these thought-desire forms, and also purely mental thought-forms, are called *artificial elementals*. The vast majority of ordinary thought-forms are of the former type, as few thoughts of ordinary men and women are untinged with desire, passion or emotion.

Both mental and astral elemental essence, which possess a half-intelligence life of their own, respond very readily to the influence of human thought and desire: consequently every impulse sent out, either from a man's mental body or from his astral body, is immediately clothed in a temporary vehicle of elemental essence. These artificial elementals thus become for the time a kind of living creature, entities of intense activity animated by the one idea that generated them. They are, in fact, often mistaken by untrained psychics or clairvoyants for real living entities.

Thus, when a man thinks of a concrete object - a book, house, landscape, etc. - he builds a tiny image of the object in the matter of his mental body. This image floats in the upper part of that body, usually in front of the face of the man, and at

about the level of the eyes. It remains there as long as the man is contemplating the object, and usually for a little time afterwards, the length of life depending upon the intensity and the clearness of the thought. The form is quite objective and can be seen by another person possessed of mental sight. If a man thinks of another person he creates a tiny portrait in just the same way.

Thought-forms have been usefully compared to a Leyden jar (a vessel charged with static electricity), [Page 46] the jar itself corresponding to the elemental essence and the electric charge to the thought-emotion. And just as a Leyden jar when it touches another object discharges its stored electricity into that object, so does an artificial elemental, when it strikes a mental or astral body, discharge its stored mental and emotional energy into that body.

The principles which underlie the production of all thought-emotion forms are : -

1. *Colour* is determined by the *quality* of the thought or emotion.
2. *Form* is determined by the *nature* of the thought or emotion.
3. *Clearness of Outline* is determined by the *definiteness* of the thought or emotion.

The life-period of a thought-form depends upon [1] its initial intensity; [2] the nutriment afterwards supplied to it by a repetition of the thought, either by the generator or by others. Its life may be continually reinforced by this repetition, a thought which is brooded over acquiring great stability of form. So again thought-forms of similar character are attracted to and mutually strengthen each other, making a form of great energy and intensity.

Furthermore, such a thought-form appears to possess instinctive desire to prolong its life, and will react on its creator, tending to evoke from him renewal of the feeling which created it. It will react in a similar, though not so perfect, manner on any others with whom it may come into contact.

The colours in which thought-forms express themselves are identical with the colours found in the aura, vide page 11-12.

The brilliance and dept of the colours are usually a measure of the strength and the activity of the feeling.

For our present purpose we may classify thought-forms into three kinds : (1) those connected solely with their originator : (2) those connected with another person : (3) those not definitely personal [Page 47]

If a man's thought is about himself, or based on a personal feeling, as the vast majority of thoughts are, the form will hover in the immediate neighbourhood of its generator. Any time, then, when he is in a passive condition, his thoughts and feelings not being specifically occupied, his own thought-form will return to him and discharge itself upon him. In addition, each man also serves as a magnet to

draw towards himself the thought-forms of others similar to his own, thus attracting towards himself reinforcements of energy from outside. People who are becoming sensitive have sometimes imagined, in such cases, that they have been tempted by the "devil", whereas it is their own thoughts-desire forms which are the cause of the "temptation". Long brooding over the same subject may create a thought-form of tremendous power. Such a form may last for many years and have for a time all the appearance and powers of real living entity. Most men move through life enclosed literally within a cage of their own building, surrounded by masses of forms created by their habitual thoughts. One important effect of this is that each man looks out upon the world *through* his own thought-forms, and thus sees everything tinged by them.

Thus a man's own thought-forms re-act upon him, tending to reproduce themselves and thus setting up definite habits of thought and feeling, which may be helpful if of a lofty character, but are often cramping and a hindrance to growth, obscuring the mental vision and facilitating the formation of prejudice and fixed moods or attitudes which may develop into definite vices.

As a Master has written: "Man is continually peopling his current in space with a world of his own, crowded with the offspring of his fancies, desires, impulses and passions. "These thought-forms remain in his aura, increasing in number and intensity, until certain kinds of them so dominate his mental and emotional life that the man rather answers to their [Page 48] impulse than decides anew: thus are habits, the outer expression of his stored-up force, created, and thus is character built.

Moreover, as each man leaves behind him a trail of thought-forms, it follows that as we go along a street we are walking amidst a sea of other men's thoughts. If a man leaves his mind blank for a time, these thoughts of others drift through it : if one happens to attract his attention, his mind seizes upon it, makes it its own, strengthening it by the addition of its force, and then casts it out again to affect somebody else. A man, therefore, is not responsible for a thought which floats into his mind, but he *is* responsible if he takes it up, dwells upon it, and then sends it out again strengthened.

An example of thought-forms is that of the shapeless clouds of heavy blue which may often be seen rolling along like wreaths of dense smoke over the heads of the congregation of a church. In churches when the level of spirituality is a low one, the minds of the men may create rows of figures, representing their calculations of business deals or speculations, while the minds of the women may create pictures of millinery, jewellery, etc..

Hypnotism provides another example of thought-forms. The operator may make a thought-form and project it on to blank paper, where it may become visible to his hypnotised subject: or he may make the form so objective that the subject will see and feel it as though it were an actual physical object. The literature of hypnotism is full of such examples.

If the thought-form is directed towards another person, it will go to that person. Either of two effects may then result. (1) If in the aura of the person concerned there is material capable of responding sympathetically to the vibration of the thought-form, then the thought-form will remain near the person, or even in his aura, and, as opportunity serves, automatically discharge itself, thus tending to strengthen in the person that particular rate of vibration. If the person [Page 49] at whom a thought form is aimed happens to be busy, or already engaged in some definite train of thought, the thought form, being unable to discharge itself into the man's mental body, which is already vibrating at a certain determinate rate, hangs in the vicinity until the man's mental body is sufficiently at rest to permit its entrance, when it immediate discharges itself.

In doing this it will display what appears like a very considerable amount of intelligence and adaptability, though really it is a force acting a long the line of least resistance - pressing steadily in one direction all the time, and taking advantage of any channel that it can find. Such elementals can, of course, be strengthened and their life-period extended by repetition of the same thought.

(2) If, on the other hand, there is in the person's aura no matter capable of response, then the thought-form cannot affect it at all. It will therefore rebound from it, with a force proportional to the energy with which impinged upon it, and return to and strike its creator.

Thus, for example, the thought of the desire for drink could not enter the body of a purely temperate man. It would strike upon his astral body, but it could not penetrate and it would then return to the sender.

The old saying that "Curses (to which might be added blessings) come home to roost" conveys this truth and explains cases where, as many have known, evil thoughts directed to a good and highly advanced man affect such a man not at all, but re-act, sometimes with terrible and devastating effect, on their creator. Hence also the obvious corollary that a pure heart and mind are the best protection against inimical assaults of feeling and thought.

On the other hand, a thought-form of love and of desire to protect, strongly directed to some beloved objects, acts as a shielding and protecting agent : it will seek all opportunities to serve and defend, will [Page 50] strengthen friendly forces and weaken unfriendly ones, that impinge on the aura. It may protect its objects from impurity, irritability, fear, etc.

Friendly thoughts and earnest good wishes thus create and maintain what is practically a "guardian angel" always at the side of the person thought of, no matter where he may be. Many a mother's thoughts and prayers, for example, have given assistance and protection to her child. They may often be seen by clairvoyants, and in rare cases they may even materialise and become physically visible.

It is thus apparent that a thought of love sent from one person to another involves the actual transference of a certain amount both of force and of matter from the sender to the recipient.

If the thought is sufficiently strong, distance makes absolutely no difference to it: but a weak and diffused thought is not effective outside a limited area.

A variant of our first group consists of those cases where a man thinks strongly of himself in a distant place. The form thus created contains a large proportion of mental matter, takes the image of the thinker, and is at first small and compressed. It draws around itself a considerable amount of astral matter and usually expands to life size before it appears at its destination. Such forms are often seen by clairvoyants, and not infrequently are mistaken for the man's astral body or even for the man himself.

When this takes place, the thought or desire must be sufficiently strong to do one of three things: (1) To call up by mesmeric influence the image of the thinker in the mind of the person to whom he wishes to appear: (2) by the same power to stimulate for the moment that person's psychic faculties so that he is able to see the astral visitor; (3) to produce a temporary materialisation which will be physically visible.

Apparitions at the time of death, which are by no means uncommon, are very often really the astral form of the dying man: but they may also be thought-forms called into being by his earnest wish to see some friend [Page 51] before he passes on. In some instances the visitor is perceived just after the moment of death, instead of just before : but for various reasons this form of apparition is far less frequent than the other.

A family ghost may be (1) a thought-form, (2) an unusually vivid impression in the astral light, or (3) a genuine earth-bound ancestor still haunting some particular place.

In this connection, it may be added that wherever any intense passion has been felt, such as terror, pain, sorrow, hatred, etc., so powerful an impression is made on the astral light that persons with but a faint glimmer of psychic faculty may be impressed by it. A slight temporary increase of sensibility would enable a man to visualise the entire scene: hence many stories of haunted places, and of the unpleasant influences of such spots as Tyburn Tree, the Chamber of Horrors at Madame Tussaud's, etc..

Apparitions at the spot where a crime was committed are usually thought-forms projected by the criminal who, whether living or dead, but most especially when dead, is perpetually thinking over again and again the circumstances of his actions. Since these thoughts are naturally specially vivid in his mind on the anniversary of his crime, it may happen that the thought-form is strong enough to materialise itself so as to be visible to physical sight, thus accounting for many cases where the manifestation is periodical.

Similarly, a jewel, which has been the cause of many crimes, may retain the impressions of the passions prompting the crimes, with unimpaired clearness, for many thousands of years, and continue to radiate them.

A thought of phenomenal energy and concentration, whether it be a blessing or a curse, calls into being an elemental which is practically a living storage-battery with a kind of clockwork attachment. It can be arranged to discharge itself regularly at a certain our daily, or upon a certain anniversary, or its discharge maybe contingent upon certain occurrences. Many instances of this class of elemental are on record, [Page 52] particularly in the Highlands of Scotland, where physical warnings occur before the death of a member of the family. In these cases it is usually the powerful thought-form of an ancestor which gives the warning, according to the intention with which it was charged.

A sufficiently strong wish - a concentrated effort of intense love or envenomed hate - would create such an entity once for all, an entity which would then be quite disconnected from its creator, and would carry on its appointed work entirely irrespective of later intentions and desire on his part. Mere repentance could not recall it or prevent its action any more than repentance could stop a bullet once discharged. Its power could be to a considerable extent neutralised only by sending after it thoughts of a contrary tendency.

Occasionally an elemental of this class, being unable to expend its force either upon its object or its creator, may become a kind of wandering demon, and be attracted by any person who harbours similar feelings. If sufficiently powerful, it may even size upon and inhabit a passing shell (see page 171), in which it is able to husband its resources more carefully. In this form it may manifest through a medium, and, by masquerading as a well-known friend, may obtain influence over people upon whom it would otherwise have little hold.

Such elementals, whether formed consciously or unconsciously, which have become wandering demons, invariably seek to prolong their life, either by feeding like vampires upon the vitality of human beings, or by influencing them to make offerings to them. Among simple half-savage tribes they have frequently succeeded in getting themselves recognised as village or family gods. The less objectionable types may be content with offerings of rice and cooked foods : the lowest and most loathsome class demand blood-sacrifices. Both varieties exist today in India, and in greater numbers in Africa.

By drawing mainly upon the vitality of their [Page 53] devotees, and also upon the nourishment they can obtain from the offerings, they may prolong their existence for years, or even centuries. They may even perform occasional phenomena of a mild type in order to stimulate the faith and zeal of their followers, and they invariably make themselves unpleasant in some way or other if the sacrifices are neglected.

The black magicians of Atlantis - the "lords of the dark face" - seems to have specialised in this type of artificial elementals, some of which, it is hinted, may

have kept themselves in existence even to this day. The terrible Indian goddess, Kâli, may well be a relic of this type.

The vast majority of thought-forms are simply copies or images of people or other material objects. They are formed first within the mental body and then pass outwards and remain suspended before the man. This applies to anything about which one may be thinking : persons, houses, landscapes, or anything else.

A painter, for example, builds out of the matter of his mental body a conception of his future picture, projects it into space in front of him, keeps it before his "mind's eye", and copies it. This thought and emotion-form persists and may be regarded as the unseen counterpart of the picture, radiating out its own vibrations and affecting all who come within its influence.

Similarly a novelist builds in mental matter images of his characters, and then, by his will, moves these puppets from one position or grouping to another, so that the plot of the story is literally acted out before him.

A curious effect arises in such a case. A playful nature-spirit (See Chapter 20) may ensoul the images and cause them to do things other than those which the author intended them do to. More frequently a dead writer may perceive the images and, being still interested in the craft of writing, may mould the characters and influence their actions according to his [Page 54] own ideas. The actual writer thus often finds his plots working themselves out according to a plan quite different from his original conception.

In reading a book, it is possible for a genuine student, with attention fully concentrated, to get into touch with the original thought-form which represents the author's conception as he wrote. Through the thought-form the author himself may even be reached, and additional information thus obtained, or light gained on difficult points.

There are in the mental and astral worlds many renderings of well-known stories, each nation usually having its special presentation, with the characters dressed in its own particular national garb. There thus exist excellent and life-like thought-forms of people like Sherlock Holmes, Captain Kettle, Robinson Crusoe, Shakespeare's characters, etc..

In fact, there are on the astral plane vast numbers of thought-forms of a comparatively permanent character, often the result of the cumulative work of generations of people. Many of these refer to alleged religious history, and the sight of them by sensitive people is responsible for many quite genuine accounts given by untrained seers and seeresses. Any great historical event, having been constantly thought of, and vividly imaged by large numbers of people, exists as a definite thought-form on the mental plane, and wherever there is any strong emotion connected with it, it is materialised also in astral matter and consequently can be seen by a clairvoyant.

The above applies equally, of course, to scenes and situations in fiction, drama, etc..

Considered in the mass, it is easy to realise the tremendous effect that these thought-forms or artificial elementals have in producing national and race-feelings, and thus in biasing and prejudicing the mind : for thought-forms of a similar kind have a tendency to aggregate together and form a kind of collective entity. We see everything through this atmosphere, every thought is more or less refracted by it, and our own [Page 55] astral bodies are vibrating in accord with it. As most people are receptive rather than initiative in their nature, they act almost as automatic reproducers of the thoughts which reach them, and thus the national atmosphere is continually intensified. This fact obviously explains many of the phenomena of crowd-consciousness (See Chapter 25)

The influence of these aggregated thought-forms extends still further. Thought-forms of a destructive type act as a disruptive agent and often precipitate havoc on the physical plane, causing "accidents", natural convulsions, storms, earthquakes, floods, or crime, disease, social upheavals and wars.

It is possible also for dead people and other non-human entities, such as mischievous nature-spirits, (see page 181) for example, to enter and vivify these thought-images. The trained seer has to learn to distinguish the thought-form, even when vivified, from the living being, and prominent facts of the astral world from the temporary moulds into which they are cast.

Our third class of thought-emotion forms consists of those which are not directly connected with any natural objects, and which therefore express themselves in forms entirely their own, displaying their inherent qualities in the matter which they draw around themselves. In this group, therefore, we have a glimpse of the forms natural to the astral and mental planes. Thought-forms of this class almost invariably manifest themselves on the astral plane, as the vast majority of them are expressions of feeling as well as of thought.

Such a form simply floats detached in the atmosphere, all the time radiating vibrations similar to those originally sent forth by its creator. If it does not come into contact with any other mental body, the radiation gradually exhausts its store of energy and the form then falls to pieces; but if it succeeds in awakening sympathetic vibrations in any mental body near at hand, an attraction is set up, and the thought-form is usually absorbed by that mental body. [Page 56]

From the above we see that the influence of a thought-form is less far-reaching than that of a thought-vibration, but it acts with much greater precision. A thought-vibration reproduces thoughts of an order *similar* to that which gave it birth. A thought-form reproduces the *same* thought. The radiations may affect thousands and stir in them thoughts of the same level as the original, though none of them may be identical with it. The thought-form can affect only very few, but in those few cases it will reproduce exactly the initiatory idea.

For pictorial, coloured illustrations of many kinds of thought and emotion forms, the student is referred to the classic work on the subject: *Thought-Forms*, by Annie Besant and C.W.Leadbeater. This whole chapter, indeed, is largely a condensed summary of the principles enunciated in that work.

Vague thoughts or feelings show themselves as vague clouds. Definite thought or feelings create clearly defined forms. Thus a form of definite affection directed to a particular individual shapes itself not unlike a projectile: a thought of protective affection becomes somewhat like a bird, with a central portion of yellow and two wing-shaped projections of rose-pink: a thought of universal love becomes a rose-pink sun with rays in every direction.

Thoughts in which selfishness or greed are prominent usually take a hooked form, the hooks in some case actually clawing round the object desired.

As a general principle, the energy of a selfish thought moves in a closed curve, and thus inevitably returns and expends itself upon its own level. An absolutely unselfish thought or feeling, however, rushes forth in an open curve, and thus does *not* return, in the ordinary sense, but pierces through into the plane above, because only in that higher condition, with its additional dimension, can it find room for its expansion. But, in thus breaking through, such a thought or feeling opens a door, as we might say symbolically, of dimension equivalent to its diameter, and thus provides a [Page 57] channel through which the higher planes can pour themselves into the lower - often with wonderful results, as in the case of prayer, both for the thinker and for others.

Herein lies the highest and best part of the belief in answers to prayer. On the higher planes there is an infinite flood of force always ready and waiting to be poured through when a channel is offered. A thought of perfectly unselfish devotion provides such a channel, the grandest and noblest part of such a thought ascending to the Logos Himself. The response from Him is a descent of the divine life, resulting in a great strengthening and uplifting of the maker of the channel, and the spreading all about him of a powerful and beneficent influence, which flows through the reservoir that exists on the higher planes for the helping of mankind. It is this adding to the reservoir of spiritual force which is the truth in the catholic idea of works of supererogation. The Nirmânakâyas are especially associated with this great reservoir of force.

Meditation upon a Master makes a link with Him, which shows itself to clairvoyant vision as a kind of line of light. The Master always subconsciously feels the impinging of such a line, and sends out along it in response a steady stream of magnetism which continues to play long after the meditation is over. Regularity in such meditation is a very important factor.

A thought of definite, well-sustained devotion may assume a form closely resembling a flower, whilst devotional aspiration will create a blue cone, the apex pointing upwards.

Such thought-forms of devotion are often exceedingly beautiful, varying much in outline, but characterised by curved upward-pointing petals like azure flames. It is possible that the flower-like characteristic of devotion forms may have led to the custom of offering flowers in religious worship, the flowers suggesting the forms visible to astral sight. [Page 58]

Intense curiosity, or desire to know, takes the form of a yellow snake: explosive anger or irritation, of a splash of red and orange: sustained anger, of a sharp, red stiletto: spiteful jealousy shows itself as a brownish snake.

Forms produced by people who have mind and emotion well under control and definitely trained in meditation, are clear, symmetrical objects of great beauty, often taking well-known geometrical forms, such as triangles, two triangles interlaced, five-pointed stars, hexagons, crosses, and so on, these indicating thoughts concerned with cosmic order, or metaphysical concepts.

The power of the united thought of a number of people is always far more than the sum of their separate thoughts: it would be more nearly represented by their product.

Music also produces forms which are perhaps not technically thought-forms - unless we take them, as we them, as we well may, as the result of the thought of the composer, expressed by the skill of the musician through his instrument.

These music forms will vary according to the type of music, the kind of instrument which plays it, and the skill and merits of the performer. The same piece of music will, if accurately played, always build the same form, but that form will, when played on a church organ or by an orchestra, be enormously larger than, as well as of different texture from that produced when played upon a piano. There will also be a difference in texture between the result of a piece of music played upon a violin and the same piece executed upon a flute. There is also a wide difference between the radiant beauty of the form produced by a true artist, perfect expression and execution, and the relatively dull effect produced by a wooden and mechanical player.

Music forms may remain as coherent erections for a considerable time - an hour or two at least - and during all that time they are radiating their characteristics [Page 59] vibrations in every direction, just as thought-forms do.

In *Thought-Forms* three coloured examples are given, of music forms built by music of Mendelssohn, of Gounod, and of Wagner respectively.

The forms which are built vary much with different composers. An overture by Wagner makes a magnificent whole, as though he built with mountains of flame for stones. One of Bach's fugues builds up an ordered form, bold yet precise, rugged but symmetrical, with parallel rivulets of silver and gold or ruby running through it, marking the successive appearances of the *motif*. One of Mendelssohn's *Lieber ohne Worte* makes an airy erection, like a castle of filigree work in frosted silver.

These forms, created by the performers of the music, are quite distinct from the thought-forms made by the composer himself, which often persist for many years, even for centuries, if he is so far understood and appreciated that his original conception is strengthened by the thoughts of his admirers. Similar edifices are constructed by a poet's idea of his epic, or a writer's conception of his subject. Sometimes crowds of nature-spirits (see page 181) may be seen admiring the music -forms and bathing in the waves of influence which they send forth.

In studying pictorial representations of thought-forms it is important to bear in mind that thought-forms are four-dimensional objects. It is therefore a practical impossibility to describe them adequately in words which pertain to our ordinary three-dimensional experiences, still less to portray them in two-dimensional pictures on paper. Students of the fourth dimension will realise that the most that can be done is to represent a section of the four-dimensional forms.

It is remarkable, and possibly deeply significant fact, that many of the higher types of thought-forms assume shapes closely resembling vegetable and animal forms. We thus have at least a presumption that the forces of nature work along lines somewhat similar [Page 60] to those along which thought and emotion work. Since the whole universe is a mighty thought-form called into existence by the Logos, it may well be that tiny parts of it also result from the thought-forms of minor entities engaged in the same creative work. This conception naturally recalls the Hindu belief that there are 330,000,000 Devas.

It is also worthy of notice that, whilst some of the thought-forms are so complicated and so exquisitely fashioned as to be beyond the power of the human hand to reproduce, yet they may be very closely approximated by mechanical means. The instrument, known as a Harmonograph, consists of a fine point guided in its path by several pendulums, each of which has its own independent swing, all of these being welded into one composite movement, which is communicated to the pointer, and which the pointer registers on a suitable surface.

Other, though simpler forms, resemble the sand figures produced by the well-known Chladni's sound plate or by the Eidophone [vide *Eidophone Voice Figures*, by Margaret Watts Hughes].

Scales and arpeggios thrown out lasso-like loops and curves: a song with a chorus produces a number of beads strung on a silver thread of melody : in a glee or part-song intertwining threads of different colours and textures are produced. A processional hymn builds a series of precise rectangular forms, like the links of a chain or the carriages of a railway train. An Anglican chant makes glittering fragments, quite different from the glowing uniformity of the Gregorian tone, which is not unlike the effect of Sanskrit verses chanted by an Indian pandit.

Military music produces a long stream of rhythmically vibrating forms, the regular beat of these undulations tending to strengthen those of the astral bodies of the soldiers, the impact of a succession of steady and powerful oscillations supplying for the time the place of the will-force which, through fatigue, may have been slackened. [Page 61]

A thunderstorm creates a flaming band of colour, a crash making a form suggestive of an exploding bomb, or an irregular sphere with spikes projecting from it. Sea-waves breaking on the shore create wavy, parallel lines of changing colour, becoming mountain ranges in a storm. Wind in the leaves of forest covers it with iridescent network, rising and falling with gentle wave-like movement.

The song of birds shows as curving lines and loops of light, from the golden globes of the *campanero* to the amorphous and coarsely-coloured mass of the scream of a parrot or macaw. The roar of a lion is also visible in higher matter and it is possible that some wild creatures are able to see it clairvoyantly, thus adding to their terror. A purring cat surrounds itself with concentric rosy cloud-films: a barking dog shoots forth well-defined sharp-pointed projectiles not unlike a rifle bullet, which pierce the astral bodies of people and seriously disturb them. The bay of a bloodhound throws off beads like footballs, slower in motion and less liable to injure. The colour of these projectiles is usually red or brown, varying with the emotion of the animal and the key of his voice.

The lowing of a cow produces blunt-ended clumsy shapes like logs of wood. A flock of sheep makes a many-pointed yet amorphous cloud not unlike a dust-cloud. The cooing of a pair of doves makes graceful curved forms like the letter S reversed.

Turning to human sounds, an angry ejaculation throws itself forth like a scarlet spear: a stream of silly chatter produces an intricate network of hard brown-grey metallic lines, forming an almost perfect barrier against any higher or more beautiful thoughts and feelings. The astral body of a garrulous person is a striking object-lesson on the folly of unnecessary, useless and unpleasant speech.

A child's laughter bubbles forth in rosy curves: the guffaw of an empty-minded person causes an explosive effect in an irregular mass, usually brown or dirty green. A sneer throws out a shapeless projectile [Page 62] of dull red, usually flecked with brownish-green and bristling with sharp points.

The cachinations of the self-conscious produce the appearance and colour of a pool of boiling mud. Nervous giggles creates a sea-weed like tangle of brown and dull yellow lines, and have a very bad effect upon the astral body. A jolly, kindly laugh billows out in rounded forms of gold and green. A soft and musical whistle produces an effect not unlike that of a small flute, but sharper and more metallic. Tuneless whistling sends out small piercing projectiles of dirty brown.

Fidgetiness or fussiness produces in the aura tremulous vibrations, so that no thought or feeling can pass in or out without distortion, even good thoughts being sent out taking with it a shiver that practically neutralises it. Accuracy in thought is essential, but it should be attained not by hurry or fuss but by perfect calmness.

The strident screech of a railway engine makes a far more penetrating and powerful projectile than even the bark of a dog, producing upon the astral body an effect comparable to that of a sword thrust upon the physical body. An astral wound heals in a few minutes, but the shock to the astral organism disappears by no means so readily.

The firing of a gun produces a serious effect upon astral currents and astral bodies. Rifle or pistol fire throws out a stream of small needles.

Repeated noises affect the mental and astral bodies precisely as blows affect the physical body. In the physical body the result would be pain: in the astral body it means irritability: in the mental body a feeling of fatigue and inability to think clearly.

It is abundantly clear that all loud, sharp or sudden sounds should, as far as possible, be avoided by any one who wishes to keep his astral and mental vehicles in good order. Especially disastrous is the effect, e.g., of the ceaseless noise and roar of a city upon the plastic astral and mental bodies of children.

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All the sounds of nature blend themselves into one tone, called by the Chinese the "Great Tone", or KUNG. This also has its form, a synthesis of all forms, vast and changeful as the sea, representing the note of our earth in the music of the spheres. This is said by some writers to be the note F of our scale.

It is, of course, possible to destroy a thought-form, and this is sometimes done, for example, where a person after death is pursued by a malignant thought-form, created probably by the hate of those whom the person had injured whilst in the physical world. Although such a thought-form may appear almost as a living creature - an instance is given where it resembled a huge distorted gorilla - it is simply a temporary creation of evil passion and in no sense an evolving entity, so that to dissipate it is simply like destroying a Leyden jar, and it is not in any sense a criminal action.

Most men recognise that acts which injure others are definitely and obviously wrong, but few recognise that it is also wrong to feel jealousy, hatred, ambition, etc., even though such feelings are not expressed in speech or deed. An examination of the conditions of life after death (Chapters 13 to 15) reveals that such feelings injure the man who harbours them, and cause him acute suffering after death.

A study of thought-forms thus brings home to the earnest student the tremendous possibilities of such creations, and the responsibility attaching to a

right use of them. Thoughts are not only things, but exceedingly *puissant* things. Every one is generating them unceasingly night and day. Often it is not possible to render physical aid to those in need, but there is no case in which help may not be given by thought, or in which it can fail to produce a definite result. No one need hesitate to use this power to the full: provided always that it be employed for unselfish purposes, and for furthering the divine scheme of evolution. [Page 64]

## CHAPTER 8

### PHYSICAL LIFE

In Chapter 2 we considered, in general outline, the composition and structure of the astral body. We shall now proceed to study it, in greater detail, as it exists and is used during the ordinary *waking* consciousness of the physical body.

The factors which determine the nature and quality of the astral body during physical life may be roughly grouped as follows: -

- 1- The physical life.
- 2- The emotional life.
- 3- The mental life

1- *The Physical Life.* - We have already seen (page 8) that every particle of the physical body has its corresponding astral "counterpart". Consequently, as the solids, liquids, gases and ethers of which the physical is composed may be coarse or refined, gross or delicate, so will be the nature of the corresponding astral envelopes. A physical body nourished on impure food will produce a corresponding impure astral body, whilst a physical body fed on clean food and drink will help to purify the astral vehicle.

The astral body being the vehicle of emotion, passion and sensation, it follows that an astral body of the grosser type will be chiefly amenable to the grosser varieties of passion and emotion: whereas a finer astral body will more readily vibrate to more refined emotions and aspirations.

It is impossible to make the physical body coarse and at the same time to organise the astral and mental bodies for finer purposes: neither is it possible to have a pure physical body with impure mental and astral bodies. All three bodies are thus interdependent. [Page 65]

Not only the physical body, but also the higher bodies also, are affected by the food which is eaten. Carnivorous diet is fatal to anything like real occult development and those who adopt it are throwing serious and unnecessary difficulties in their own way, for flesh food intensifies all the undesirable elements and passions of the lower planes.

In the ancient Mysteries were men of the utmost purity and they were invariably vegetarian. The Râja Yogi takes especial pains to purify the physical body by an elaborate system of food, drink, sleep, etc., and insists on foods which are *sâtvic*,

or "rhythmic". A whole system relating to foodstuffs is built up to help in the preparation of the body for use by the higher consciousness. Flesh foods are *rajasic*, i.e., they come under the quality of activity, being stimulants, and built up to express animal desires and activities. They are utterly unsuited to the finer type of nervous organisation. The yogi therefore cannot afford to use these for the higher processes of thought.

Foods on the way to decay, such as game, venison, etc., as well as alcohol, are *tamasic*, or heavy, and also to be avoided.

Foods which tend to growth, such as grain and fruits, are *sâtvic*, or rhythmic, being the most highly vitalised and suitable for building up a body sensitive and at the same time strong.

Certain other substances also affect the physical and astral bodies detrimentally. Thus tobacco permeates the physical body with impure particles, causing emanations so material that they are frequently perceptible to the sense of smell, Astrally, tobacco not only introduces impurity, but tends also to deaden the sensibility of the body: "soothing the nerves", as it is called. While this may, in conditions of modern life, be sometimes less harmful than leaving the nerves "unsoothed", it is certain undesirable for an occultist, who needs the capacity of answering instantly to all possible vibrations, combined, of course, with perfect control. [Page 66]

Similarly, there is no doubt whatever that from the point of view of both astral and mental bodies the use of alcohol is always an evil.

Bodies fed on flesh and alcohol are liable to be thrown out of health by opening up of the higher consciousness: and nervous diseases are partly due to the fact that the human consciousness is trying to express itself through bodies clogged with flesh products and poisoned with alcohol. In particular, the pituitary body is very readily poisoned by even a very small amount of alcohol, and its highest evolution is thereby checked. It is the poisoning of the pituitary body with alcohol that leads to the abnormal and irrational vision associated with delirium tremens.

In addition to the direct coarsening of the physical and astral bodies, meat, tobacco and alcohol are open also to the serious objection that they tend to attract undesirable astral entities which take pleasure in the scent of blood and spirits: they surge around the person, impressing their thoughts upon him, forcing their impressions on his astral body, so that the person may have a kind of shell of objectionable entities hanging on to his aura. Principally for this reason, in the Yoga of the Right Hand Path meat and wine are absolutely forbidden.

These entities consist of artificial elementals, given birth to by the thoughts and desires of men, and also of depraved men imprisoned in their astral bodies, known as elementaries (see page 145). The elementals are attracted towards people whose astral bodies contain matter congenial to their nature, while the elementaries naturally seek to indulge in vices such as they themselves

encouraged while in physical bodies. An astral clairvoyant can see hordes of loathsome elementals crowding round butchers' shops, whilst in beer-houses and gin-palaces elementaries specially gather, feasting on the emanation of the liquors, and thrusting themselves sometimes into the very bodies of the drinkers.

Nearly all drugs - such as opium, cocaine, [Page 67] theine in tea, caffeine in coffee, etc. - produce a deleterious effect upon the higher vehicles. Occasionally they are, of course, almost a necessity, in certain diseases: but an occultist should use them as sparingly as possible.

One who knows how to do it can remove the evil effect of opium (which may have been used to relieve great pain) from the astral and mental bodies after it has done its work on the physical.

Dirt of all kinds is also more objectionable in the higher worlds even than in the physical and attracts a low class of nature-spirits (see page 181). The occultist therefore needs to be stringent in all matters of cleanliness. Especial attention should be paid to the hands and feet, because through these extremities emanations flow out so readily.

Physical noises, such as prevail in cities, jar the nerves and thus cause irritations and fatigue: the effect is accentuated by the pressure of so many astral bodies vibrating at different rates, and all excited and disturbed by trifles. Although such irritation is superficial, and may pass out of the mind in ten minutes, yet an effect may be produced in the astral body lasting for forty-eight hours. Hence it is difficult, whilst living in modern cities, to avoid irritability, especially for one whose bodies are more highly strung and sensitive than those of the ordinary man.

In general, it may be said that everything which promotes the health of the physical body also reacts favourably upon the higher vehicles.

Travel is another of the many factors which affect the astral body, by bringing to bear on the traveller a change of etheric and astral influences connected with each place or district. Ocean, mountain, forest, waterfall, each has its own special type of life, astral and etheric as well as visible, and therefore its own set of influences. Many of these unseen entities are pouring out vitality, and in any case their effect on etheric, astral and mental bodies is likely to be healthy and desirable in the long run, though a change may be somewhat tiring at the time. Hence an occasional [Page 68] change from town to country is beneficial on the ground of emotional as well as physical health.

The astral body may also be affected by such objects as talismans. The methods of making them have already been described in *The Etheric Double*, pages 113 to 119. We shall here deal only with their general effects.

When an object is strongly charged with magnetism for a particular purpose by a competent person, it becomes a talisman, and when properly made continues to radiate this magnetism with unimpaired strength for many years.

It may be used for many purposes. Thus, for example, a talisman may be charged with thoughts of purity, which will express themselves as definite rates of vibration in astral and mental matter. These vibratory rates, being directly contrary to thoughts of impurity, will tend to neutralise or overpower any impure thought which may arise. In many cases the impure thought is a casual one that has been picked up and is not therefore a thing of great power in itself. The talisman, on the other hand, has been intentionally and strongly charged, so that when the two streams of thought meet, there is not the slightest doubt that the thoughts connected with the talisman will vanquish the others.

In addition, the initial conflict between the opposing sets of thoughts will attract the man's attention, and thus give him time to recollect himself, so that he will not be taken off this guard, as so frequently happens.

Another example would be that of a talisman charged with faith and courage. This would operate in two ways. First, the vibrations radiating from the talisman would oppose feelings of fear as soon as they arose, and thus prevent them from accumulating and strengthening one another, as they often do, until they become irresistible. The effect has been compared to that of a gyroscope which, once set in motion in one direction, strongly resists being turned into another direction.

Secondly, the talisman works indirectly upon the [Page 69] mind of the wearer: as soon as he feels the beginnings of fear, he will probably recollect the talisman, and call up the reserve strength of his own will to resist the undesirable feeling.

A third possibility of a talisman is that of its being linked with the person who made it. In the event of the wearer being in desperate circumstances, he may call upon the maker and evoke a response from him. The maker may or may not be physically conscious of the appeal, but in any case his ego will be conscious and will respond by reinforcing the vibrations of the talisman.

Certain articles are to a large extent natural amulets or talismans. All precious stones are such, each having a distinct influence which can be utilised in two ways: (1) the influence attracts to it elemental essence of a certain kind, and thoughts and desires which naturally express themselves through that essence; (2) these natural peculiarities make it a fit vehicle for magnetism which is intended to work along the same line as those thoughts and emotions. Thus, for example, for an amulet of purity, a stone should be chosen whose natural undulations are inharmonious to the key in which impure thoughts express themselves.

Although the particles of the stone are physical, yet, being in a key identical at this level with the key of purity on higher levels, they will, even without the stone being magnetised, check impure thought or feeling by virtue of the overtones. Furthermore, the stone can readily be charged at astral and mental levels with the undulations of pure thought and feeling which are set in the same key.

Other examples are (1) the rudraksha berry, frequently used for necklaces in India, which is especially suitable for magnetisation where sustained holy thought or meditation is required, and where all disturbing influences are to be kept away; (2) the beads of the tulsi plant, whose influence is somewhat different.

Objects which produce strong scents are natural talismans. Thus the gums chosen for incense give [Page 70] out radiations favourable to spiritual and devotional thought, and do not harmonise with any form of disturbance or worry. Mediaeval witches sometimes combined the ingredients of incense so as to produce the opposite effect, and it is also done today in Luciferian ceremonies. It is generally desirable to avoid coarse and heavy scents, such as that of musk or of satchet powder, as many of them are akin to sensual feelings.

An object not intentionally charged may sometimes have the force of a talisman: e.g., a present from a friend, worn on the person, such as a ring or chain, or even a letter.

An object, such as a watch, habitually carried in the pocket, becomes charged with magnetism and is able, if given away, to produce decided effects on the recipient. Coins and money notes are usually charged with mixed magnetism, feeling and thought, and may, therefore, radiate a disturbing and irritating effect.

A man's thoughts and feelings thus affect not only himself and other people, but also impregnate the inanimate objects round him, even walls and furniture. He thus unconsciously magnetises these physical objects, so that they have the power of suggesting similar thoughts and feelings to other people within range of their influence.

(2) *The Emotional Life*. - It is scarcely necessary to insist that the quality of the astral body is largely determined by the kind of feelings and emotions which constantly play through it.

A man is using his astral body, whether he be conscious of the fact or not, whenever he expresses an emotion, just as he is using his mental body whenever he thinks, or his physical body whenever he performs physical work. This, of course, is quite a different thing from utilising his astral body as an *independent vehicle* through which his consciousness can be fully expressed, a matter which we shall have to consider later, in due course.

The astral body, as we have seen, is the field of manifestation of desire, the mirror in which every feeling [Page 71] is instantly reflected, in which even every thought which has in it anything that touches the personal self must express itself. From the material of the astral body bodily form is given to the dark "elementals" (see page 45), which men create and set in motion by evil wishes and malicious feelings: from it also are bodied forth the beneficent elementals called into life by good wishes, gratitude and love.

The astral body grows by use, just as every other body does, and it also has its own habits, built up and fixed by constant repetition of similar acts. The astral

body during physical life being the recipient of and respondent to stimuli both from the physical body and from the lower mental, it tends to repeat automatically vibrations to which it is accustomed; just as the hand may repeat a familiar gesture, so may the astral body repeat a familiar feeling or thought.

All the activities that we call evil, whether selfish thoughts (mental) or selfish emotions (astral), invariably show themselves as vibrations of the coarser matter of those planes, whilst good and unselfish thought or emotion sets in vibrations the higher types of matter. As finer matter is more easily moved than coarse, it follows that a given amount of force spent in good thought or feeling produces perhaps a hundred times as much result as the same amount of force sent out into coarser matter. If this were not so, it is obvious that the ordinary man could never make any progress at all.

The effect of 10% of force directed to good ends enormously outweighs that of 90% devoted to selfish purposes, and so on the whole such a man makes an appreciable advance from life to life. A man who has even 1% of good makes a slight advance. A man whose account balances exactly, so that he neither advances nor retrogresses, must live a distinctly evil life: whilst in order to go downwards in evil a person must be an unusually consistent villain.

Thus even people who are doing nothing consciously towards their evolution, and who let everything go as [Page 72] it will, are nevertheless gradually evolving, because of the irresistible force of the Logos which is steadily pressing them onwards. But they are moving so slowly that it will take them millions of years of incarnation and trouble and uselessness to gain even a step.

The method by which progress is made certain is simple and ingenious. As we have seen, evil qualities are vibrations of the coarser matter of the respective planes, while good qualities are expressed through the higher grades of matter. From this follow two remarkable results.

It must be born in mind that each sub-plane of the astral body has a special relationship to the corresponding sub-plane of the mental body; thus the four lower astral sub-planes correspond to the four kinds of matter in the mental body, while the three higher astral sub-planes correspond to the three kinds of matter in the causal body.

Hence the lower astral vibrations can find no matter in the causal body capable of responding to them, and so the higher qualities alone can be built into the causal body. Thence it emerges that any good which a man develops in himself is permanently recorded by a change in his causal body, while the evil which he does, feels, or thinks cannot possibly touch the real ego, but can cause disturbance and trouble only to the mental body, which is renewed for each fresh incarnation. The result of evil is stored in the astral and mental permanent atoms: the man, therefore, has still to face it all over and over again, until he has vanquished it, and finally rooted from his vehicles all tendency to respond to it.

That is evidently a very different matter from taking it into the ego and making it really a part of himself.

Astral matter responds more rapidly than physical to every impulse from the world of mind, and consequently the astral body of a man, being made of astral matter, shares this readiness to respond to the impact of thought, and thrills in answer to every thought [Page 73] that strikes it, whether the thoughts come from without, i.e., from the minds of other men, or from within, from the mind of its owner.

An astral body, therefore, which is made by its owner to respond habitually to evil thoughts acts as a magnet to similar thought - and emotion-forms in its vicinity, whereas a pure astral body acts on such thoughts with repulsive energy, and attracts to itself thought - and emotion-forms of matter and vibrations congruous with its own.

For it must be borne in mind that the astral world is full of thoughts and emotions of other men, and that these exert a ceaseless pressure, constantly bombarding every astral body and setting up in it vibrations similar to their own.

In addition, there are nature-spirits (see page 181) of a low order, which enjoy the coarse vibrations of anger and hatred, and throw themselves into any current of such nature, thus intensifying the undulations and adding fresh life to them. People yielding themselves to coarse feelings can depend on being constantly surrounded by such carrion-crows of the astral world who jostle one another in eager anticipation of an outburst of passion.

Many of the moods to which most people are subject, in greater or lesser degree, are due to outside astral influences. Whilst depression, for example, may be due to a purely physical cause, such as indigestion, a chill, fatigue, etc., even more frequently it is caused by the presence of an astral entity who is himself depressed and is hovering around either in search of sympathy or in the hope of drawing from the subject the vitality which he lacks.

Furthermore, a man who, for example, is beside himself with rage, temporarily loses hold of his astral body, the desire-elemental (see page 6) becoming supreme. Under such circumstances the man may be seized upon and obsessed either by a dead man of similar nature or by some evil artificial elemental. [Page 74]

The student should sternly and especially disregard depression, which is a great barrier to progress, and at least should endeavour to let no one else know that he is oppressed by it. It indicates that he is thinking more of himself than of the Master, and it makes it more difficult for the Master's influence to act upon him. Depression causes much suffering to sensitive people, and is responsible for much of the terror of children at night. The inner life of an aspirant ought not to be one of continual emotional oscillation.

Above all things, the aspirant should learn not to worry. Contentment is not incompatible with aspiration. Optimism is justified by the certainty of the ultimate

triumph of good, though it is true that if we take into account only the physical plane it is not easy to maintain that position.

Under the stress of very powerful emotions, if a man lets himself go too far, he may die, become insane, or be obsessed. Such obsession need not necessarily be what we call evil, though the truth is that all obsession is injurious.

An illustration of this phenomenon may be taken from "conversion" at a religious revival. On such occasions some men get worked up into a condition of such tremendous emotional excitement that they swing beyond the degree of safety: they may then be obsessed by a departed preacher of the same religious persuasion, and thus two souls may be temporarily work through one body. The tremendous energy of these hysterical excesses is contagious and may spread rapidly through a crowd.

An astral disturbance is set up of the nature of a gigantic whirlpool. Towards this pour astral entities whose one desire is for sensation: these are all kinds of nature-spirits (see page 181) who delight in and bathe in the vibrations of wild excitement, of whatever character, be it religious or sexual, just as children play in the surf. They supply and reinforce the energy so recklessly expended. The dominant idea being usually the selfish one of saving one's own soul, [Page 75] the astral matter is of a coarse kind, and the nature-spirits are also of a primitive type.

The emotional effect of a religious revival is thus very powerful. In some cases a man may be genuinely and permanently benefited by his "conversion", but the serious student of occultism should avoid such excesses of emotional excitement, which for many people are apt to be dangerous. "Excitement is alien to the spiritual life".

There are, of course, many causes of insanity: it may be due to defects in one or more of the vehicles - physical, etheric, astral, mental. In one variety it is caused by a want of accurate adjustment between the astral particles and the particles of either the etheric or the mental body. Such a case would not recover sanity until he reached the heaven-world, *i.e.*, until he had left his astral body and passed into his mental body. This type of insanity is rare.

The effect on the astral body caused by astral vibrations of another astral body has long been recognised in the East, and is one of the reasons why it is such an immense advantage to a pupil to live in close proximity to one more highly evolved than himself. An Indian teacher not only may prescribe for his pupil special kinds of exercises or study, in order to purify, strengthen and develop the astral body, but also by keeping the pupil in his neighbourhood physically seeks by this close association to harmonise and attune the pupil's vehicles to his own. Such a teacher has already calmed his own vehicles and accustomed them to vibrate at a few carefully selected rates instead of in a hundred promiscuous frenzies. These few rates of vibration are very strong and steady, and each day

and night, whether he is sleeping or waking, they play unceasingly upon the vehicles of the pupil, and gradually raise him to his teacher's key.

For similar reasons, an Indian, who wishes to live the higher life, retires to the jungle, as a man of other races withdraws from the world and lives as a hermit. He thus has at least breathing space, and rest from [Page 76] from the endless conflict caused by the perpetual battering on his vehicles of other people's feelings and thoughts, and can find time to think coherently. The calm influences of Nature are also to a certain extent helpful.

Somewhat analogous are the effects produced on animals which are closely associated with human beings. The devotion of an animal for the master whom he loves, and his mental efforts to understand his master's wishes and to please him, enormously develop the animal's intellect and his power of devotion and affection. But in addition to this, the constant play of the man's vehicles on those of the animal greatly assist the process, and thus prepare the way for the animal to individualise and become a human entity.

It is possible, by an effort of will, to make a shell of astral matter on the periphery of the astral aura. This may be done for three purposes: (1) to keep out emotional vibrations, such as anger, envy or hatred, intentionally directed at one by another; (2) to keep out casual vibrations of low type which may be floating in the astral world and impinge upon one's aura; (3) to protect the astral body during meditation. Such shells do not usually last for long, but need to be frequently renewed if required for any length of time.

Such a shell would, of course, keep vibrations *in* as well as *out*. The student should therefore make the shell only of the coarsest astral matter, as he will not wish to keep away, or to prevent from passing outwards, vibrations in the higher types of astral matter.

As a general principle, it may be said that to use a shell for oneself is to some extent a confession of weakness, as if one is all one should be, no artificial protection of this kind would be needed. On the other hand, shells may often be used with advantage to help other people who need protection.

It will be recollected (see page 6) that a man's astral body consists not only of ordinary astral matter, but also of a quantity of elemental essence. During the [Page 77] man's life this elemental essence is segregated from the ocean of similar matter around, and practically becomes for that time what may be described as a kind of artificial elemental (see page 450 i.e., a kind of semi-intelligent separate entity known as the Desire-Elemental. The Desire-Elemental follows the course of its own evolution downwards into matter without any reference to (or, indeed, any knowledge of) the convenience or intention of the Ego to whom it happens to be attached. Its interests are thus diametrically opposed to those of the man, as it is seeking ever stronger and coarser vibrations. Hence the perpetual struggle described by St.Paul as "the law in the members warring against the law of the mind". Furthermore, finding that

association with the mental matter of the man's mind-body brings to it more vivid vibrations, it endeavours to stir up the mental matter into sympathy with it, and to induce the man to believe that *he* desires the sensations which it desires.

Consequently, it becomes a sort of tempter. Nevertheless the desire-elemental is not an evil entity: in fact it is not an evolving entity at all, having no power of reincarnation: it is only the essence of which it is composed which is evolving. Nor has this shadowy being any evil designs upon the man, for it knows nothing whatever of the man of whom, for the time, it forms a part. It is thus in no way a fiend to the regarded with horror, but is as much a part of the divine life as the man himself, though at a different stage of its unfoldment.

It is a mistake to imagine that by refusing to gratify the desire-elemental with coarse vibrations, a man is thereby checking its evolution: for this is not the case. By controlling the passions and developing the higher qualities, a man drops the lower and helps to evolve the higher types of essence: the lower kinds of vibrations can be supplied by an animal, at some later time, even better than by a man, whereas no one but a man can evolve the higher type of essence.

All through life a man should definitely fight against [Page 78] the desire-elemental and its tendency to seek for the lower, coarser physical vibrations, recognising quite clearly that its consciousness, its like and dislikes, are not his own. He has himself created it and should not become a slave to it, but learn to control it and realise himself as apart from it.

This matter will be further considered in Chapter 12.

3) *The Mental Life.* - Our third and last factor which affects the astral body during ordinary waking consciousness is the mental life. The mental activities have the most far-reaching effects on the astral body for two reasons: -

(1) Because lower mental matter, Manas, is so inextricably linked with astral matter, Kâma, that it is almost impossible for most people to utilise one without the other: *i.e.*, few people can think without at the same time feeling, or feel without at the same time, to some extent, thinking.

(2) Because the organisation and control of the astral body rest with the mind. This is an example of the general principle that each body is built up by consciousness working in the plane next above it. Without the creative power of thought the astral body cannot be organised.

Every impulse sent by the mind to the physical body has to pass through the astral body, and produces an effect on it also. Further, as astral matter is far more responsive to thought-vibrations than is physical, the effect of mental vibrations on it is proportionately greater than on the physical body.

Consequently a controlled, trained and developed mind tends also to bring the astral body under control and to develop it. When, however, the mind is not actively controlling the astral body, the latter, being peculiarly susceptible to the

influence of passing thought-currents, is perpetually receiving these stimuli from without, and eagerly responding to them.

So far, we have dealt with the general effects produced on the astral body, during ordinary life, by the nature of the physical, emotional and mental life. [Page 79] We have now to deal, but in general outline only, with the use of the special faculties of the astral body itself, during the waking consciousness.

The nature of these faculties, and their connection with the various Chakrams in the astral body, we have already described in Chapter 5. By means of the powers of astral matter itself, developed through the agency of the Chakrams, a man is enabled not only to receive vibrations from etheric matter, transmitted through the astral body to his mind, but also to receive impressions direct from the surrounding matter of the astral world, these, of course, being also similarly transmitted through the mental body to the real man within.

But in order to receive impressions in this manner direct from the astral world, the man must learn to focus his consciousness in his astral body, instead of, as is usually the case, in his physical brain.

In the lower types of men, Kâma, or desire, is still emphatically the most prominent feature, though the mental development has also proceeded to some extent. The consciousness of such men is centred in the lower part of the astral body, their life being governed by sensations connected with the physical plane. That is the reason why the astral body forms the most prominent part of the aura in the undeveloped man.

An ordinary man of our own race is also still living almost entirely in his sensations, although the higher astral is coming into play: but still, for him, the prominent question which guides his conduct is not what is right or reasonable to do, but simply what he himself desires to do. The more cultured and developed are beginning to govern desire by reason: that is to say, the centre of consciousness is gradually transferring itself from the higher astral to the lower mental. Slowly as the man progresses it moves up further still, and the man begins to be dominated by principle rather than by interest and desire.

The student will recollect that humanity is still [Page 80] in the Fourth Round, which should naturally be devoted to the development of desire and emotion; yet we are engaged in the unfolding of intellect, which is to be the special characteristic of the Fifth Round. That this is so is due to the immense stimulus given to our evolution by the descent of the Lords of the Flame from Venus, and by the work of the Adepts, who have preserved for us that influence and steadily sacrificed themselves in order that we might make the better progress.

It should also be recollected that, in the smaller cycle of races, the Fifth Root Race is working at the mind-body, whereas the Fourth Root Race is more especially concerned with the astral body.

In spite of the fact that, in the vast majority of cases the centre of consciousness is located in the astral body, most men are quite unaware of the fact, knowing nothing at all about the astral body or its uses. They have behind them the traditions and customs of a long series of lives in which the astral faculties have not been used; yet all the time those faculties have been gradually and slowly growing inside a shell, somewhat as a chick grows inside the egg. Hence a very large number of people have astral faculties, of which they are entirely unconscious, in reality very near the surface, so to speak, and its probable that in the near future, as these matters become more widely known and understood, in great numbers of cases these latent faculties will break through, and astral powers will then become far more common than they are today.

The shell spoken of above is composed of a great mass of self-centred thought in which the ordinary man is almost hopelessly entombed. This applies also, perhaps with even greater force, to the sleep life, with which we shall deal in the next chapter.

We spoke above of focusing the consciousness in the astral body. The consciousness of man can be focused in only one vehicle at a time, though he may be simultaneously conscious through the others in a vague way. [Page 81] a simple analogy may be taken from ordinary physical sight. If the finger be held up before the face, the eyes can be so focussed as to see the finger perfectly: at the same time the distant background can also be seen, though imperfectly, because it is out of focus. In a moment the focus can be changed so that the background is seen perfectly, but the finger, now out of focus, only dimly and vaguely.

Precisely in the same way, if a man who has developed astral and mental consciousness focuses himself in the physical brain, as in ordinary life, he will see perfectly the physical bodies of people, and at the same time he will see their astral and mental bodies, but only somewhat dimly. In far less than a moment he can change the focus of his consciousness so that he sees the astral fully and perfectly: but in that case he will see the mental and physical bodies also, but not in full detail. The same thing is true of the mental sight and of the sight of higher planes.

Thus in the case of a highly developed man, whose consciousness has already developed even beyond the causal (higher mental) body, so that he is able to function freely on the buddhic plane, and has also a measure of consciousness upon the âtmic plane, the centre of consciousness lies between the higher mental and the buddhic plane. The higher mental and the higher astral are in him much more developed than their lower parts, and though he still retains his physical body, he holds it merely for the convenience of working in it, and not in any way because his thoughts and desires are fixed there. Such a man has transcended all Kâma which could bind him to incarnation, and his physical body is therefore retained in order that it may serve as an instrument for the forces of the higher planes to reach down even to the physical plane. [Page 82]

## CHAPTER 9

### SLEEP-LIFE

The real cause of sleep would appear to be that the bodies grow tired of one another. In the case of the physical body, not only every muscular exertion, but also every feeling and thought, produce certain slight chemical changes. A healthy body is always trying to counteract these changes, but it never quite succeeds whilst the body is awake. Consequently with every thought, feeling or action there is a slight, almost imperceptible loss, the cumulative effect of which eventually leaves the physical body too exhausted to be capable of further thought or work. In some cases even a few moments of sleep will be sufficient for recuperation, this being effected by the physical elemental.

In the case of the astral body, it very soon becomes tired of the heavy labour of moving the particles of the physical brain, and needs a considerable period of separation from it to enable it to gather strength to resume the irksome task.

On its own plane, however, the astral body is practically incapable of fatigue, since it has been known to work incessantly for twenty-five years without showing signs of exhaustion.

Although excessive and long-continued emotion tires a man very quickly in ordinary life, it is not the astral body which becomes fatigued, but the physical organism through which the emotion is expressed or experienced.

Similarly with the mental body. When we speak of mental fatigue, it is in reality a misnomer, for it is the brain, not the mind, that is tired. There is no such thing as fatigue of the *mind*. [Page 83]

When a man leaves his body in sleep (or in death), the pressure of the surrounding astral matter - which really means the force of gravity on the astral plane - immediately forces other astral matter into the astrally empty space. Such a temporary astral counterpart is an exact copy, so far as arrangement is concerned, of the physical body, but nevertheless it has no real connection with it, and could never be used as a vehicle. It is merely a fortuitous concurrence of particles, drawn from any astral matter of a suitable kind that happens to be at hand. When the true astral body returns, it pushes out this other astral matter without the slightest opposition.

This is clearly one reason why extreme care should be exercised as to the surroundings in which a man sleeps: for, if those surrounding are evil, astral matter of an objectionable type may fill the physical body while the man's astral body is absent, leaving behind influences which cannot but react unpleasantly upon the real man when he returns.

When a man "goes to sleep", his higher principles in their astral vehicle withdraw from the physical body, the dense body and the etheric body remaining by

themselves on the bed, the astral body floating in the air above them. In sleep, then, a man is simply using his astral body instead of his physical: it is only the physical body that is asleep, not necessarily the man himself.

Usually the astral body, thus withdrawn from the physical, will retain the form of the physical body, so that the person is readily recognisable to any one who knows him physically. This is due to the fact that the attraction between the astral and the physical particles, continued all through physical life, sets up a habit or momentum in the astral matter, which continues even while it is temporarily withdrawn from the sleeping physical body.

For this reason, the astral body of a man who is asleep will consist of a central portion corresponding [Page 84] to the physical body, relatively very dense, and a surrounding aura, relatively much rarer.

In the case of a very undeveloped man, such as a savage, he may be nearly as much asleep as his physical body, because he is capable of very little definite consciousness in his astral body. He is also unable to move away from the immediate neighbourhood of the sleeping physical body, and if an attempt were made to draw him away in his astral body, he would probably awake in his physical body in terror.

His astral body is a somewhat shapeless mass, a floating wreath of mist, roughly ovoid in shape, but very irregular and indefinite in outline: the features and shape of the inner form (the dense astral counterpart of the physical body) are also vague, blurred and indistinct, but always recognisable.

A man of this primitive type has been using his astral body, during waking consciousness, sending mind currents through the astral to the physical brain. But when, during sleep, the physical brain is inactive, the astral body, being undeveloped, is incapable of receiving impressions on its own account, and so the man is practically unconscious, being unable to express himself clearly through the poorly organised astral body. The centres of sensation in it may be affected by passing thought-forms, and he may answer in it to stimuli that rouse the lower nature. But the whole effect given to the observer is one of sleepiness and vagueness, the astral body lacking all definite activity and floating idly, inchoate, above the sleeping physical form.

In a quite unevolved person, therefore, the higher principles, *i.e.*, the man himself, are almost as much asleep as the physical body.

In some cases the astral body is less lethargic, and floats dreamily about on the various astral currents, occasionally recognising other people in a similar condition, and meeting with experiences of all sorts, pleasant and unpleasant, the memory of which, hopelessly confused and often travestied into a grotesque [Page 85] caricature of what really happened (See Chapter 10 on *Dreams*) will cause the man to think next morning what a remarkable dream he has had.

In the case of a more evolved man, there is a very great difference. The inner form is much more distinct and definite - a closer reproduction of the man's physical appearance. Instead of the surrounding mist-wreath, there is a sharply defined ovoid form preserving its shape unaffected amidst all the varied currents which are always swirling around it on the astral plane.

A man of this type is by no means unconscious in his astral body, but is quite actively thinking. Nevertheless, he may be taking very little more notice of his surroundings than the savage. Not because he is incapable of seeing, but because he is so wrapped up in his own thought that he does not see, though he could do so if he chose. Whatever may have been the thoughts engaging his mind during the past day, he usually continues them when he falls asleep, and he is thus surrounded by so dense a wall of his own making that he observes practically nothing of what is going on outside. Occasionally a violent impact from without, or even some strong desire of his own from within, may tear aside this curtain of mist and permit him to receive some definite impression. But even then the fog would close in again almost immediately, and he would dream on unobservantly as before.

In the case of a still more developed man, when the physical body goes to sleep, the astral body slips out of it, and the man is then in full consciousness. The astral body is clearly outlined and definitely organised, bearing the likeness of the man, and the man is able to use it as a vehicle, a vehicle far more convenient than the physical body.

The receptivity of the astral body has increased, until it is instantly responsive to all the vibrations of its plane, the fine as well as the coarser: but in the astral body of a very highly developed person [Page 86] there would, of course, be practically no matter left capable of responding to coarse vibrations.

Such a man is wide awake, is working far more actively, more accurately, and with greater power of comprehension, than when he was confined in the denser physical vehicle. In addition, he can move about freely and with immense rapidity to any distance, without causing the least disturbance to the sleeping physical body.

He may meet and exchange ideas with friends, either incarnate or discarnate, who happen to be equally awake on the astral plane. He may meet people more evolved than himself, and receive from them warning or instruction: or he may be able to confer benefits on those who know less than himself. He may come into contact with non-human entities of various kinds (see Chapters 20 and 21 on *Astral Entities*): he will be subject to all kinds of astral influences, good or evil, strengthening or terrifying.

He may form friendships with people from to their parts of the world: he may give or listen to lectures: if he is a student, he may meet other students and, with the additional faculties which the astral world gives, he may be able to solve problems which presented difficulties in the physical world.

A physician, for example, during the sleep of the body, may visit cases in which he is especially interested. He may thus acquire new information, which may come through as a kind of intuition to his waking consciousness.

In a highly evolved man, the astral body, being thoroughly organised and vitalised, becomes as much the vehicle of consciousness on the astral plane as the physical body is on the physical plane.

The astral world being the very home of passion and emotion, those who yield themselves to an emotion can experience it with a vigour and a keenness mercifully unknown on earth. Whilst in the physical body most of the efficiency of an emotion is exhausted in transmission to the physical plane, but in the astral [Page 87] world the whole of the force is available in its own world. Hence it is possible in the astral world to feel far more intense affection or devotion than is possible in the physical world: similarly an intensity of suffering is possible in the astral world which is unimaginable in ordinary physical life.

An advantage of this state of affairs is that in the astral world all pain and suffering are voluntary and absolutely under control, hence life there is much easier, for the man who understands. To control physical pain by the mind is possible, but exceedingly difficult: but in the astral world anyone can in a moment drive away the suffering caused by a strong emotion. The man has only to exert his will, when the passion straightway disappears. This assertion sounds startling: but it is nevertheless true, such being the power of will and mind over matter.

To have attained full consciousness in the astral body is to have already made a considerable amount of progress: when a man has also bridged over the chasm between astral and physical consciousness, day and night no longer exist for him, since he leads a life unbroken in its continuity. For such a man, even death, as ordinarily conceived, has ceased to exist, since he carries that unbroken consciousness not only through night and day, but also through the portals of death itself, and up to the end of his life upon the astral plane, as we shall see later when we come to deal with the after-death life.

Travelling in the astral body is not instantaneous: but it is so swift that space and time may be said to be practically conquered: for although a man is passing through space, it is passed through so rapidly that its power to divide is nearly non-existent. In two or three minutes a man might move round the world.

Any fairly advanced and cultured man among the higher races of mankind has already consciousness fully developed in the astral body, and is perfectly capable of employing it as a vehicle, though in many [Page 88] case he does not do so, because he has not made the definite effort which is at first necessary, until the habit becomes established.

The difficulty with the ordinary person is not that the astral body cannot act, but that for thousands of years that body has been accustomed to being set in

motion only by impressions received through the physical vehicle, so that men do not realise that the astral body can work on its own plane and on its own account, and that the will can act upon it directly. People remain "unawake" astrally because they get into the habit of waiting for the familiar physical vibrations to call out their astral activity. Hence they may be said to be awake *on* the astral plane, but not in the least *to* the plane, and consequently they are conscious of their surroundings only very vaguely, if at all.

When a man becomes a pupil of one of the Masters, he is usually at once shaken out of his somnolent condition on the astral plane, fully awakened to the realities around him on that plane, and set to learn from them and to work among them, so that his hours of sleep are no longer a blank, but are filled with active and useful occupation, without in the least interfering with the healthy repose of the tired physical body.

In Chapter 28 on *Invisible Helpers* we shall deal more fully with carefully planned and organised work in the astral body: here it may be stated that even before that stage is reached, a great deal of useful work may be and is constantly being done. A man who falls asleep with the definite intention in his mind of doing a certain piece of work will assuredly go and attempt to carry out his intention as soon as he is freed from his physical body in sleep. But, when the work is completed, it is likely that the fog of his own self-centred thoughts will close round him once more, unless he has accustomed himself to initiate fresh lines of action when functioning apart from the physical brain. In some cases, of course, the work [Page 89] chosen is such as to occupy the whole of the time spent in sleep, so that such a man would be exerting himself to the fullest extent possible, so far as his astral development permits.

Every one should determine each night to do something useful on the astral plane: to comfort some one in trouble: to use the will to pour strength into a friend who is weak or ill: to calm some one who is excited or hysterical: or to perform some similar service.

Some measure of success is absolutely certain, and if the helper observes closely, he will often receive indications in the physical world of definite results achieved.

There are four ways in which a man may be "awakened" to self-conscious activity in his astral body.

- (1) By the ordinary course of evolution, which though slow, is sure.
- (2) By the man himself, having learnt the facts of the case, making the requisite steady and persistent effort to clear away the mist from within and gradually overcome the inertia to which he is accustomed. In order to do this the man should resolve before going to sleep to try when he leaves the body to awaken himself and see something or do some useful work. This, of course, is merely hastening the natural process of evolution. It is desirable that the man should first

have developed common sense and moral qualities: this for two reasons: first, lest he may misuse such powers as he may acquire; second, lest he be overwhelmed by fear in the presence of forces which can neither understand nor control.

(3) By some accident, or by unlawful use of magical ceremonies, he may so rend the veil that it can never wholly be closed again. Instances of this are to be found in *A Bewitched life* by H.P. Blavatsky, and in *Zanoni* by Lord Bulwer Lytton

(4) A friend may act from without upon the closed shell surrounding the man and gradually arouse the [Page 90] man to higher possibilities. This, however, would never be done unless the friend were quite sure that the man to be awakened possessed the courage, devotion, and other qualifications necessary for useful work.

But the need of helpers on the astral plane is so great that every aspirant may be certain that there will not be a day's delay in arousing him as soon as he is seen to be ready.

It may be added that when even a child has been awakened on the astral plane, the development of the astral body would proceed so rapidly that he would very soon be in a position upon that plane but little inferior to that of the awakened adult, and would, of course, be much in advance, so far as usefulness is concerned, of the wisest man who was as yet unawakened.

But unless the ego expressing himself through the child-body possessed the necessary qualification of a determined yet loving disposition, and had clearly manifested it in his previous lives, no occultist would take the very serious responsibility of awakening him on the astral plane. When it is possible to arouse children in this way, they often prove most efficient workers on the astral plane, and throw themselves into this work with a whole-souled devotion which is beautiful to see.

Also, while it is comparatively easy to waken a man on the astral plane, it is practically impossible, except by a most undesirable use of mesmeric influence, to put him to sleep again.

Sleeping and waking life are thus seen to be in reality but one: during sleep we are aware of that fact, and have the continuous memory of both, i.e., astral memory includes the physical, though, of course, the physical memory by no means always includes the memory of the astral experiences.

The phenomenon of sleep-walking (somnambulism) may apparently be produced in several distinct ways.

(1) The ego may be able to act more directly upon [Page 91] the physical body during the absence of the mental and astral vehicles: in cases of this nature a man might be able, for example, to write poetry, paint pictures, etc., which would be far beyond his ordinary powers when awake.

(2) The physical body may be working automatically, and by force of habit, uncontrolled by the man himself. Instances of this occur where servants rise in the middle of the night and light a fire or attend to other household duties to which they are accustomed: or where the sleeping physical body carries out to some extent the idea dominant in the mind before falling to sleep.

(3) An outside entity, incarnate or discarnate, may seize the body of a sleeping man and use it for his own ends. This would be most likely to happen with a person who was mediumistic, i.e., whose bodies are more loosely joined together than usual and therefore more readily separable.

With normal people, however, the fact that the astral body leaves the physical body during sleep does *not* open the way to obsession, because the ego always maintains a close connection with his body and he would quickly be recalled to it by any attempt that might be made upon it.

(4) A directly opposite condition may also produce a similar result. When the principles or bodies fit more tightly than usual, the man, instead of visiting a distant place in his astral body only, would take his physical body along as well, because he is not wholly dissociated from it.

(5) Somnambulism is probably also connected with the complex problem of the various layers of consciousness in man, which under normal circumstances are unable to manifest themselves.

Closely akin to sleep-life is the condition of trance, which but the sleep state, artificially or abnormally induced. Mediums and sensitives readily pass out of the physical body into the astral body, usually unconsciously. The astral body can then exercise its functions, [Page 92] such as that of travelling to a distant place, gathering impressions there from surrounding objects and bringing them back to the physical body. In the case of a medium the astral body can describe these impressions by means of the entranced physical body: but, as a rule, when the medium comes out of the trance, the brain does not retain the impressions thus made on it, no trace being left in the physical memory of the experiences acquired. Occasionally, but rarely, the astral body is able to make a lasting impression on the brain, so that the medium is able to recollect the knowledge acquired during trance. [Page 93]

## CHAPTER 10

### DREAMS

Consciousness and activity in the astral body are one thing: the memory in the brain of that astral consciousness and activity are a totally different matter. The existence or the absence of physical memory in no way affects the consciousness on the astral plane, nor the ability to function in the astral plane with perfect ease and freedom. It is, in fact, not only possible, but also by no means uncommon, for a man to function freely and usefully in his astral body

during the sleep of the physical body, and yet to return to the physical body without the slightest memory of the astral work upon which he has been engaged.

The break in consciousness between the astral and the physical life is due either to un-development of the astral body, or to the want of an adequate etheric bridge between the astral and the dense physical matter of the bodies.

This bridge consists of the closely-woven web of atomic matter, through which the vibrations have to pass, and which causes a moment of unconsciousness, like a veil, between sleeping and waking.

The only way in which memory of the astral life can be brought through into the physical brain is by sufficient development of the astral body and by an awakening of the etheric Chakrams, one function of which is to bring forces from the astral to the etheric. In addition, there must be active functioning of the pituitary body, which focuses the astral vibrations.

Sometimes, on awakening, there is a feeling that something has been experienced of which no memory remains. The feeling indicates that there has been [Page 94] astral consciousness, though the brain is insufficiently receptive to receive the record. At other times the man in his astral body may succeed in making a momentary impression on the etheric double and the dense body, resulting in a vivid memory of the astral life. This is sometimes done deliberately when something occurs which the man feels that he ought to remember on the physical plane. Such a memory usually vanishes quickly and cannot be recovered: efforts to recover the memory, by setting up strong vibrations in the physical brain, still further overpower the more delicate astral vibrations, and consequently render success even more impossible.

There are some events, too, which make such a vivid impression upon the astral body that they become impressed upon the physical brain by a kind of repercussion (see page 242).

In other cases, a man may succeed in impressing new knowledge on the physical brain, without being able to convey also the memory of where or how that knowledge was gained. Instances of this, common to most people, occur where solutions of problems, previously insoluble, suddenly arise in the consciousness, or where light is suddenly thrown on to questions previously obscure. Such cases may be taken to indicate that progress is being made with the organisation and functioning of the astral body, although the physical body is still only partially receptive.

In cases where the physical brain does respond, there are vivid, reasonable and coherent dreams, such as occur to many people from time to time.

Few people, when in the astral body, care whether the physical brain remembers or not, and nine out of ten much dislike returning to the body. In coming back to the physical body from the astral world there is a feeling of great constraint, as

though one were being enveloped in a thick, heavy cloak. The joy of life on the astral plane is so great that physical life in comparison with it seems no life at all. Many regard the daily return to the physical body as men [Page 95] often do their daily journey to the office. They do not positively dislike it, but they would not do it unless they were compelled.

Eventually, in the case of highly developed and advanced persons, the etheric bridge between the astral and the physical worlds is constructed, and then there is perfect continuity of consciousness between the astral and the physical lives. For such people life ceases to be composed of days of remembrance and nights of oblivion, and becomes instead, a continuous whole, year after year, of unbroken consciousness.

Occasionally, a man who has normally no memory of his astral life, may unintentionally, through an accident, or illness, or intentionally by certain definite practices, bridge over the gap between astral and physical consciousness, so that from that time onwards his astral consciousness will be continuous, and his memory of his sleep life therefore be perfect. But, of course, before this could take place, he must already have developed full consciousness in the astral body. It is merely the rending of the veil between the astral and physical that is sudden, not the development of the astral body.

The dream life may be considerably modified as a direct result of mental growth. Every impulse sent by the mind to the physical brain has to pass through the astral body, and, as astral matter is far more responsive to thought-vibrations than is physical matter, it follows that the effects produced on the astral body are correspondingly greater. Thus, when a man has acquired mental control, *i.e.*, has learned to dominate the brain, to concentrate, and to think as and when he likes, a corresponding change will take place in his astral life; and, if he brings the memory of that life through into the physical brain, his dreams will become vivid, well-sustained, rational, even instructive.

In general, the more the physical brain is trained to answer to the vibrations of the mental body, the more is the bridging of the gulf between waking and sleeping [Page 96] consciousness facilitated. The brain should become more and more the obedient instrument of the man, acting under impulses from his will.

The dreaming of ordinary events does not interfere with astral work, because the dreaming takes place in the physical brain, while the real man is away attending to other matters. It does not really matter what the physical brain does, so long as it keeps itself free from undesirable thoughts.

Once a dream is started, its course cannot usually be changed: but the dream-life can be controlled indirectly to a considerable extent. It is especially important that the last thought on sinking to sleep should be a noble and elevating one, as this strikes the keynote which largely determines the nature of the dreams which follow. An evil or impure thought attracts evil and impure influences and

creatures, which react on the mind and astral body and tend to awaken low and earthly desires.

On the other hand, if a man falls asleep with his thoughts fixed on high and holy things, he will automatically draw round him elementals created by similar efforts of others, and consequently his dreams will be lofty and pure.

As we are dealing in this book mainly with the astral body, and phenomena closely associated with it, it is not necessary to attempt to deal exhaustively with the somewhat large subject of dream consciousness. Nevertheless, in order to show the proper setting of the part which the astral body plays in the dream life, it will be useful to give a very brief outline of the main factors operative in producing dreams. For a detailed study of the whole matter the student is referred to that excellent textbook, Dreams by C.W. Leadbeater, from which the following facts are extracted.

The factors concerned in the production of dreams are: -

- 1- The *lower physical brain*, with its infantile semi-consciousness, and its habit of expressing every stimulus in pictorial form. [Page 97]
- 2- The *etheric part of the brain*, through which sweeps a ceaseless procession of disconnected pictures.
- 3- The *astral body*, palpitating with the wild surgings of desire and emotion.
- 4- The *ego* (in the causal body) who may be in any state of consciousness, from almost complete insensibility to perfect command of his faculties.

When a man goes to sleep, his ego withdraws further within himself, and leaves his various bodies more free than usual to go their own way. These separate bodies: (1) are much more susceptible of impressions from without than at other times; and (2) have a very rudimentary consciousness of their own.

Consequently there is ample reason for the production of dreams, as well as for confused recollections in the physical brain of the experiences of the other bodies during sleep.

Such confused dreams may thus be due to: (1) a series of disconnected pictures and impossible transformations produced by the senseless automatic action of the lower physical brain; (2) a stream of casual thought which has been pouring through the etheric part of the brain; (3) the ever-restless tide of earthly desire, playing through the astral body and probably stimulated by astral influences; (4) an imperfect attempt at dramatisation by an undeveloped ego; (5) a mingling of several or all of these influences.

We will briefly describe the principal elements in each of these kinds of dreams.

- 1- *Physical Brain Dreams*. - When in sleep the ego, for the time, resigns control of the brain, the physical body still has a certain dim consciousness of its own:

and in addition there is also the aggregate consciousness of the individual cells of the physical body. The grasp of the physical consciousness over the brain is far feebler than that of the ego over the brain, and consequently purely physical changes are capable of affecting the brain to a very much greater extent.

Examples of such physical changes are: irregularity in the circulation of the blood, indigestion, heat and cold, etc..[Page 98]

The dim physical consciousness possesses certain peculiarities: (1) it is to a great extent automatic; (2) it seems unable to grasp an idea except in the form in which it is itself an actor: consequently all stimuli, whether from within or from without, are immediately translated into perceptual images; (3) it is incapable of grasping abstract ideas or memories, as such, but at once transforms them into imaginary percepts: (4) every local direction of thought becomes for it an actual spatial transportation, *i.e.*, a passing thought of China would transport the consciousness instantly in imagination to China; (5) it has no power of judging the sequence, value or objective truth of the pictures that appear before it; it takes them all just as it seems them, and never feels surprised at anything which may happen, however incongruous or absurd; (6) it is subject to the principle of association of ideas, and consequently images, unconnected except by the fact that they represent events which happened near to one another in time, are apt to be thrown together in inextricable confusion; (7) it is singularly sensitive to the slightest external influences, such as sounds or touches, and (8) it magnifies and distorts them to an almost incredible degree.

The physical brain thus is capable of creating sufficient confusion and exaggeration to account for many, but by no means all, dream phenomena.

2. *Etheric Brain Dreams.* - The etheric brain is even more sensitive during the sleep of the body than it is during ordinary waking consciousness to influences from outside. Whilst the mind is actively engaged, the brain thereby being fully employed, it is practically impervious to the continual impingement of thought from without. But the moment the brain is left idle, the stream of inconsequent chaos begins to pour through it. In the vast majority of people, the thoughts which flow through their brains are in reality not their own thoughts at all, but fragments cast off by other people. Consequently, in sleep life especially, any passing thought which finds something [Page 99] congruous to itself in the brain of a sleeper, is seized upon by that brain and appropriated, thus starting a whole train of ideas: eventually these fade away and the disconnected, purposeless stream begins flowing through the brain again.

A point to notice is that, since in the present state of the world's evolution there are likely to be more evil thoughts than good ones floating around, a man with an uncontrolled brain is open to all sorts of temptation which mind and brain control might have spared him.

Even when these thought-currents are shut out, by the deliberate effort of another person, from the etheric brain of a sleeper, that brain does not remain

completely passive, but begins slowly and dreamily to evolve pictures for itself from its store of past memories.

3. *Astral Dreams* -These are simply recollection in the physical brain of the life and activities of the astral body during the sleep of the physical body, to which reference has already been made in the preceding pages. In the case of a fairly well-developed person, the astral body can travel without discomfort to considerable distances from its physical body: can bring more or less definite impressions of places which it may have visited, or of people whom it may have met. In every case the astral body, as already said, is ever intensely impressionable by any thought or suggestion involving desire or emotion, though the nature of the desires which most readily awaken a response in it will, of course, depend on the development of the person and the purity or otherwise of his astral body.

The astral body is at all times susceptible to the influences of passing thought-currents, and, when the mind is not actively controlling it, it is perpetually receiving these stimuli from without, and eagerly responding to them. During sleep it is even more readily influenced. Consequently, a man who has, for example, entirely destroyed a physical desire, which he may previously have possessed for alcohol, so that in [Page 100] waking life he may feel even a definite repulsion for it, may yet frequently dream that he is drinking, and in that dream experience the pleasure of its influence. During the day, the desire of the astral body would be under the control of the will, but when the astral body was liberated in sleep, it escaped to some extent from the domination of the ego, and, responding probably to outside astral influence, its old habit reasserted itself. This class of dream is probably common to many who are making definite attempts to bring their desire-nature under the control of the will.

It may also happen that a man may have been a drunkard in a past life and still possesses in his astral body some matter drawn thereinto by the vibrations caused in the permanent atom by the drunkenness. Although this matter is not vivified in this life, yet in dreams, the control of the ego being weak, the matter may respond to drink-vibrations from without and the man dreams that he drinks. Such dreams, once understood, need not cause distress: nevertheless they should be regarded as a warning that there is still present the possibility of the drink-craving being re-awakened.

*Ego Dreams* - Much as the nature of the astral body changes as it develops, still greater is the change of the ego, or real man, that inhabits it. Where the astral body is nothing but a floating wreath of mist, the ego is also almost as much asleep as his physical body, being blind to the influences of his own higher plane: and even if some idea belonging to it should manage to reach him, since he has little or no control over his lower bodies, he will be unable to impress the experience on the physical brain.

Sleepers may be at any stage from that of complete oblivion up to that of full astral consciousness. And it must be recollected, as already said, that even

though there may be many important experiences on the higher planes, the ego may nevertheless be unable to impress them upon the brain, so that there is either no physical memory at all, or only a most confused memory. [Page 101]

The principal characteristics of the consciousness and experiences of the ego, whether or not they be remembered in the brain, are as follows: -

(1) The ego's measure of time and space are so entirely different from that which he uses in waking life that it is almost as though neither time nor space existed for him. Many instances are known where in a few moments of time, as we measure it, the ego may have experiences which appear to last for many years, event after event happening in full and circumstantial detail.

(2) The ego possesses the faculty, or the habit, of instantaneous dramatisation. Thus a physical sound or a touch may reach the ego, not through the usual nerve mechanism, but directly, a fraction of a second before even it reaches the physical brain. That fraction of a second is sufficient for the ego to construct a kind of drama or series of scenes leading up to and culminating in the event which awakens the physical body. The brain confuses the subjective dream and the objective event, and therefore imagines itself to have actually lived through the events of the dream.

This habit, however, seems to be peculiar to the ego which, so far as spirituality is concerned, is still comparatively undeveloped. As the ego develops spiritually, he rises beyond these graceful sports of his childhood. The man who has attained continuous consciousness is so fully occupied with higher plane work that he devotes no energy to this dramatisation, and consequently this class of dream ceases for him.

(3) The ego possesses also to some extent the faculty of prevision, being sometimes able to see in advance events which are going to happen, or rather which may happen unless steps are taken to prevent them, and to impress the same on the physical brain. Many instances are recorded of such prophetic or warning dreams. In some cases the warning may be heeded, the necessary steps taken, and the foreseen result either modified or entirely avoided. [Page 102]

(4) The ego, when out of the body during sleep, appears to think in symbols: an idea, which down here would require many words to be expressed, is perfectly conveyed to him by a single symbolical image. If such a symbolic thought is impressed upon the brain, and remembered in waking consciousness, the mind may itself translate it into words: on the other hand it may come through merely as a symbol, un-translated, and so may cause confusion. In dreams of this nature, it seems that each person usually has a system of symbology of his own: thus water may signify approaching trouble: pearls may be a sign of tears: and so forth.

If a man wishes to have useful dreams, *i.e.*, to be able to reap in his waking consciousness the benefit of what his ego may learn during sleep, there are certain steps he should take to bring about this result.

First, it is essential that he should form the habit of sustained and concentrated thought during ordinary waking life. A man who has absolute control of his thoughts will always know exactly what he is thinking about, and why; he will also find that the brain, thus trained to listen to the promptings of the ego, will remain quiescent when not in use, and will decline to receive or respond to casual currents from the surrounding ocean of thought. The man will thus be more likely to receive influences from the higher planes, where insight is keener and judgment truer than they can ever be on the physical plane.

It should scarcely be necessary to add that the man should also be complete master of at least his lower passions.

By a very elementary act of magic, a man may shut out from his etheric brain the rush of thoughts which impinge upon it from without. To this end, he should, when lying down to sleep, picture his aura, and will strongly that its outer surface shall become a shell to protect him from outside influences. The auric matter will obey his thought, and form the shell. This step is of appreciable value towards the desired end. [Page 103]

The great importance of fixing the last thought, before falling to sleep, on high and noble things, has already been mentioned; it should be practised regularly by those who wish to bring their dreams under control.

It may be useful here to add the Hindu terms for the four states of consciousness:

*Jâgrat* is the ordinary waking consciousness.

*Svapna* is the dream consciousness, working in the astral body, and able to impress its experiences upon the brain.

*Sushupti* is the consciousness working in the mental body, and not able to impress its experiences on the brain.

*Turiya* is a state of trance, the consciousness working in the buddhic vehicle, being so far separated from the brain that it cannot readily be recalled by outer means.

These terms, however, are used relatively, and vary according to the context. Thus, in one interpretation of *jâgrat*, the physical and astral planes are combined, the seven sub-divisions corresponding to the four conditions of physical matter, and the three broad divisions of astral matter mentioned on page 148.

For further elucidation the student is referred to *An introduction to Yoga*, by Annie Besant, page 16, *et seq.*, and also to *A Study in Consciousness*, were waking

consciousness is defined as that part of the total consciousness which is working through the outermost vehicle. [Page 104]

## **CHAPTER 9**

### **CONTINUITY OF CONSCIOUSNESS**

As we have seen, for a man to pass in unbroken consciousness from one vehicle to another, e.g., from the physical to the astral, or vice versa, it is a requisite that the links between the bodies should be developed. Most men are not conscious of these links, and the links are not actively vivified, being in a condition similar to that of rudimentary organs in the physical body. They have to be developed by use, and are made to function by the man fixing his attention upon them and using his will. The will sets free and guides kundalini, but unless the preliminary purification of the vehicles is first thoroughly accomplished, kundalini is a destructive instead of a vivifying energy. Hence the insistence, by all occult teachers, on the necessity of purification before true yoga is practised.

When a man has rendered himself fit to be helped in vivifying the links, such assistance will inevitably come to him as a matter of course, from those who are ever seeking opportunities to aid the earnest and unselfish aspirant. Then, one day, the man will find himself slipping out of the physical body while he is wide awake, and without any break in consciousness he discovers himself to be free. With practice the passage from vehicle to vehicle becomes familiar and easy. The development of the links bridges the gulf between physical and astral consciousness, so that there is perfect continuity of consciousness.

The student thus has not only to learn to see correctly on the astral plane, but also to translate accurately the memory of what he has seen from the astral to the physical brain: and to assist him in this he is trained to carry his consciousness without break from the [Page 105] physical plane to the astral and mental and back again, for until that can be done there is always a possibility that his recollections may be partially lost or distorted during the blank intervals which separate his periods of consciousness on the various planes. When the power of bringing over the consciousness is perfectly acquired, the pupil will have the advantage of the use of all the astral faculties, not only while out of the body during sleep or trance, but also while fully awake in ordinary physical life.

In order that the physical waking consciousness should include astral consciousness it is necessary that the pituitary body should be further evolved, and that the fourth spirillae in the atoms should be perfected.

In addition to the method of moving the consciousness from one sub-plane to another, *of the same plane*, from, e.g., the *astral* atomic to the lowest sub-plane of the *mental*, there is also another line of connection which may be called the atomic short-cut.

If we picture the atomic sub-planes of astral, mental, etc., as lying side by side along a rod, the other sub-planes may be pictured as hanging from the rod in loops, as though a piece of string were wound loosely round the rod. Obviously, then, to pass from one atomic sub-plane to another one could move by a short cut along the rod, or down and up again through the hanging loops which symbolise the lower sub-planes.

The normal processes of our thinking come steadily down through the sub-planes: but flashes of genius, illuminative ideas, come through the atomic sub-planes only.

There is also a third possibility connected with the relation of our planes with the cosmic planes, but this is too abstruse to be dealt with in a work which purports to deal only with the astral plane and its phenomena.

Merely to obtain continuity of consciousness between the physical and the astral planes is, of course, quite [Page 106] insufficient in itself to restore memory of past lives. For this a much higher development is required, into the nature of which it is not necessary to enter enter.

A man who has thus acquired complete mastery over the astral body may, of course, leave the physical body, not only during sleep, but at any time he chooses, and go to a distant place, etc..

Mediums and sensitives project their astral bodies unconsciously, when they go into trance: but usually on coming out of trance there is no brain-memory of the experiences acquired. Trained students are able to project the astral body consciously and to travel to great distances from the physical body, bringing back with them full and detailed memory of all the impressions they have gained.

An astral body thus projected may be seen by persons who are sensitive or who may chance to be temporarily in an abnormal nervous condition. There are on record many cases of such astral visitations by a dying person near the time of death, the approach of dissolution having loosened the principles so as to make the phenomenon possible for people who were unable at any other time to perform the feat. (See also page 50 for a similar phenomenon produced by a *thought-form*). The astral body is also set free in many cases of disease. Inactivity of the physical body is a condition of such astral journeys.

A man may, if he knows how to set about it, slightly densify his astral body by drawing into it, from the surrounding atmosphere, particles of physical matter, and thus "materialise" sufficiently to become physically visible. This is the explanation of many cases of "apparitions", where a person, physically absent, has been seen by friends with their ordinary physical sight. [Page 107]

## **CHAPTER 12**

### **DEATH AND THE DESIRE-ELEMENTAL**

At death, the consciousness withdraws from the dense physical body into the etheric double for a short time, usually a few hours, and then passes into the astral body.

Death thus consists of a process of unrobing or unsheathing. The ego, the immortal part of man, shakes off from itself, one after the other, its outer casings, first the dense physical: then the etheric double: then even the astral body, as we shall see later.

In almost every case the actual passing-away appears to be perfectly painless, even after a long illness involving terrible suffering. The peaceful look on the face of the dead is strong evidence in favour of this statement, and it is also borne out by the direct testimony of most of those who have been questioned on the point immediately after death.

At the actual moment of death, even when death is sudden, a man sees the whole of his past life marshaled before him, in its minutest detail. In a moment he sees the whole chain of causes which been at work during his life; he sees and now understands himself as he really is, unadorned by flattery or self-deception. He reads his life, remaining as a spectator, looking down upon the arena he is quitting.

The condition of consciousness *immediately* after the moment of death is usually a dreamy and peaceful one. There will also be a certain period of unconsciousness, which may last only for a moment, though often it is a few minutes, or several hours, and sometimes even days or weeks.

The natural attraction between the astral counterpart and the physical body is such that, after death, [Page 108] the astral counterpart, from force of habit, retains its accustomed form: consequently a man's physical appearance will still be preserved after death almost unchanged. Almost - because in view of the fact that astral matter is very readily moulded by thought, a man who habitually thinks of himself after death as younger than he actually was at the time of death will probably assume a somewhat younger appearance.

Very soon after death, in most cases, an important change takes place in the structure of the astral body, owing to the action of the desire elemental.

Much of the matter of the astral body is composed of elemental essence (see page 6): this essence is living, though not intelligent: and for the time it is cut off from the general mass of astral essence. Blindly, instinctively, and without reason it seeks its own ends and shows great ingenuity in obtaining its desires and in furthering its evolution.

Evolution for it is a descent into matter, its aim being to become a mineral monad. Its object in life, therefore, is to get as near to the physical as it can, and to experience as many of the coarser vibrations as possible. It neither does or could know anything of the man in whose astral body it is for the time living.

It desires to preserve its separate life, and feels that it can do so only by means of its connection with the man: it is conscious of the man's lower mind, and realises that the more mental matter it can entangle with itself the longer will be its astral life.

On the death of the physical body, knowing that the term of its separated life is limited, and that the man's astral death will more or less quickly follow, in order to make the man's astral body last as long as possible, it rearranges its matter in concentric rings or shells, the coarsest outside. From the point of view of the desire elemental this is good policy, because the coarsest matter can hold together longest and best stand friction.

The re-arranged astral body is called the *Yâtanâ*, or suffering body: in the case of a very evil man in [Page 109] whose astral body there is a preponderance of the coarsest matter, it is called the *Dhruvam* or strong body.

The re-arrangement of the astral body takes place over the surface of the counterpart of the physical body, not over the surface of the ovoid which surrounds it.

The effect is to prevent the free and full circulation of astral matter which usually takes place in the astral body. In addition, the man is able to respond only to those vibrations which are received by the outermost layer of his astral body. The man is thus shut up, as it were, in a box of astral matter, being able to see and hear things of the lowest and coarsest plane only.

Although living in the midst of high influences and beautiful thought-forms, he would be almost entirely unconscious of their existence, because the particles of his astral body which could respond to those vibrations are shut in where they cannot be reached.

Consequently, also, being able to sense only the coarsest matter in the astral bodies of other people, and being entirely unconscious of his limitations, he would assume that the person he was looking at possessed only the unsatisfactory characteristics which he would be able to perceive.

Since he can see and feel only what is lowest and coarsest, the men around him appear to be monsters of vice. Under these circumstances it is little wonder that he considers the astral world a hell.

The re-arrangement of the astral body by the desire elemental does not in any way affect the recognisability of the form within the ovoid, though the natural changes which take place tend on the whole to make the form grow somewhat fainter and more spiritual in appearance as time passes on - for reasons which will presently be made clear.

In course of time, the outermost shell or ring disintegrates: the man then becomes able to respond to the vibrations of the next higher level of the astral plane, and thus "rises to the next sub-plane": and so [Page 110] on from one sub-

plane to another. His stay on each sub-plane will, of course, correspond to the amount and activity of the matter in his astral body belonging to that sub-plane.

When we speak of a man "rising" from one sub-plane to another, he need not necessarily move in space at all: he rather transfers his consciousness from one level to another. In the case of a man with a rearranged astral body, the focus of his consciousness shifts from the outer shell to the one next within it. The man thus gradually becomes unresponsive to the vibrations of one order of matter and answers instead to those of a higher order. Thus one world with its scenery and its inhabitants would seem to fade slowly away from his view, while another world would dawn upon him.

As the shell usually disintegrates gradually, the man thus finds the counterparts of physical objects growing dimmer and dimmer, while thought-forms become more and more vivid to him. If during this process he meets another man at intervals, he will imagine that that man's character is steadily improving, merely because he is himself become able to appreciate the higher vibrations of that character. The re-arrangement of the astral body, in fact, constantly interferes with a man's true and full vision of his friends at all stages of their astral life.

This process of re-arrangement of the astral body, which takes place with most people, can be prevented by the man setting his will to oppose it: in fact, anyone who understands the conditions of the astral plane should altogether decline to permit the re-arrangement of the astral body by the desire-elemental. The particles of the astral body will then be kept intermingled, as in life, and in consequence, instead of being confined to one astral sub-plane at a time, the man will be free of all the sub-planes, according to the constitution of his astral body.

The elemental, being afraid in its curious semi-conscious way, will endeavour to transfer its fear to the [Page 111] man who is jolting him out of the re-arrangement, in order to deter him from doing so. Hence one reason why it is so useful to have knowledge of these matters before death.

If the re-arrangement, or shelling, has already occurred, it is still possible for the condition to be broken up by someone who wishes to help the man, and for the man to be thus set free to work on the whole astral plane, instead of being confined to one level. [Page 112]

## **CHAPTER 13**

### **AFTER-DEATH LIFE: PRINCIPLES**

It cannot be too strongly insisted that it is not found that any sudden change takes place in man at death: on the contrary, he remains after death exactly what he was before, except that he no longer has a physical body. He has the same intellect, the same disposition, the same virtues and vices; the loss of the physical body no more makes him a different man than would the removal of an

overcoat. Moreover, the conditions in which he finds himself are those which his own thoughts and desires have already created for him. There is no reward or punishment from outside, but only the actual result of what he has himself done, and said, and thought, while living in the physical world.

As we proceed with our description of the astral life after death, it will be recognised that the true facts correspond with considerable accuracy with the Catholic conception of purgatory, and the Hades or underworld of the Greeks.

The poetic idea of death as a universal leveller is a mere absurdity born of ignorance, for, as a matter of fact, in the vast majority of cases, the loss of the physical body makes no difference whatever in the character or intellect of the person, and there are therefore as many different varieties of intelligence among the so-called dead as among the living.

This is the first and the most prominent fact to appreciate: that after death there is no strange new life, but a continuation, under certain changed conditions, of the present physical plane life.

So much is this the case that when a man first arrives on the astral plane after physical death he by no means always knows that he is dead: and even when [Page 113] he does realise what has happened to him he does not always at first understand how the astral world differs from the physical.

In some cases people consider the very fact that they are still conscious, an absolute proof that they have not died: and this in spite of the much-vaunted belief in the immortality of the soul.

If a man has never heard of astral plane life before, he is likely to be more or less disturbed by the totally unexpected conditions in which he finds himself. Finally, he accepts these conditions, which he does not understand, thinking them necessary and inevitable.

Looking out upon the new worlds, at the first glance he would probably see very little difference, and he would suppose himself to be looking upon the same world as before. As we have seen, each degree of astral matter is attracted by the corresponding degree of physical matter. If, therefore, we imagined the physical world to be struck out of existence, without any other change being made, we should still have a perfect replicate of it in astral matter. Consequently a man on the astral plane would still see the walls, furniture, people, etc., to which he was accustomed, outlined as clearly as ever by the densest type of astral matter. If, however, he examined such objects closely he would perceive that all the particles were visibly in rapid motion, instead of only invisibly as on the physical plane. But, as few men observe closely, a man who dies often does not know at first that any change has come over him. Thus many, especially in Western countries, find it difficult to believe that they are dead, simply because they still see, hear, feel and think. Realisation of what has happened will probably dawn gradually, as the man discovers that though he can see his friends he cannot

always communicate with them. Sometimes he speaks to them, and they do not seem to hear: he tries to touch them, and finds that he can make no impression upon them. Even then, for some time he may persuade himself that he is dreaming, for at other times, when his friends are [Page 114] asleep, they are perfectly conscious of him and talk with him as of old.

By degrees the man begins to realise the differences between his present life and that which he lived in the physical world. For example, he soon finds that for him all pain and fatigue have passed away. He also finds that in the astral world desires and thoughts express themselves in visible forms, though these are composed mostly of the finer matter of the plane. As his life proceeds, these become more and more prominent.

Moreover, though a man on the astral plane cannot usually see the physical bodies of his friends, yet he can and does see the physical bodies of his friends, and consequently knows their feelings and emotions. He will not necessarily be able to follow in detail the events of their physical life: but he would at once be aware of such feelings as love or hate, jealousy or envy, as these would be expressed through the astral bodies of his friends.

Thus, although the living often suppose themselves to have "lost" the dead, the dead are never for a moment under the impression that they have lost the living.

A man, in fact, living in his astral body after death is more readily and deeply influenced by the feelings of his friends in the physical world than when he was on earth, because he has no physical body to deaden his perceptions.

A man on the astral plane does not usually see the whole astral counterpart of an object, but the portion of it which belongs to the particular sub-plane upon which he is at the time.

Moreover, a man by no means always recognises with any certainty the astral counterpart of a physical body even when he sees it. He usually requires considerable experience before he can clearly identify objects, and any attempt that he makes to deal with them is liable to be vague and uncertain. Examples of this are often seen in haunted houses, where [Page 115] stone-throwing, or vague, clumsy movements of physical matter take place.

Frequently, not realising that he is free from the necessity to work for a living, to eat, sleep, etc., a man after death may continue to prepare and consume meals, created entirely by his imagination, or even to build for himself a house in which to live. A case is recorded of a man who built for himself a house, stone by stone, each stone being separately created by his own thought. He might, of course, with the same amount of effort have created the whole house at once. He was eventually led to see, that as the stones had no weight, the conditions were different from those obtaining in physical life, and so he was induced to investigate further.

Similarly, a man new to the conditions of astral life may continue to enter and depart from a room by a door or window, not realising that he can pass through the wall just as easily. For the same reason he may walk upon the earth when he might just as well float through the air.

A man who has already during earth life acquainted himself, by reading or otherwise, with the general conditions of astral life, naturally finds himself after death on ground more or less familiar, and consequently he should not be at a loss to know what to do with himself.

Even an intelligent appreciation of occult teaching on this subject, as experience has shown, is of enormous advantage to a man after death, while it is a considerable advantage for a man merely to have heard of the conditions of astral life, even though he may have regarded such teachings as one of many hypotheses, and may not have followed them up further. In the case of others, not so fortunately situated as to their knowledge of the astral world, their best plan is to take stock of their position, endeavour to see the nature of the life before them, and how they can make the best use of it. In addition, they would do well to consult some experienced friend. [Page 116]

The condition of life referred to above constitute Kâmaloka, literally the place or world of Kâma or desire: the Limbus of scholastic theology. In general terms Kâmaloka is a region peopled by intelligent and semi-intelligent entities. It is crowded with many types and forms of living things, as diverse from each other as a blade of grass is different from a tiger, a tiger is different from a man, there being of course, many other entities living there besides deceased human beings (See Chapters 19 to 21). It interpenetrates the physical world, and is interpenetrated by it, but, as the states of matter in the two worlds differ, they co-exist without the entities of either world being conscious of those of the other. Only under abnormal circumstances can consciousness of each other's presence arise among the inhabitants of the two worlds.

Kâmaloka is thus not divided off as a distinct locality, but is separated off from the rest of the astral plane by the conditions of consciousness of the entities who belong to it, these entities being human beings, who have shaken off the dense and etheric bodies, but who have not yet disentangled themselves from Kâma, *i.e.*, the passionnal and emotional nature. This state is also called Pretaloka, a preta being a human being who has lost his physical body, but is still encumbered with the vesture of his animal nature.

The Kâmalokic condition is found on each sub-division of the astral plane.

Many who die are at first in a condition of considerable uneasiness, and others of positive terror. When they encounter the thought-forms which they and their kind have for centuries been making - thoughts of a personal devil, an angry and cruel deity, and eternal punishment - they are often reduced to a pitiable state of fear, and may spend long periods of acute mental suffering before they can free themselves from the fatal influence of such foolish and utterly false conceptions.

It ought, however, in fairness to be mentioned that [Page 117] it is only among what are called Protestant communities that this terrible evil assumes its most aggravated form. The great Roman Catholic Church, with its doctrine of purgatory, approaches much more nearly to a true conception of the astral plane, and its devout members, at any rate, realise that the state in which they find themselves shortly after death is merely a temporary one, and it is their business to endeavour to raise themselves out of it as soon as may be by intense spiritual aspiration, while they accept any suffering which may come to them as necessary for the wearing away of the imperfections in their character, before they can pass to higher and brighter spheres.

Thus we see that although men should have been taught by their religion what to expect, and how to live on the astral plane, in most cases this has not been done. Consequently a good deal of explanation is needed regarding the new world in which they find themselves. But, after death, exactly as before it, there are few who attain to an intelligent appreciation of the fact of evolution and who, by understanding something of their position, know how to make the best of it. Today, large numbers of people, both "living" and "dead", are engaged in looking after and helping those who have died in ignorance of the real nature of the after-death life (*vide Chapter 28 on Invisible Helpers*). Unfortunately, however, on the astral plane, as on the physical, the ignorant are rarely ready to profit by the advice or example of the wise.

To a man who has, before he dies physically, already acquainted himself with the real conditions of life on the astral plane, one of the most pleasant characteristics of that life is its restfulness and complete freedom from those imperious necessities, such as eating and drinking, which burden physical life. On the astral plane a man is really free, free to do whatever he likes, and to spend his time as he chooses.

As already indicated, a man who has died physically, is steadily withdrawing into himself. The whole cycle [Page 118] of life and death may be likened to an ellipse, of which only the lowest portion passes into the physical world. During the first portion of the cycle, the ego is putting himself forth into matter: the central point of the curve should be a middle point in physical life, when the force of the ego has expended its outward rush and turns to begin the long process of withdrawal.

Thus each physical incarnation may be regarded as a putting of the ego, whose habitat is the higher part of the mental plane, outwards into the lower planes. The ego puts the soul out, as though it were an investment, and expects his investment to draw back added experience, which will have developed new qualities within him.

The portion of the life after death spent on the astral plane is therefore definitely in the period of withdrawal back towards the ego. During the latter part of the physical life the man's thoughts and interests should be less and less directed towards merely physical matters: similarly, during the astral life, he should pay less and less attention to the lower astral matter, out of which counterparts of

physical objects are composed, and occupy himself with the higher matter, out of which desire - and thought-forms are made. It is not so much that he has changed his location in space (though this is partially true, See Chapter 14), as that he has moved the centre of his interest. Hence the counterpart of the physical world which he has left gradually fades from his view, and his life becomes more and more a life in the world of thought. His desires and emotions still persist, and consequently, owing to the readiness with which astral matter obeys his desires and thoughts, the forms surrounding him will be very largely the expression of his own feelings, the nature of which mainly determines whether his life is one of happiness or of discomfort.

Although we are not in this book dealing with that portion of the life after death which is spent in the "heaven-world", *i.e.*, on the mental plane, nevertheless, in order to understand fully what is happening to the [Page 119] astral body on the astral plane, it is desirable to bear in mind that the astral life is largely an intermediate stage in the whole cycle of life and death, a preparation for the life on the mental plane.

As we have seen, soon after physical death, the astral body is set free: expressed from the point of view consciousness, Kâma-Manas is set free. From this, that portion of lower-manas, which is not inextricably entangled with Kâma, gradually frees itself, taking with it such of its experience as fit for assimilation by the higher mental body.

Meanwhile, that portion of the lower manas which still remains entangled with Kâma, gives to the astral body a somewhat confused consciousness, a broken memory of the events of the life just closed. If the emotions and passions were strong, and the mental element weak, then the astral body will be strongly energised, and will persist for a considerable time on the astral plane. It will also show a considerable amount of consciousness, due to the mental matter entangled with it. If, on the other hand, the earth life just closed was characterised by mentality and purity rather than by passion, the astral body will be poorly energised, will be but a pale simulacrum of the man, and will disintegrate and perish comparatively rapidly. [Page 120]

## **CHAPTER 14**

### **THE AFTER-DEATH LIFE: PARTICULARS**

In considering the conditions of a man's astral life, there are two prominent factors to be taken into account: (1) The length of *time* which he spends on any particular sub-plane: (2) The amount of his *consciousness* upon it.

The length of *time* depends upon the amount of matter belonging to that sub-plane which he has built into his astral body during physical life. He will necessarily remain upon that sub-plane until the matter corresponding to it has dropped out of his astral body.

During physical life, as we have already seen, the quality of the astral body which he builds for himself is directly determined by his passions, desires and emotions, and indirectly by his thoughts, as well as by his physical habits - food, drink, cleanliness, continence, etc.. A coarse and gross astral body, resulting from a coarse and gross life, will cause the man to be responsive only to lower astral vibrations, so that after death he will find himself bound to the astral plane during the long and slow process of the disintegration of the astral body.

On the other hand, a refined astral body, created by a pure and refined life, will make the man unresponsive to the low and coarse vibrations of the astral world, and responsive only to its higher influences: consequently he will experience much less trouble in his post-mortem life, and his evolution will proceed rapidly and easily.

The amount of *consciousness* depends upon the degree to which he has vivified and used the matter of the particular sub-plane in his physical life. [Page 121]

If during earth-life the animal nature was indulged and allowed to run riot, if the intellectual and spiritual parts were neglected or stifled, then the astral or desire body will persist for a long time after physical death.

If, on the other hand, desire has been conquered and bridled during earth life, if it has been purified and trained into subservience to the higher nature, then there will be little to energise the astral body, and will quickly disintegrate and dissolve away.

The average man, however, has by no means freed himself from all lower desires before death, and consequently it takes a long period of more or less fully conscious life on the various sub-planes of the astral plane to allow the forces which he has generated to work themselves out, and thus release the higher ego.

The general principle is that when the astral body has exhausted its attractions to one level, the greater part of its grosser particles fall away, and it finds itself in affinity with a somewhat higher state of existence. Its specific gravity, as it were, is constantly decreasing, and so it steadily rises from the dense to the lighter strata, pausing only when it is exactly balanced for a time.

To be upon any given sub-plane in the astral world is to have developed sensitiveness of those particles in the astral body which belong to that sub-plane. To have perfect vision on the astral plane means to have developed sensitiveness in all particles of the astral body, so that all the sub-planes are simultaneously visible.

A man who has led a good and pure life, whose strongest feelings and aspirations have been unselfish and spiritual, will have no attractions to the astral plane, and will, if entirely left alone, find little to keep him upon it, or to awaken him into activity even during the comparatively short period of his stay. His earthly passions have been subdued during physical life, and the force of his will

having been directed into higher channels, there is but little energy [Page 122] of lower desire to be worked out on the astral plane. Consequently his stay there will be very short, and most probably he will have little more than a dreamy half-consciousness, until he sinks into the sleep during which his higher principles finally free themselves from the astral body, and enter upon the blissful life of the heaven-world.

Expressed more technically, during physical life Manas has purified Kâma with which it was inter-woven, so that after death all that is left of Kâma is a mere residuum, easily shaken off by the withdrawing ego. Such a man therefore would have little consciousness on the astral plane.

It is quite possible that a man might, as a result of his previous incarnations, possess a good deal of coarse astral matter in his astral body. Even if he has been so brought up, and has so conducted his life, that he has not vivified that coarse matter, and although much of it may have dropped out and been replaced by finer materials, yet there may be quite a good deal left. Consequently the man would have to remain on a low level of the astral plane for some time, until in fact the coarse matter had all dropped out. But, as the coarse matter would not be vivified, he would have little consciousness and would practically sleep through the period of his sojourn there.

There is a point known as the critical point between every pair of sub-states of matter: ice may be raised to a point at which the least increment of heat will change it into liquid: water may be raised to a point at which the least increment of heat will change it into vapour. And so each sub-state of astral matter may be carried to a point of fineness at which any additional refinement would transform it into the next higher sub-state. If a man has done this for every sub-state of matter in his astral body, so it is purified to the last possible degree of delicacy, then the first touch of disintegrating force shatters its cohesion and resolves it into its original condition, leaving him free at once to pass on to the next [Page 123] sub-plane. His passage through the astral plane will thus be of inconceivable rapidity, and he will flash through the plane practically instantaneously to the higher state of the heaven-world.

Every person after death has to pass through all the sub-planes of the astral plane, on his way to the heaven-world. But whether or not he is conscious on any or all of them, and to what extent, will depend upon the factors enumerated.

For these reasons, it is clear that the amount of consciousness a man may possess on the astral plane, and the time he may spend there in his passage to the heaven-world, may vary within very wide limits. There are some who pass only a few hours or days on the astral plane: others remain there for many years, or even centuries.

For an ordinary person 20 or 30 years on the astral plane after death is a fair average. An exceptional case is that of Queen Elizabeth, who had so intense a love for her country that she has only quite recently passed into the heaven-

world, having spent the time since her death in endeavouring, until recently almost without success, to impress upon her successors her ideas of what ought to be done for England.

Another notable example was that of Queen Victoria, who passed very rapidly through the astral plane and into the heaven-world, her swift passage being undoubtedly due to the millions of loving and grateful thought-forms which were sent to her, as well as to her inherent goodness.

The general question of the interval between earth-lives is complicated. It is possible here to touch briefly only on the astral portion of those intervals. For further details the student is referred to *The Inner Life*, Volume 2, pages 458-474.

Three principal factors have to be taken into account:-

- (1) The class of ego
- (2) The mode of individualisation.
- (3) The length and nature of the last earth-life. [Page 124]

The following table gives a general average of the length of the astral life, as determined by the class of ego.

MOON-MEN: FIRST ORDER		
Individualised in Moon-Chain Round No.	Present type	Average length of Astral life.
5	Advanced egos (many) of these are taking continuous incarnations so that for them the question of intervals between lives does not arise)	5 years: an ego may even pass through rapidly and unconsciously
	Men distinguished in art, science or religion	General tendency is towards a longer astral life, especially in the case of artists and religious men.
6	Country gentlemen and professional men	20- 25 years
7	Upper middle class	25 years
Class of Ego		
Moon-Men: Second Order	Bourgeoisie	40 years
Moon-Animal-Men	Skilled workers	40, on middle level
Moon-Animal, First Class	Unskilled labourers	40-50, on lower levels
Moon-Animals, Second Class	Drunkards and	40-50, usually on 6th

	<b>unemployables</b>	<b>level</b>
<b>Moon-Animals, Third Class</b>	<b>Lowest of humanity</b>	<b>5, on 7th level.</b>

A certain difference is produced by the mode of individualisation , but this difference is much less in proportion in the lower classes. Those individualised through intellect tend to take an interval between lives rather longer than that taken by those who individualised in other ways. [Page 125]

Generally speaking, a man who dies young will have a shorter interval than one who dies in old age, but is likely to have a proportionately longer astral life, because most of the strong emotions which work themselves out in astral life are generated in the earlier part of the physical life.

It must be recollected that in the astral world or ordinary methods of time-measurement scarcely apply: even in physical life anxiety or pain will stretch a few hours almost indefinitely, and on the astral plane this characteristic is exaggerated a hundred-fold.

A man on the astral plane can measure time only by his sensations. For a distortion of this fact has come the false idea of eternal damnation.

We have thus seen that both (1) the time spent, and (2) the amount of consciousness experienced, on each level of the astral plane depend very largely upon the kind of life the man has led in the physical world. Another factor of great importance is the man's attitude of mind after physical death.

The astral life may be directed by the will, just as the physical life may be. A man with little will-power or initiative is, in the astral as in the physical world, very much the creature of the surroundings which he has made for himself. A determined man, on the other hand, can always make the best of his conditions and live his own life in spite of them.

A man, therefore, does not rid himself of evil tendencies in the astral world, unless he definitely works to that end. Unless he makes definite efforts, he will necessarily suffer from his inability to satisfy such cravings as can be gratified only by means of a physical body. In process of time the desires will wear themselves out and die down simply because of the impossibility of their fulfilment.

The process, however, may be greatly expedited as soon as the man realises the necessity of ridding himself of the evil desires which detain him, and makes the requisite effort. A man who is ignorant of the true state of affairs usually broods over his desires, thus [Page 126] lengthening their life, and clings desperately to the gross particles of astral matter as long as he can, because the sensations connected with them seem nearest to the physical life for which he still craves. The proper procedure for him, of course, is to kill out earthly desires and to withdraw into himself as quickly as possible.

Even a merely intellectual knowledge of the conditions of astral life, and, in fact, of Theosophical truths in general, is of inestimable value to a man in the after-death life.

It is of the utmost importance that after physical death a man should recognise quite clearly that he is withdrawing steadily towards the ego, and that consequently he should disengage his thoughts as far as may be from things physical and fix his attention upon spiritual matters which will occupy him when, in due time he passes from the astral plane into the mental or heaven-world.

By adopting this attitude he will greatly facilitate the natural disintegration of the astral body instead of unnecessarily and uselessly delaying himself upon the lower levels of the astral plane.

Many people, unfortunately, refuse to turn their thoughts upwards, but cling to earthly matters with desperate tenacity. As time passes on, they gradually, in the normal course of evolution, lose touch with the lower worlds: but by fighting every step of the way they cause themselves much unnecessary suffering and seriously delay their upward progress.

In this ignorant opposition to the natural course of things the possession of a physical corpse is of assistance to a man, the corpse serving as a kind of fulcrum on the physical plane. The best remedy for this tendency is cremation, which destroys the link with the physical plane.

A few typical examples of astral after-death life will best illustrate the nature and rational of that life.

An ordinary colourless man, neither specially good nor specially bad, is of course in no way changed by [Page 127] death, but remains colourless. Consequently, he will have no special suffering and no special joy: in fact, he may find life somewhat dull, because, having cultivated no particular interests during his physical life, he has none in his astral life.

If during his physical life he had no ideas beyond gossip, sport, business or dress, he will naturally, when these are no longer possible, be likely to find time hang heavily on his hands.

A man, however, who has had strong desires of a low type, who has been, for example, a drunkard or a sensualist, will be in far worse case. Not only will his cravings and desires remain with him (it will be recollected that the centres of sensation are situated, not in the physical body, but in Kâma, see page 24), but they will be stronger than ever, because their full force is expressed in astral matter, none of it being absorbed in setting in motion the heavy physical particles.

Being in the lowest and most depraved condition of astral life, such a man seems often to be still sufficiently near to the physical to be sensitive to certain odours,

though the titillation produced is only sufficient still further to excite his mad desires and tantalise him to the verge of frenzy.

But, as he no longer possesses a physical body, through which alone his cravings can be allayed, he has no possibility of gratifying his terrible thirst. Hence the innumerable traditions of the fires of purgatory, found in nearly every religion, which are no inapt symbols for the torturing conditions described. Such a condition may last for quite a long time, since it passes away only by gradually wearing itself out.

The rationale and automatic justice of the whole process is clear: the man has created his conditions himself, by his own actions, and determined the exact degree of their power and duration. Furthermore, it is the only way in which he can get rid of his vices. For, if he were to be reincarnated immediately, he would start his next life precisely as he finished the [Page 128] preceding one: *i.e.*, a slave to his passions and appetites: and the possibility of his ever becoming master of himself would be immeasurably reduced. But, as things are, his cravings having worn themselves out, he will be able to commence his next incarnation without the burden of them: and his ego, having had so severe a lesson, is likely to make every possible effort to restrain its lower vehicles from again making a similar mistake.

A confirmed drunkard will sometimes be able to draw round himself a veil of etheric matter, and thus partially materialise himself. He can then draw in the odour of the alcohol, but he does not smell it in the same sense as we do. Hence he is anxious to force others into the condition of drunkenness, so that he may be able partially to enter their physical bodies and obsess them, through their bodies being once more able to experience directly the tastes and other sensations for which he craves.

Obsession may be permanent or temporary. As just mentioned, a dead sensualist may seize upon any vehicle he can steal in order to gratify his coarse desires. At other times a man may obsess someone as a calculated act of revenge: a case is recorded where a man obsessed the daughter of his enemy.

Obsession can be best prevented or resisted by an exercise of will-power. When it occurs it is almost always because the victim has in the first place voluntarily yielded himself to the invading influence, and his first step therefore is to reverse the act of submission. The mind should be set steadily against the obsession in determined resistance, realising strongly that the human will is stronger than any evil influence.

Such obsession is of course utterly unnatural and in the highest degree harmful to both parties.

The effect of excessive tobacco-smoking on the astral body after death is remarkable. The poison so fills the astral body that it stiffens under its influences and is unable to work properly or to move freely. For the time, the man is as

though paralysed - [Page 129] able to speak, yet debarred from movement, and almost entirely cut off from higher influences. When the poisoned part of his astral body wears away, he emerges from this unpleasant predicament.

The astral body changes its particles, just as does the physical body, but there is nothing to correspond to eating and digesting food. The astral particles which fall away are replaced by others from the surrounding atmosphere. The *purely physical* cravings of hunger and thirst no longer exist there: but the *desire* of the glutton to gratify the sensation of taste, and the *desire* of the drunkard for the feelings which follow the absorption of alcohol, being both astral, still persist: and, as already stated, they may cause great suffering owing to the absence of the physical body through which alone they could be satisfied.

Many myths and traditions exist, exemplifying the conditions described. One of them is that of Tantalus, who suffered from raging thirst, yet was doomed to see the water recede just as it was about to touch his lips. Another, typifying ambition, is that of Sisyphus, condemned to roll a heavy rock up a mountain, only see it roll down again. The rock represents ambitious plans which such a man continues to form, only to realise that he has no physical body with which to carry them out. Eventually he wears out his selfish ambition, realises that he need not roll his rock, and lets it rest in peace at the bottom of the hill.

Another story was that of Tityus, a man who was tied to a rock, his liver being gnawed by vultures, and growing against as fast as it was eaten. This symbolised a man tortured by the gnawings of remorse for sins committed on earth.

The worse that the ordinary man of the world usually provides for himself after death is a useless and unutterably wearisome existence, void of all rational interests - the natural sequel of a life wasted in self-indulgence, triviality and gossip here on earth.

The only things for which he craves are no longer possible to him, for in the astral world there is no [Page 130] business to be done, and, thought he may have as much companionship as he wishes, society is now for him a very different matter, because all the pretensions upon which it is usually based in this world are no longer possible.

Man thus makes for himself both his own purgatory and his own heaven, and these are not places but states of consciousness. Hell does not exist: it is only a figment of the theological imagination .Neither purgatory nor heaven can ever be eternal, for a finite cause cannot produce an infinite result.

Nevertheless, the conditions of the worst type of man after death are perhaps best described by the word "hell", though they are *not* everlasting. Thus, for example, it sometimes happens that a murderer is followed about by his victim, never being able to escape from his haunting presence. The victim (unless

himself of a very base type) is wrapped in unconsciousness, and this very unconsciousness seems to add a new horror to the mechanical pursuit.

The vivisectors also has his "hell", where he lives amid the crowding forms of his mutilated victims - moaning, quivering, howling. These are vivified, not by the animal souls, but by elemental life pulsing with hatred to the tormentor, rehearsing his worst experiments with automatic regularity, conscious of all their horror, and yet impelled to the self-torture by the habits set up during earth-life.

Such conditions are not produced arbitrarily, but are the inevitable results of causes set in operation by each person. Nature's lessons are sharp, but in the long run they are merciful, for they lead to the evolution of the soul, being strictly corrective and salutary.

For most people the state after death is much happier than life upon earth. The first feeling of which the dead man is usually conscious is one of the most wonderful and delightful freedom; he has nothing to worry about, and no duties rest upon him, except those which he chooses to impose upon himself.

Regarded from this point of view, it is clear that [Page 131] there is ample justification for the assertion that people physically "alive", buried and cramped as they are in physical bodies, are in the true sense far less "alive" than those usually termed dead. The so-called dead are much more free and, being less hampered by material condition as, are able work far more effectively and to cover a wider field of activity.

A man who, not having permitted the re-arrangement of his astral body, is free of the entire astral world, does not find it inconveniently crowded, because the astral world is much larger than the surface of the physical earth, while its population is somewhat smaller, the average life of humanity in the astral world (see page 124) being shorter than the average in the physical.

In addition to the dead, there are also, of course, on the astral plane about one-third of the living, who have temporarily left the physical body during sleep.

Although the whole astral plane is open to any of its inhabitants who have not permitted the re-arrangement of their astral bodies, yet the great majority remain near the surface of the earth.

Passing to a higher type of man, we may consider one who has some interests of a rational nature, e.g., music, literature, science, etc. The need to spend a large proportion of each day in "earning a living" no longer existing, the man is free to do precisely what he likes, so long as it is capable of realisation without physical matter. In the astral life it is possible not only to listen to the grandest music but to hear far more of it than before, because there are in the astral world other and fuller harmonies than the relatively dull physical ears can hear. For the artist, all the loveliness of the higher astral world is open for his enjoyment. A man can readily and rapidly move from place to place and see the wonders of Nature, obviously far more easily than he could ever do on the physical plane. If he is a

historian or a scientist, the libraries and the laboratories of the world are at his disposal: his comprehension of natural processes will [Page 132] be far fuller than ever before, because he can now see the inner as well as the outer workings, and many of the causes where previously he saw only the effects. In all these cases his delight is greatly enhanced, because no fatigue is possible (see page 82).

A philanthropist can pursue his beneficent work more vigorously than ever before and under better conditions than in the physical world. There are thousands whom he can help, and with greater certainty of conferring real benefit.

It is quite possible for any person upon the astral plane after death to set himself to study, and to acquire entirely new ideas. Thus, people may learn of Theosophy for the first time in the astral world. A case is on record even of a person learning music there, though this is unusual.

In general, life on the astral plane is more active than on the physical plane, astral matter being more highly vitalised than physical matter, and form being more plastic. The possibilities on the astral plane, both of enjoyment and of progress, are in every way much greater than those on the physical plane. But the possibilities are of a higher class, and it needs a certain amount of intelligence to take advantage of them. A man who has whilst on earth devoted the whole of his thought and energy solely to material things, is little likely to be able to adapt himself to more advanced conditions, as his semi-atrophied mind will not be strong enough to grasp the wider possibilities of the grander life.

A man whose life and interests are of a higher type may be able to do more good in a few years of astral existence than ever he could have done in the longest physical life.

Astral pleasures being so much greater than those of the physical world, there is danger of people being turned aside by them from the path of progress. But even the delights of the astral life do not present a serious danger to those who have realised a little of something higher. After death a man should try to [Page 133] pass through the astral levels as speedily as possible, consistently with usefulness, and not yield to their refined pleasures any more than to those of the physical.

Any developed man is in every way quite as active during astral life after death as during his physical life: he can unquestionably help or hinder his own progress and that of others quite as much after death as before, and consequently he is all the time generating karma of the greatest importance.

In fact, the consciousness of a man living entirely in the astral world is usually much more definite than it has been during his sleep astral life, and he is correspondingly better able to think and act with determination, so that his opportunities of making good or bad karma are the greater.

It may be said in general that man can make karma wherever his consciousness is developed, or wherever he can act or choose. Thus actions done on the astral plane may bear karmic fruit in the next earth life.

On the lowest astral sub-plane a man, having other things to occupy his attention, concerns himself little with what takes place in the physical world, except when he haunts vile resorts.

On the next sub-plane, the sixth, are found men who, whilst alive, centred their desires and thoughts chiefly in mere worldly affairs. Consequently, they still hover about the persons and places with which they were most closely associated while on earth, and may be conscious of many things in connection with these. They never, however, see physical matter itself, but always the astral counterpart of it.

Thus, for example, a theatre full of people has its astral counterpart, which is visible to astral entities. They would not, however, be able to see, as we see them, either the costumes or the expressions of the actors, and the emotions of the players, being not real but simulated, would make no impression on the astral plane. [Page 134]

Those on the sixth sub-plane, which is on the surface of the earth, find themselves surrounded by the astral counterparts of physically existing mountains, trees, lakes, etc..

On the next two sub-planes, the fifth and fourth, this consciousness of physical affairs is also possible, though in rapidly diminishing degree.

On the next two sub-planes, the third and second, contact with the physical plane could be obtained only by a special effort to communicate through a medium.

From the highest, the first sub-plane, even communication through a medium would be very difficult.

Those living on the higher sub-planes usually provide themselves with whatever scenes they desire. Thus in one portion of the astral world men surround themselves with landscapes of their own creation: others accept ready-made the landscapes which have already been constructed by others. (A description of the various levels or sub-planes will be given in Chapter 16).

In some cases men construct for themselves the weird scenes described in their various religious scriptures, manufacturing clumsy attempts at jewels growing on trees, seas of glass mingled with fire, creatures full of eyes within, and deities with a hundred heads and arms.

In what the Spiritualists call the Summerland, people of the same race and the same religion tend to keep together after death just as they do during life, so that there is a kind of network of summerlands over the countries to which belong the persons who have created them, communities being formed, differing as widely

from each other as do similar communities on earth. This is due not only to natural affinity but also to the fact that barriers of language still exist on the astral plane.

This principle applies, in fact, to the astral plane in general. Thus at spiritualist séances in Ceylon, it was found that the communicating entities were Buddhists, and that beyond the grave they had found their religious preconceptions confirmed, exactly as had [Page 135] the members of various Christian sects in Europe. Men find on the astral plane not only their own thought-forms, but those made by others - these, in some cases, being the product of generations of thought from thousands of people, all following along the same lines.

It is not uncommon for parents to endeavour to impress their wishes on their children, e.g., with regard to some particular alliance on which their heart is set. Such an influence is insidious, an ordinary man being likely to take the steady pressure for his own sub-conscious desire.

In many cases the dead have constituted themselves guardian angels to the living, mothers often protecting their sons, husbands their widows, and so on, for many years.

In others cases a dead writer or musical composer may impress his ideas upon a writer or composer in the physical world, so that many books credited to the living are really the work of the dead. The person who actually executes the writing may be conscious of the influence, or may be entirely unconscious of it.

One leading novelist has stated that his stories come to him he knows not whence - that they are in reality written not by him, but through him. He recognises the state of affairs: there are probably many others in the same case who are quite unconscious of it.

A doctor who dies often continues after death to take an interest in his patients, endeavouring to cure them from the other side, or to suggest to his successor methods of treatment which, with his newly-acquired astral faculties, he sees would be useful.

Whilst most ordinary "good" people, who die natural deaths, are unlikely to be conscious of anything physical at all, as they sweep through all the lower stages before awakening to astral consciousness, yet some, even of these, may be drawn back into touch with the physical world by great anxiety about someone left behind.

The grief of relatives and friends may also attract the attention of one who has passed to the astral plane [Page 136] and tend to draw him down into touch with earth life again. This downward tendency grows with use and the man is likely to exert his will to keep in touch with the physical world. For a time his power of seeing earthly things will increase; but presently it will diminish, and then he will probably suffer mentally as he feels his power slipping from him.

In many cases people not only cause themselves an immense amount of wholly unnecessary pain, but often also do serious injury to those for whom they mourn with intense and uncontrolled grief.

During the whole period of the astral plane life, whether it be long or short, the man is within the reach of earth influences. In the cases just mentioned the passionate sorrow and desires of friends on earth would set up vibrations in the astral body of the man who had died, and so reach and rouse his mind or lower manas. Thus aroused from his dreamy state to vivid remembrance of earth life, he may endeavour to communicate with his earth friends, possibly through a medium. Such an awakening is often accompanied by acute suffering, and in any even the natural process of the ego's withdrawal is delayed.

Occult teaching does not for a moment counsel forgetfulness of the dead: but it does suggest that affectionate remembrance of the dead is a force which, if properly directed towards helping his progress towards the heaven-world, and his passage through the intermediate state, might be of real value to him, whereas mourning is not only useless but harmful. It is with a true instinct that the Hindu religion prescribes its Shrâddha ceremonies and the Catholic Church its prayers for the dead.

Prayers, with their accompanying ceremonies, create elementals which strike against the Kâmalokic entity's astral body, and hasten its disfigurement, thus speeding him on towards the heaven-world.

When, for example, a Mass is offered with a definite intention of helping a dead person, that person will undoubtedly benefit by the downpouring of force: [Page 137] the strong thought about him inevitably attracts his attention, and when he is drawn to the church he takes part in the ceremony and enjoys a large share in its results. Even if he be still unconscious, the priest's will and prayer directs the stream of force towards the person concerned.

Even the earnest general prayer or wish for the good of the dead as a whole, though likely to be vague and therefore less efficient than a more definite thought, has yet in the aggregate produced an effect whose importance it would be difficult to exaggerate. Europe little knows how much it owes to those great religious orders who devote themselves night and day to ceaseless prayer for the faithful departed. [Page 138]

## CHAPTER 15

### THE AFTER-DEATH LIFE: SPECIAL CASES

[Page 138]There is practically no difference between the consciousness of a psychic after death and that of an ordinary person, except that the psychic, being probably more familiar with astral matter, will feel more at home in his new environment. To be psychic means to possess a physical body in some ways

more sensitive than those of most people: consequently, when the physical body is dropped, this inequality no longer exists.

A sudden death, such as from an accident, need not necessarily affect the astral life in any way for the worse. At the same time, for most people, a more natural death is preferable, because the slow wasting away of the aged or the ravages of a long-continued illness are almost invariably accompanied by a considerable loosening and breaking up of the astral particles, so that when the man recovers consciousness upon the astral plane, he finds some, at any rate, of his principal work there already done for him.

In most cases, when earth life is suddenly cut short by accident or suicide, the link between *kâma* (desire) and *prânâ* (vitality) is not easily broken, and the astral body is consequently strongly vivified.

The withdrawal of the principles from their physical encasement, owing to sudden death of any kind, has been aptly compared to the tearing of the stone out of an unripe fruit. A great deal of the grossest kind of astral matter still clings around the personality, which is consequently held in the seventh or lowest astral sub-plane.

The mental terror and disturbance which sometimes accompany accidental death are, of course, a [Page 139] very unfavourable preparation for astral life. In certain rare cases the agitation and terror may persist for some time after death.

The victims of capital punishment, apart from the injury done to them by suddenly wrenching from the physical the astral body, throbbing with feelings of hatred, passion, revenge, and so forth, constitute a peculiarly dangerous element in the astral world. Unpleasant to society as a murderer in his physical body may be, he is clearly far more dangerous when suddenly expelled from the body: and, whilst society may protect itself from murderers in the physical body, it is at present defenceless against murderers suddenly projected on to the astral plane in the full flush of their passions.

Such men may well act as the instigators of other murders. It is well known that murders of a particular kind are sometimes repeated over and over again in the same community.

The position of the suicide is further complicated by the fact that his rash act has enormously diminished the power of the higher ego to withdraw its lower portion into itself, and therefore has exposed him to other and great dangers.

Nevertheless it must be remembered, as already said, that the guilt of suicide differs considerably according to circumstances, from the morally blameless act of Socrates through all degrees down to that of a wretch who commits suicide in order to escape the physical results of his own crimes, and, of course, the position after death varies accordingly.

The karmic consequences of suicide are usually momentous: they are certain to affect the next life, and probably more lives than one. It is a crime against Nature

to interfere with the prescribed period appointed for living on the physical life. For every man has an appointed life-term, determined by an intricate web of prior causes - *i.e.*, by karma - and that term must run out its appointed sands, before the dissolution of the personality. [Page 140]

The attitude of mind at the time of death determines the subsequent position of the person. Thus, there is a profound difference between one who *lays down* his life from altruistic motives and one who deliberately destroys his life from selfish motives, such as fear, etc..

Pure and spiritually-minded men, who are the victims of accident, etc., sleep out happily the term of their natural life. In other cases they remain conscious - often entangled in the final scene of earth-life for a time, held in whatever region they are related to by the outermost layer of their astral body. Their normal kâmalokic life does not begin until the natural web of earth-life is out-spun, and they are vividly conscious of both their astral and physical surroundings.

It must not for a moment, therefore, be supposed that because of the many superiorities of astral over physical life, a man is therefore justified in committing suicide or seeking death. Men are incarnated in physical bodies for a purpose which can be attained only in the physical world. There are lessons to be learnt in the physical world which cannot be learnt anywhere else, and the sooner we learn them the sooner we shall be free from the need to return to the lower and more limited life. The ego has to take much trouble in order to incarnate in a physical body, and also to live through the wearisome period of early childhood, during which he is gradually and with much effort gaining some control over his new vehicles, and therefore his efforts should not be foolishly wasted. In this respect the natural instinct of self-preservation is one which should be obeyed, it being a man's duty to make the most of his earthly life and to retain it as long as circumstances permit.

If a man, who has been killed suddenly, has led a low, brutal, selfish and sensual life, he will be fully conscious on the seven astral sub-plane, and is liable to develop into a terribly evil entity. Inflamed with appetites which he can no longer satisfy, he may endeavour to gratify his passions through a medium or any sensitive person who he can obsess. [Page 141] Such entities take a devilish delight in using all the arts of astral delusion to lead others into the same excesses in which they themselves indulged. From this class and from the vitalised shells (see page 172) are drawn the tempters - the devils of ecclesiastical literature.

The following is a strongly worded account of the victims of sudden death, whether suicides or killed by accident, when such victims are depraved and gross. "Unhappy shades, if sinful and sensual, they wander about... until their death-hour comes. Cut off in the full flush of earthly passions, which bind them to familiar scenes, they are enticed by opportunities which mediums afford to gratify them vicariously. They are the Pishâchas, the Incubi and Succubae of mediaeval times: the demons of thirst, gluttony, lust and avarice: elementaries of intensified

craft, wickedness and cruelty: provoking their victims to horrid crimes, and revelling in their commission!"

Soldiers killed in battle do not quite come under this category, because, whether the cause for which they are fighting be in the abstract right or wrong, they think it to be right: to them it is the call of duty, and they sacrifice their lives willingly and unselfishly. In spite of its horrors, therefore, war may nevertheless be a potent factor in evolution at a certain level. This, also, is the grain of truth in the idea of the Mohammedan fanatic that the man who dies fighting for the faith goes straight to a very good life in the next world.

In the case of children dying young, it is unlikely that they will have developed much affinity for the lowest sub-divisions of the astral world, and as a matter of experience they are seldom found on the lowest astral sub-planes.

Some people cling so desperately to material existence that at death their astral bodies cannot altogether separate from the etheric, and consequently they awaken still surrounded by etheric matter. Such persons are in a very unpleasant condition: they are shut out from the astral world by the etheric shell which surrounds them, and at the same time they are [Page 142] also, of course, shut off from ordinary physical life because they have no physical sense-organs.

The result is that they drift about, lonely, dumb and terrified, unable to communicate with entities on either plane. They cannot realise that if they would only let go their frenzied grasp on matter they would slip, after a few moments of unconsciousness, into the ordinary life of the astral plane. But they cling to their grey world, with their miserable half-consciousness, rather than sink into what they think complete extinction, or even the hell in which they have been taught to believe.

In process of time the etheric shell wears out, and the ordinary course of Nature reasserts itself in spite of their struggles: sometimes in sheer desperation they recklessly let themselves go, preferring even the idea of annihilation to their present existence — with a result overwhelmingly and surprisingly pleasant.

In a few cases, another astral entity may be able to help them by persuading them to let go their hold on what to them is life and sink out of it.

In other cases, they may be so unfortunate as to discover a means of reviving to some extent their touch with physical life through a medium, though as a rule the medium's "spirit-guide" very properly forbids them access.

The "guide" is right in his action, because such entities, in their terror and need, become quite unscrupulous and would obsess and even madden a medium, fighting as a drowning man fights for life. They could succeed only if the ego of the medium had weakened his hold upon his vehicles by allowing the indulgence of undesirable thoughts or passions.

Sometimes an entity may be able to seize upon a baby body, ousting the feeble personality for whom it was intended, or sometimes even to obsess the body of an animal, the fragment of the group-soul which, to an animal, stands in the place of an ego, having a hold on the body less strong than that of an ego. This obsession may be complete or partial. The obsessing [Page 143] entity thus once more gets into touch with the physical plane, sees through the animal's eyes, and feels any pain inflicted upon the animal — in fact, so far as his own consciousness is concerned, he *is* the animal for the time being.

A man who thus entangles himself with an animal cannot abandon the animal's body at will, but only gradually and by considerable effort, extending probably over many days. Usually he is set free only at the death of the animal, and even then there remains an astral entanglement to shake off. After the death of the animal such a soul sometimes endeavours to obsess another member of the same herd, or indeed any other creature whom he can seize in his desperation. The animals most commonly seized upon seem to be the less developed ones — cattle, sheep and swine. More intelligent creatures, such as dogs, cats and horses do not appear to be so easily dispossessed, though cases do occasionally occur.

All obsessions, whether of a human or an animal / body, are an evil and a hindrance to the obsessing soul, as they temporarily strengthen his hold upon the material, and so delay his natural progress into the astral life, besides making undesirable karmic links.

In the case of a man who, by vicious appetite or otherwise, forms a very strong link with any type of animal, his astral body shows animal characteristics, and may resemble in appearance the animal whose qualities had been encouraged during earth life. In extreme cases the man may be linked to the astral body of the animal and thus be chained as a prisoner to the animal's physical body. The man is conscious in the astral world, has his human faculties, but cannot control the animal body nor express himself through that body on the physical plane. The animal organism serves as a jailer, rather than as a vehicle: and, further, the animal soul is not ejected, but remains as the proper tenant of its body.

Cases of this kind explain, at least partially, the belief often found in Oriental countries, that a man [Page 144] may under certain conditions reincarnate in an animal body.

A similar fate may befall a man as he returns to the astral plane on his way to re-birth, and is described in Chapter 24 on *Re-birth*.

The class of person who is definitely held down to earth by anxiety is often termed earth-bound: as St. Martin expressed it, such men are "remainers", not "returners", being unable thoroughly to tear themselves away from physical matter until some business is settled in which they have a special interest.

We have already seen that after physical death the real man is steadily withdrawing himself from his outer bodies: and that, in particular, manas, or mind, endeavours to disentangle itself from kâma, or desire. In certain rare cases, the personality, or lower man, may be so strongly controlled by kâma that lower manas is completely enslaved and cannot disentangle itself. The link between the lower and the higher mental, the “silver thread that binds it to the Master”, snaps in two. This is spoken of in occultism as the “loss of the soul”. It is the loss of the personal self, which has separated from its parent, the higher ego, and has thus doomed itself to perish.

In such a case, even during earth-life, the lower quaternary is wrenched away from the Triad, i.e., the lower principles, headed by lower manas, are severed from the higher principles, Atma, Buddhi and Higher Manas. The man is rent in twain, the brute has broken itself free, and it goes forth unbridled, carrying with it the reflections of that manasic light which should have been its guide through life. Such a creature, owing to its possession of mind, is more dangerous even than an unevolved animal: though human in form, it is brute in nature, without sense of truth, love or justice.

After physical death, such an astral body is an entity of terrible potency, and is unique in this, that under certain rare conditions it can reincarnate in the world of men. With no instincts save those of the [Page 145] animal, driven only by passion, never even by emotion, with a cunning that no brute can rival, a wickedness that is deliberate, it touches ideal vileness, and is the natural foe of all normal human beings. A being of this class — which is known as an *Elementary* — sinks lower with each successive incarnation, until, as the evil force gradually wears itself out, it perishes, being cut off from the source of life. It disintegrates, and thus as a separate existence is lost.

From the point of view of the ego there has been no harvest of useful experience from that personality: the “ray” has brought nothing back, the lower life has been a total and complete failure.

The word Elementary has been employed by various writers in many different senses, but it is recommended that it be confined to the entity described above. [Page 146]

## CHAPTER 16

### THE ASTRAL PLANE

THIS chapter will be confined, so far as the complexities of the subject permit, to a description of the nature, appearance, properties, etc., of the astral plane or world. A later chapter will be devoted to an enumeration and description of the

entities which live in the astral world.

The intelligent student will recognise the extreme difficulty of giving in physical language an adequate description of the astral world. The task has been compared to that of an explorer of some unknown tropical forest being asked to give a full account of the country through which he has passed. The difficulties of describing the astral world are further complicated by two factors: (i) the difficulty of correctly translating from the astral to the physical plane the recollection of what has been seen: and (2) the inadequacy of physical plane language to express much of what has to be reported.

One of the most prominent characteristics of the astral world is that it is full of continually changing shapes: we find there not only thought-forms, composed of elemental essence and animated by a thought, but also vast masses of elemental essence from which continually shapes emerge and into which they again disappear. The elemental essence exists in hundreds of varieties on every sub-plane, as though the air were visible and were in constant undulating motion with changing colours like mother-of-pearl. Currents of thought are continually thrilling through this astral matter, strong thoughts persisting as entities for a long time, weak ones clothing themselves in elemental essence and wavering out again. [Page 147]

We have already seen that astral matter exists in seven orders of fineness, corresponding to the seven physical grades of solid, liquid, gaseous, etc. Each of these seven orders of matter is the basis of one of the seven levels, subdivisions, or sub-planes (as they are variously called) of the astral plane.

It has become customary to speak of these seven levels as being ranged one above the other, the densest at the bottom and the finest at the top: and in many diagrams they are actually drawn in this manner. There is a basis of truth in this method of representation, but it is not the whole truth.

The matter of each sub-plane interpenetrates that of the sub-plane below it: consequently, at the surface of the earth, all seven sub-planes exist together in the same space. Nevertheless, it is also true that the higher astral sub-planes extend further away from the physical earth than the lower sub-planes.

A very fair analogy of the relation between the astral sub-planes exists in the physical world. To a considerable extent liquids interpenetrate solids, e.g., water is found in soil, gases interpenetrate liquids (water usually contains considerable volumes of air), and so on. Nevertheless it is substantially true that the bulk of the liquid matter of the earth lies in seas, rivers, etc., above the solid earth. Similarly the bulk of gaseous matter rests above the surface of the water, and reaches much further out into space than either solid or liquid.

Similarly with astral matter. By far the densest aggregation of astral matter lies

within the limits of the physical sphere. In this connection it should be noted that astral matter obeys the same general laws as physical matter, and gravitates towards the centre of the earth.

The seventh or lowest astral sub-plane penetrates some distance into the interior of the earth, so that the entities living on it may find themselves actually within the crust of the earth.

The sixth sub-plane is partially coincident with the surface of the earth. [Page 148]

The third sub-plane, which the Spiritualists call the "Summerland", extends many miles up into the atmosphere.

The outer limit of the astral world extends nearly to the mean distance of the moon's orbit, so that at perigee the astral planes of the earth and moon usually touch one another, but not at apogee. (N.B.—The earth and moon are nearly 240,000 miles apart.) Hence the name the Greeks gave to the astral plane—the sub-lunar world. It follows that at certain times of the month astral communication with the moon is possible, but not at certain other times. A case, in fact, is recorded where a man reached the moon, but had to wait till communication was re-established by the approach of the satellite to its primary before he could return.

The seven sub-divisions fall naturally into three groups: (a) the seventh or lowest: (b) the sixth, fifth and fourth: and (c) the third, second and first. The difference between members of one group may be compared to that between two solids, e.g., steel and sand, the difference between the groups may be compared to that between a solid and a liquid.

Sub-plane 7 has the physical world as its background, though only a distorted and partial view of it is visible, since all that is light and good and beautiful seems invisible. Four thousand years ago the Scribe Ani described it in an Egyptian papyrus thus: "What manner of place is this unto which I have come? It hath no water, it hath no air; it is deep, unfathomable; it is black as the blackest night, and men wander helplessly about therein; in it a man may not live in quietness of heart."

For the unfortunate human being on that level it is indeed true that "all the earth is full of darkness and cruel habitation", but it is darkness which radiates from within himself and causes his existence to be passed in a perpetual night of evil and horror — a very real hell, though, like all other hells, entirely of man's own creation.

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Most students find the investigation of this section an extremely unpleasant task, for there appears to be a sense of density and gross materiality about it which is indescribably loathsome to the liberated astral body, causing it the sense of

pushing its way through some black, viscous fluid, while the inhabitants and the influences encountered there are also usually exceedingly undesirable.

The ordinary decent man would probably have little to detain him on the seventh sub-plane, the only persons who would normally awake to consciousness on that sub-plane being those whose desires are gross and brutal — drunkards, sensualists, violent criminals, and the like.

Sub-planes 6, 5 and 4 have for their background the physical world with which we are familiar. Life on No. 6 is like ordinary physical life, minus the physical body and its necessities. Nos. 5 and 4 are less material and more withdrawn from the lower world and its interests.

As in the case of the physical, the densest astral matter is far too dense for the ordinary forms of astral life: but the astral world has other forms of its own which are quite unknown to students of the surface.

On the fifth and fourth sub-planes, merely earthly associations appear to become of less and less importance, and the people there tend more and more to mould their surroundings into agreement with the more persistent of their thoughts.

Sub-planes 3, 2 and 1, though occupying the same space, give the impression of being further removed from the physical world and correspondingly less material. At these levels entities lose sight of the earth and its affairs: they are usually deeply self-absorbed, and to a large extent create their own surroundings, though these are sufficiently objective to be perceptible to other entities.

They are thus little awake to the realities of the plane, but live instead in imaginary cities of their own, partly creating them entirely by their own thoughts, [Page 150] and partly inheriting and adding to the structures created by their predecessors.

Here are found the happy hunting-grounds of the Red Indian, the Valhalla of the Norseman, the houri-filled paradise of the Muslim, the golden and jewelled-gated New Jerusalem of the Christian, the lyceum-filled heaven of the materialistic reformer. Here is also the “Summerland” of the Spiritualists, in which exist houses, schools, cities, etc., which, real enough as they are for a time, to a clearer sight are sometimes pitifully unlike what their delighted creators suppose them to be. Nevertheless, many of the creations are of real though temporary beauty, and a visitor who knew of nothing higher might wander contentedly among the natural scenery provided, which at any rate is much superior to anything in the physical world: or he might, of course, prefer to construct his scenery to suit his own fancies.

The second sub-plane is especially the habitat of the selfish or unspiritual religionist. Here he wears his golden crown and worships his own grossly

material representation of the particular deity of his country and time.

The first sub-plane is specially appropriated to those who during earth-life have devoted themselves to materialistic but intellectual pursuits, following them not for the sake of benefiting their fellow-men, but either from motives of selfish ambition or simply for the sake of intellectual exercise. Such persons may remain on this sub-plane for many years, happy in working out their intellectual problems, but doing no good to any one, and making but little progress on their way towards the heaven-world.

On this, the atomic sub-plane, men do not build themselves imaginary conceptions, as they do at lower levels. Thinkers and men of science often utilise for purposes of their study almost all the powers of the entire astral plane, for they are able to descend almost to the physical along certain limited lines. Thus they can swoop down upon the astral counterpart of a [Page 151] physical book and extract from it the information they require. They readily touch the mind of an author, impress their ideas upon him, and receive his in return. Sometimes they seriously delay their departure for the heaven-world by the avidity with which they prosecute lines of study and experiment on the astral plane.

Although we speak of astral matter as solid, it is never *really*, but only relatively solid. One of the reasons why mediaeval alchemists symbolised astral matter by water was because of its fluidity and penetrability. The particles in the densest astral matter are further apart, relatively to their size, than even gaseous particles. Hence it is easier for two of the densest astral bodies to pass through each other than it would be for the lightest gas to diffuse itself in the air.

People on the astral plane can and do pass through one another constantly, and through fixed astral objects. There can never be anything like what we mean by a collision, and under ordinary circumstances two bodies which interpenetrate are not even appreciably affected. If, however, the interpenetration lasts for some time, as when two persons sit side by side in a church or theatre, a considerable effect may be produced.

If a man *thought* of a mountain as an obstacle, he could not pass through it. To learn that it is not an obstacle is precisely the object of one part of what is called the "test of earth".

An explosion on the astral plane might be temporarily as disastrous as an explosion of gunpowder on the physical plane, but the astral fragments would quickly collect themselves again. Thus there cannot be an accident on the astral plane in our sense of the word, because the astral body, being fluidic, cannot be destroyed or permanently injured, as the physical can.

A purely astral object could be moved by means of an astral hand, if one wished, but not the astral counterpart of a physical object. In order to move an astral

[Page 152] counterpart it would be necessary to materialise a hand and move the physical object, then the astral counterpart would, of course, accompany it. The astral counterpart is there because the physical object is there, just as the scent of a rose fills a room because the rose is there. One could no more move a physical object by moving its astral counterpart than one could move the rose by moving its perfume.

On the astral plane one never touches the surface of anything, so as to feel it hard or soft, rough or smooth, hot or cold: but on coming into contact with the interpenetrating substance one would be conscious of a different rate of vibration, which might, of course, be pleasant or unpleasant, stimulating or depressing.

Thus if one is standing on the ground, part of one's astral body interpenetrates the ground under one's feet: but the astral body would not be conscious of the fact by anything corresponding to a sense of hardness or by any difference in the power of movement.

On the astral plane one has not the sense of jumping over a precipice, but simply of floating over it.

Although the light of all planes comes from the sun, yet the effect which it produces on the astral plane is entirely different from that on the physical. In the astral world there is a diffused luminosity, not obviously coming from any special direction. All astral matter is in itself luminous, though an astral body is not like a painted sphere, but rather a sphere of living fire. It is never dark in the astral world. The passing of a physical cloud in front of the sun makes no difference whatever to the astral plane, nor, of course, does the shadow of the earth which we call night. As astral bodies are transparent, there are no shadows.

Atmospheric and climatic conditions make practically no difference to work on the astral and mental planes. But being in a big city makes a great difference, on account of the masses of thought-forms.

On the astral plane there are many currents which tend to carry about persons who are lacking in will, [Page 153] and even those who have will but do not know how to use it.

There is no such thing as sleep in the astral world.

It is possible to forget upon the astral plane just as it is on the physical. It is perhaps even easier to forget on the astral plane than on the physical because that world is so busy and so populous.

Knowledge of a person in the astral world does not necessarily mean knowledge of him in the physical world.

The astral plane has often been called the realm of illusion — not that it is itself any more illusory than the physical world, but because of the extreme unreliability of the impressions brought back from it by the untrained seer. This can be accounted for mainly by two remarkable characteristics of the astral world: (1) many of its inhabitants have a marvellous power of changing their forms with protean rapidity, and also of casting practically unlimited glamour over those with whom they choose to sport: and (2) astral sight is very different from and much more extended than physical vision.

Thus with astral vision an object is seen, as it were, from all sides at once, every particle in the interior of a solid being as plainly open to the view as those on the outside, and everything entirely free from the distortion of perspective.

If one looked at a watch astrally, one would see the face and all the wheels lying separately, but nothing on the top of anything else. Looking at a closed book one would see each page, not through all the other pages before or behind it, but looking straight down upon it as though it were the only page to be seen.

It is easy to see that under such conditions even the most familiar objects may at first be totally unrecognizable, and that an inexperienced visitor may well find considerable difficulty in understanding what he really does see, and still more in translating his vision into the very inadequate language of ordinary speech. Yet a moment's consideration will show that astral [Page 154] vision approximates much more closely to true perception than does physical sight, which is subject to the distortions of perspective.

In addition to these possible sources of error, matters are still further complicated by the fact that this astral sight cognizes forms of matter which, while still purely physical, are nevertheless invisible under ordinary conditions. Such, for example, are the particles composing the atmosphere, all the emanations which are continuously being given out by everything that has life, and also the four grades of etheric matter.

Further, astral vision discloses to view other and entirely different colours beyond the limits of the ordinary visible spectrum, the ultra-red and ultraviolet rays known to physical science being plainly visible to astral sight.

Thus, to take a concrete example, a rock, seen with astral sight, is no mere inert mass of stone. With astral vision: (1) the whole of the physical matter is seen, instead of a very small part of it: (2) the vibrations of the physical particles are perceptible: (3) the astral counterpart, composed of various grades of astral matter, all in constant motion, is visible: (4) the universal life (*prâna*) is seen to be circulating through it and radiating from it: (5) an aura will be seen surrounding it: (6) its appropriate elemental essence is seen permeating it, ever active but ever fluctuating. In the case of the vegetable, animal, and human kingdoms, the

complications are naturally much more numerous.

A good instance of the sort of mistake that is likely to occur on the astral plane is the frequent reversal of any number which the seer has to record, so that he is liable to render, say, 139 as 931, and so on. In the case of a student of occultism trained by a capable Master, such a mistake would be impossible, except through great hurry or carelessness, since such a pupil has to go through a long and varied course of instruction in this art of seeing correctly. A trained seer in time acquires a certainty and confidence in dealing with the [Page 155] phenomena of the astral plane far exceeding anything possible in physical life.

It is quite a mistaken view to speak with scorn of the astral plane and to think it unworthy of attention. It would, of course, certainly be disastrous for any student to neglect his higher development, and to rest satisfied with the attainment of astral consciousness. In some cases it is indeed possible to **develop the higher mental faculties first**, to overleap the astral plane for the time, as it were. But this is not the ordinary method adopted by the Masters of Wisdom with their pupils. For most, progress by leaps and bounds is not practicable: it is necessary therefore to proceed slowly, step by step.

In The Voice of the Silence three halls are spoken of. The first, that of ignorance, is the physical plane: the second, the Hall of Learning, is the astral plane, and is so called because the opening of the astral chakrams reveals so much more than is visible on the physical plane that the man feels he is much nearer the reality of the thing: nevertheless it is still but the place of probationary learning. Still more **real and definite knowledge is acquired in the Hall of Wisdom**, which is the **mental plane**.

An important part of the scenery of the astral plane consists of what are often, though mistakenly, called the Records of the Astral Light. These records (which are in truth a sort of materialisation of the Divine memory — a living photographic representation of all that has ever happened) are really and permanently impressed upon a very much higher level, and are only reflected in a more or less spasmodic manner on the astral plane; so that one whose power of vision does not rise above this will be likely to obtain only occasional and disconnected pictures of the past instead of a coherent narrative. But nevertheless these reflected pictures of all kinds of past events are constantly being reproduced in the astral world, and form an important part of the surroundings of the investigator there. [Page 156]

Communication on the astral plane is limited by the knowledge of the entity, just as it is in the physical world. One who is able to use the mind-body can communicate his thoughts to the human entities there more readily and rapidly than on earth, by means of mental impressions:- but the ordinary inhabitants of the astral plane are not usually able to exercise this power; they appear to be restricted by limitations similar to those that prevail on earth, though perhaps less

rigid. Consequently (as previously mentioned) they are found associating, there as here, in groups drawn together by common sympathies, beliefs, and language. [Page 157]

## CHAPTER 17

### MISCELLANEOUS ASTRAL PHENOMENA

THERE is reason to suppose that it may not be long before some applications of one or two super-physical forces may come to be known to the world at large. A common experience at spiritualistic séances is that of the employment of practically irresistible force in, for example, the instantaneous movement of enormous weights, and so on. There are several ways in which such results may be brought about. Hints may be given as to four of these.

- (1) There are great *etheric currents* on the surface of the earth flowing from pole to pole in volumes which make this power as irresistible as that of the rising tide, and there are methods by which this stupendous force may be safely utilised, though unskillful attempts to control it would be fraught with the greatest danger.
- (2) There is an *etheric pressure*, somewhat corresponding to, though immensely greater than, the atmospheric pressure. Practical occultism teaches how a given body of ether can be isolated from the rest, so that the tremendous force of etheric pressure can be brought into play.
- (3) There is a vast store of *potential energy* which has become dormant in matter during the involution of the subtle into the gross, and by changing the condition of the matter some of this may be liberated and utilised, somewhat as latent energy in the form of heat may be liberated by a change in the condition of visible matter.
- (4) Many results may be produced by what is known as *sympathetic vibration*. By sounding the keynote of the class of matter it is desired to affect, [Page 158] an immense number of sympathetic vibrations can be called forth. When this is done on the physical plane, e.g., by sounding a note on a harp and inducing other harps tuned in unison to respond sympathetically, no additional energy is developed. But on the astral plane the matter is far less inert, so that when called into action by sympathetic vibrations, it adds its own living force to the original impulse, which may thus be multiplied many-fold. By further rhythmic repetition of the original impulse, the vibrations may be so intensified that the result is out of all apparent proportion to the cause. There seems scarcely any limit to the conceivable achievements of this force in the hands of a great Adept who fully comprehends its possibilities: for the very building of the Universe itself was but the result of the vibrations set up by the Spoken Word.

The class of mantras or spells which produce their result not by controlling some

elemental, but merely by the repetition of certain sounds, also depend for their efficacy upon this action of sympathetic vibration.

The phenomenon of *disintegration* also may be brought about by the action of extremely rapid vibrations, which overcome the cohesion of the molecules of the object operated upon. A still higher vibration of a somewhat different type will separate these molecules into their constituent atoms. A body thus reduced to the etheric condition can be moved from one place to another with very great rapidity; and the moment the force which has been exerted is withdrawn it will be forced by the etheric pressure to resume its original condition.

It is necessary to explain how the shape of an object is preserved, when it is disintegrated and then re-materialised. If a metal key, for example, were raised to the vaporous condition by heat, when the heat is withdrawn the metal will solidify, but instead of being a key it will be merely a lump of metal. The reason of this is that the elemental essence which informs the [Page 159] key would be dissipated by the alteration in its condition: not that the elemental essence can be affected by heat, but that when its temporary body is destroyed as a solid, the elemental essence pours back into the great reservoir of such essence, much as the higher principles of man, though entirely unaffected by heat or cold, are yet forced out of a physical body when the latter is destroyed by fire.

Consequently, when the metal of the key cooled into the solid condition again, the "earth" elemental essence which poured back into it would not be the same as that which it contained before, and there would therefore be no reason why the key shape should be retained.

But a man who disintegrated a key in order to move it from one place to another, would be careful to hold the elemental essence in exactly the same shape until the transfer was completed, and then when his will-force was removed it would act as a mould into which the solidifying particles would flow, or rather round which they would be re-aggregated. Thus, unless the operator's power of concentration failed, the shape would be accurately preserved.

*Apports*, or the bringing of objects almost instantaneously from great distances to spiritualistic séances are sometimes produced in this way: for it is obvious that when disintegrated they could be passed with perfect ease through any solid substance, such as the wall of a house or the side of a locked box. The passage of matter through matter is thus, when understood, as simple as the passage of water through a sieve or of a gas through a liquid.

*Materialisation* or the change of an object from the etheric to the solid state, can be produced by a reversal of the above process. In this case also a continued effort of will is necessary to prevent the materialised matter from relapsing into the etheric condition. The various kinds of materialisation will be described in Chapter 28I on Invisible Helpers.

Electrical disturbances of any sort present [Page 160] difficulties in either materialisation or disintegration, presumably for the same reason that bright light renders them almost impossible — the destructive effect of strong vibration.

*Reduplication* is produced by forming a perfect mental image of the object to be copied, and then gathering about that mould the necessary astral and physical matter. The phenomenon requires considerable power of concentration to perform, because every particle, interior as well as exterior, of the object to be duplicated must be held accurately in view simultaneously. A person who is unable to extract the matter required directly from the surrounding ether may sometimes borrow it from the material of the original article, which would then be correspondingly reduced in weight.

*Precipitation* of letters, etc., may be produced in several ways. An Adept might place a sheet of paper before him, form a mental image of the writing he wished to appear upon it, and draw from the ether the matter wherewith to objectivise the image. Or he could with equal ease produce the same result upon a sheet of paper lying before his correspondent, whatever might be the distance between them.

A third method, quicker and therefore more often adopted, is to impress the whole substance of the letter on the mind of some pupil and leave him to do the mechanical work of precipitation. The pupil would then imagine he saw the letter written on the paper in his Master's hand, and objectivise the writing as just described. If he found it difficult to draw the material from the ether and precipitate the writing on the paper simultaneously, he might have ink or coloured powder at hand on which he could draw more readily.

It is just as easy to imitate one man's hand-writing as another's, and it would be impossible to detect by any ordinary means a forgery committed in this manner. A pupil of a Master has an infallible test which he can apply, but for others the proof of origin must lie solely in the contents of the letter and the spirit breathing [Page 161] through it, as the hand-writing, however cleverly imitated, is valueless as evidence.

A pupil new to the work would probably be able to imagine a few words at a time only, but one with more experience could visualise a whole page or even an entire letter at once. In this manner quite long letters are sometimes produced in a few seconds at spiritualistic séances.

Pictures are precipitated in the same manner, except that here it is necessary to visualise the entire scene at once: and if many colours are needed they have to be manufactured, kept separate, and applied correctly. Evidently there is here scope for artistic faculty, and those with experience as artists will be more successful than those without such experience.

*Slate-writing* is sometimes produced by precipitation, though more frequently tiny points of spirit hands are materialised just sufficiently to grasp the fragment of pencil.

*Levitation*, that is the floating of a human body in the air, is often performed at séances by "spirit hands" which support the body of the medium. It may also be achieved by the aid of the elementals of air and water. In the East, however, always, and here occasionally, another method is employed. There is known to occult science a method of neutralising or even reversing the force of gravity, which is in fact of a magnetic nature, by means of which levitation may be easily produced. Doubtless this method was used in raising some of the air-ships of ancient India and Atlantis, and it is not improbable that a similar method was employed in constructing the Pyramids and Stonehenge.

Levitation also happens to some ascetics in India, and some of the greatest of Christian Saints have in deep meditation been thus raised from the ground — for example, S. Teresa and S. Joseph of Cupertino.

Since light consists of ether vibrations, it is obvious that any one who understands how to set up these vibrations can produce "*spirit lights*", either the [Page 162] mildly phosphorescent or the dazzling electrical variety, or those dancing globules of light into which a certain class of fire elementals so readily transform themselves.

The feat of *handling* fire without injury may be performed by covering the hand with the thinnest layer of etheric substance, so manipulated as to be impervious to heat. There are also other ways in which it may be done.

The *production of fire* is also within the resources of the astral plane, as well as to counteract its effect. There seem to be at least three ways in which this could be done: (1) to set up and maintain the requisite rate of vibration, when combustion must ensue: (2) to introduce fourth-dimensionally a tiny fragment of glowing matter and then blow upon it until it bursts into flame: (3) to introduce chemical constituents which would produce combustion.

The *transmutation of metals* can be achieved by reducing a piece of metal to the atomic condition and rearranging the atoms in another form.

*Repercussion*, which will be dealt with in the Chapter on *Invisible Helpers*, is also due to the principle of sympathetic vibration, described above. [Page 163]

## CHAPTER 18

### THE FOURTH DIMENSION

There are many characteristics of the astral world which agree with remarkable exactitude with a world of four dimensions, as conceived by geometry and mathematics. So close, in fact, is this agreement, that cases are known where a purely intellectual study of the geometry of the fourth dimension has opened up astral sight in the student.

The classic books on the subject are those of C. H. Hinton: *Scientific Romances*, Vols. I and II: *A New Era of Thought: The Fourth Dimension*. These are strongly recommended by C. W. Leadbeater, who states that the study of the fourth dimension is the best method he knows to obtain a conception of the conditions which prevail on the astral plane, and that C. H. Hinton's exposition of the fourth dimension is the only one which gives any kind of explanation down here of the constantly observed facts of astral vision.

Other, and later books are several by Claude Bragdon: *The Beautiful Necessity: A Primer of Higher Space: Fourth Dimensional Vistas*; etc., *Tertium Organum* (a most illuminating work) by P. D. Ouspensky, and no doubt many others.

For those who have made no study of this subject we may give here the very barest outline of some of the main features underlying the fourth dimension.

A *point*, which has "position but no magnitude", has no dimensions: a *line*, created by the movement of a point, has one dimension, length: a *surface*, created by the movement of a line, at right angles to itself, has two dimensions, length and breadth: a *solid*, created by the movement of a surface at right angles to itself, has three dimensions, length, breadth and thickness. [Page 164]

A *tesseract* is a hypothetical object, created by the movement of a solid, in a new direction at right angles to itself, having four dimensions, length, breadth, thickness and another, at right angles to these three, but incapable of being represented in our world of three dimensions.

Many of the properties of a tesseract can be deduced, according to the following table:—

properties of a tesseract	Points	Lines	Surfaces	Solids
A Point has	1			
A Line has	2	1		
A Four-sided surface has	4	4	1	
A Cube has	8	12	6	1
A Tesseract has	16	32	24	8

The tesseract, as described by C. H. Hinton, is stated by C. W. Leadbeater to be

a reality, being quite a familiar figure on the astral plane. In *Some Occult Experiences* by J. Van Manen, an attempt is made to represent a 4-dimensional globe graphically.

There is a close and suggestive parallel between phenomena which could be produced by means of a three-dimensional object in a hypothetical world of two dimensions inhabited by a being conscious only of two dimensions, and many astral phenomena as they appear to us living in the physical or three-dimensional world. Thus:

- (1) Objects, by being lifted through the third dimension, could be made to appear in or disappear from the two-dimensional world at will.
- (2) An object completely surrounded by a line could be lifted out of the enclosed space through the third dimension.
- (3) By bending a two-dimensional world, represented by a sheet of paper, two distant points could be brought together, or even made to coincide, thus destroying the two-dimensional conception of distance.
- (4) A right-handed object could be turned over through the third dimension and made to re-appear as a left-handed object.
- (5) By looking down, from the third dimension, on to a two-dimensional object, every point of the [Page 165] latter could be seen at once, and free from the distortion of perspective.

To a being limited to a conception of two dimensions, the above would appear "miraculous", and completely incomprehensible.

It is curious that precisely similar tricks can be and are constantly being played upon us, as is well known to spiritualists: (1) entities and objects appear and disappear: (2) "apports" of articles from great distances are made: (3) articles are removed from closed boxes: (4) space appears to be practically annihilated; (5) an object can be reversed, *i.e.*, a right hand turned into a left hand: (6) all parts of an object, e.g., of a cube, are seen simultaneously and free from all distortion of perspective: similarly the whole of the matter of a closed book can be seen at once.

The explanation of the welling-up of force, e.g., in Chakrams, apparently from nowhere, is of course that it comes from the fourth dimension.

A liquid, poured on to a surface, tends to spread itself out in two dimensions, becoming very thin in the third dimension. Similarly a gas tends to spread itself in three dimensions, and it may be that in so doing it becomes smaller in the fourth dimension: *i.e.*, the density of a gas may be a measure of its relative thickness in

the fourth dimension.

It is clear that there is no need to stop at four dimensions: for all we know, there may be infinite dimensions of space. At any rate, it seems certain that the astral world is four-dimensional, the mental five-dimensional, and the buddhic six-dimensional.

It should be clear that if there are, say, seven dimensions at all, there are seven dimensions always and everywhere: *i.e.*, there is no such thing as a third or fourth-dimensional being. The apparent difference is due to the limited power of perception of the entity concerned, not to any change in the objects perceived. This idea is very well worked out in *Tertium Organum* by Ouspensky. [Page 166]

Nevertheless a man may develop astral consciousness and still be unable to perceive or appreciate the fourth dimension. In fact it is certain that the average man does not perceive the fourth dimension at all when he enters the astral plane. He realises it only as a certain blurring, and most men go through their astral lives without discovering the reality of the fourth dimension in the matter surrounding them.

Entities, such as nature-spirits, which belong to the astral plane, have by nature the faculty of seeing the four-dimensional aspect of all objects, but even they do not see them perfectly, since they perceive only the astral matter in them and not the physical, just as we perceive the physical and not the astral.

The passage of an object through another does not raise the question of the fourth dimension, but may be brought about by disintegration — a purely three-dimensional method.

Time is not in reality the fourth dimension at all: yet to regard the problem from the point of view of time is some slight, help towards understanding it. The passage of a cone through a sheet of paper would appear to an entity living on the sheet of paper as a circle altering in size: the entity would of course be incapable of perceiving all the stages of the circle as existing together as parts of one cone. Similarly for us the growth of a solid object viewed from the buddhic plane corresponds to the view of the cone as a whole, and thus throws some light on our own delusion of past, present and future, and on the faculty of prevision.

The transcendental view of time is very well treated in C. H. Hinton's story *Stella*, which is included in *Scientific Romances*, Vol. II. There are also two interesting references to this conception in *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I, page 69, and Vol. II, page 466.

It is an interesting and significant observation that geometry as we have it now is but a fragment, an exoteric preparation for the esoteric reality. Having lost the

true sense of space, the first step towards that knowledge is the cognition of the fourth dimension. [Page 167]

We may conceive the Monad at the beginning of its evolution to be able to move and to see in infinite dimensions, one of these being cut off at each downward step, until for the physical brain-consciousness only three are left. Thus by involution into matter we are cut off from the knowledge of all but a minute part of the worlds which surround us, and even what is left is but imperfectly seen.

With four-dimensional sight it may be observed that the planets which are isolated in our three-dimensions are four-dimensionally joined, these globes being in fact the points of petals which are part of one great flower: hence the Hindu conception of the solar system as a lotus.

There is also, *viâ* a higher dimension, a direct connection between the heart of the sun and the centre of the earth, so that elements appear in the earth without passing through what we call the surface.

A study of the fourth dimension seems to lead the way direct to mysticism. Thus C. H. Hinton constantly uses the phrase “casting out the self”, pointing out that in order to appreciate a solid four-dimensionally it is necessary to regard it not from any one point of view but from all points of view simultaneously: *i.e.*, the “self” or particular, isolated point of view must be transcended and replaced by the general and unselfish view.

One is also reminded of the famous saying of St. Paul (Ephesians iii, 17-18): “That ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth and height.” [Page 168]

## CHAPTER 19

### ASTRAL ENTITIES: HUMAN

To enumerate and describe every kind of astral entity would be a task as formidable as that of enumerating and describing every kind of physical entity. All we can attempt here is to tabulate the chief classes and give a very brief description of each.

ASTRAL ENTITIES			
Human		Non-Human	Artificial
Physically Alive	Physically Dead		
1- Ordinary Person	1- Ordinary Person	1-Elemental Essence	1- Elementals formed unconsciously
2- Psychic	2-Shade	2-Astral Bodies	2-Elementals

		<b>of Animals</b>	<b>formed consciously</b>
<b>3-Adept or his pupil</b>	<b>3-Shell</b>	<b>3-Nature-Spirits</b>	<b>3-Human Artificials</b>
<b>4- Black Magician or his pupil</b>	<b>4-Vitalised Shell</b>	<b>4-Devas</b>	
	<b>5-Suicide and Victim of Sudden Death</b>		
	<b>6-Vampire and Werewolf</b>		
	<b>7-Black Magician or his pupil</b>		
	<b>8-Pupil awaiting Reincarnation</b>		
	<b>9-Nirmānakaya</b>		

[Page 169] In order to make the classification quite complete, it is necessary to state that, in addition to the above, very high Adepts from other planets of the solar system, and even more august Visitors from a still greater distance, occasionally appear, but although it is possible, it is almost inconceivable, that such Beings would ever manifest themselves on a plane as low as the astral. If they wished to do so they would create a temporary body of astral matter of this planet.

Secondly, there are also two other great evolutions evolving on this planet, though it appears not to be intended that they or man should ordinarily be conscious of each other. If we did come into contact with them it would probably be physically, their connection with our astral plane being very slight. The only possibility of their appearance depends upon an extremely improbable accident in ceremonial magic, which only a few of the most advanced sorcerers know how to perform: nevertheless this has actually happened at least once.

#### THE HUMAN CLASS, (a) Physically Alive.

1. *The Ordinary Person.* — This class consists of persons, whose physical bodies are asleep, and who float about on the astral plane, in various degrees of consciousness, as already fully described in Chapter 9 on *Sleep Life*.
2. *The Psychic.* — A psychically-developed person will usually be perfectly conscious when out of the physical body, but, for want of proper training, he is liable to be deceived as to what he sees. Often he may be able to range through all the astral sub-planes, but sometimes he is especially attracted to some one

sub-plane, and rarely travels beyond its influences. His recollection of what he has seen may of course vary from perfect clearness to utter distortion or black oblivion. As he is assumed not to be under the guidance of a Master, he will appear always in his astral body, since he does not know how to function in his mental vehicle.

3- *The Adept and His pupils.* — This class usually [Page 170] employs, not the astral body, but the mind body, which is composed of matter of the four lower levels of the mental plane. The advantage of this vehicle is that it permits of instant passage from the mental to the astral and back, and also allows of the use at all times of the greater power and keener sense of its own plane.

The mind body not being visible to astral sight, the pupil who works in it learns to gather round himself a temporary veil of astral matter, when he wishes to become perceptible to astral entities. Such a vehicle, though an exact reproduction of the man in appearance, contains none of the matter of his own astral body, but corresponds to it in the same way as a materialisation corresponds to a physical body.

At an earlier stage of his development, the pupil may be found functioning in his astral body like any one else: but, whichever vehicle he is employing, a pupil under a competent teacher is always fully conscious and can function easily upon all the sub-planes.

4. *The Black Magician and his pupils.*—This class corresponds somewhat to that of the Adept and His pupils, except that the development has been for evil instead of good, the powers acquired being used for selfish instead of for altruistic purposes. Among its lower ranks are negroes who practise the rites of the Obeah and Voodoo schools, and the medicine-men of savage tribes. Higher in intellect, and therefore more blameworthy, are the Tibetan black magicians.

#### THE HUMAN CLASS. (B) Physically Dead.

1. *The Ordinary Person after Death.*—This class, obviously a very large one, consists of all grades of persons, in varying conditions of consciousness, as already fully described in Chapters 12I to 15 on *After-Death Life*.

2. *The Shade.*—In Chapter 23 we shall see that when the astral life of a person is over, he dies on the astral plane and leaves behind him his disintegrating astral body, precisely as when he dies physically he leaves behind him a decaying physical corpse. [Page 171]

In most cases the higher ego is unable to withdraw from his lower principles the whole of his manasic (mental) principle: consequently, a portion of his lower mental matter remains entangled with the astral corpse. The portion of mental matter thus remaining behind consists of the grosser kinds of each sub-plane,

which the astral body has succeeded in wrenching from the mental body.

This astral corpse, known as a Shade, is an entity which is not in any sense the real individual at all: nevertheless it bears his exact personal appearance, possesses his memory, and all his little idiosyncrasies. It may therefore very readily be mistaken for him, as indeed it frequently is at séances. It is not conscious of any act of impersonation, for as far as its intellect goes it must necessarily suppose itself to be the individual: it is in reality merely a soulless bundle of all his lowest qualities.

The length of life of a shade varies according to the amount of the lower mental matter which animates it: but as this is steadily fading out, its intellect is a diminishing quantity, though it may possess a great deal of a certain sort of animal cunning, and even quite towards the end of its career it is still able to communicate by borrowing temporary intelligence from the medium. From its very nature it is exceedingly liable to be swayed by all kinds of evil influences, and, being separated from its higher ego, it has nothing in its constitution capable of responding to good ones. It therefore lends itself readily to various minor purposes of some of the baser sort of black magicians. The mental matter it possesses gradually disintegrates and returns to the general matter of its own plane.

3. *The Shell*.—A shell is a man's astral corpse in the later stages of its disintegration, every particle of mind having left it. It is consequently without any sort of consciousness or intelligence, and drifts passively about upon the astral currents. Even yet it may be galvanised for a few moments into a ghastly burlesque of life if it happens to come within reach of a medium's [Page 172] aura. Under such circumstances it will still exactly resemble its departed personality in appearance and may even reproduce to some extent his familiar expressions or handwriting.

It has also the quality of being still blindly responsive to such vibrations, usually of the lowest order, as were frequently set up in it during its last stage of existence as a shade.

4. *The Vitalised Shell*.—This entity is not, strictly speaking, human: nevertheless, it is classified here because its outer vesture, the passive, senseless shell, was once an appanage of humanity. Such life, intelligence, desire, and will as it may possess are those of the artificial elemental (see page 45) animating it, this elemental being itself a creation of man's evil thought.

A vitalised shell is always malevolent: it is a true tempting demon, whose evil influence is limited only by the extent of its power. Like the shade, it is frequently used in Voodoo and Obeah forms of magic. It is referred to by some writers as an "elementary".

5. *The Suicide and Victim of Sudden Death*.—These have already been described in Chapter 15 on *After-Death Life*. It may be noted that this class, as well as Shades and Vitalised Shells, are what may be called minor vampires, because when they have an opportunity they prolong their existence by draining away the vitality from human beings whom they are able to influence.

6. *The Vampire and Werewolf*.—These two classes are today extremely rare; examples are occasionally found, chiefly in countries where there is a considerable strain of Fourth Race blood, such as Russia or Hungary.

It is just possible for a man to live such a degraded, selfish and brutal life that the whole of the lower mind becomes immeshed in his desires and finally separates from the higher ego. This is possible only where every gleam of unselfishness or spirituality has been stifled, and where there is no redeeming feature whatever.

Such a lost entity very soon after death finds himself unable to stay in the astral world, and is irresistibly [Page 173] drawn in full consciousness into “his own place”, the mysterious eighth sphere, there slowly to disintegrate after experiences best left undescribed. If, however, he perishes by suicide or sudden death, he may under certain circumstances, especially if he knows something of black magic, hold himself back from that fate by the ghastly existence of a vampire.

Since the eighth sphere cannot claim him until after the death of the body, he preserves it in a kind of cataleptic trance by transfusing into it blood drawn from other human beings by his semi-materialised astral body, thus postponing his final destiny by the commission of wholesale murder. The most effective remedy in such a case, as popular “superstition” rightly supposes, is to cremate the body, thus depriving the entity of his *point d'appui*.

When the grave is opened, the body usually appears quite fresh and healthy, and the coffin is not unusually filled with blood. Cremation obviously makes this sort of vampirism impossible.

The Werewolf can first manifest only during a man's physical life, and it invariably implies some knowledge of magical arts — sufficient at any rate to enable him to project the astral body.

When a perfectly cruel and brutal man does this, under certain circumstances the astral body may be seized upon by other astral entities and materialised, not into the human form, but into that of some wild animal, usually the wolf. In that condition it will range the surrounding country, killing other animals, and even human beings, thus satisfying not only its own craving for blood, but also that of the fiends who drive it on.

In this case, as so often with ordinary materialisations, a wound inflicted upon the

astral form will be reproduced upon the human physical body by the curious phenomenon of repercussion (see page 242). But after the death of the physical body, the astral body, which will probably continue to appear in the same form, will be less vulnerable. [Page 174]

It will then, however, be also less dangerous, as unless it can find a suitable medium, it will be unable to materialise fully. In such manifestations, there is probably a great deal of the matter of the etheric double, and perhaps even some of liquid and gaseous constituents of the physical body, as in the case of some materialisations. In both cases this fluidic body seems able to pass to much greater distances from the physical than is otherwise possible, so far as is known, for a vehicle containing etheric matter.

The manifestations of both vampires and werewolves are usually restricted to the immediate neighbourhood of their physical bodies.

7. *The Black Magician and his Pupil*.—This class corresponds, *mutatis mutandis*, to the pupil awaiting reincarnation, but in this case the man is defying the natural process of evolution by maintaining himself in astral life by magical arts—sometimes of the most horrible nature.

It is considered undesirable to enumerate or describe the various sub-divisions of this class, as an occult student wishes only to avoid them. All these entities, who prolong their life thus on the astral plane beyond its natural limit, do so at the expense of others and by the absorption of their life in some form or another.

8. *The Pupil awaiting Reincarnation*.—This is also at present a rare class. A pupil who has decided not to “take his devachan”, i.e., not to pass into the heaven-world, but to continue to work on the physical plane, is sometimes, by permission only of a very high authority, allowed to do so, a suitable reincarnation being arranged for him by his Master. Even when permission is granted, it is said that the pupil must confine himself strictly to the astral plane while the matter is being arranged, because if he touched the mental plane even for a moment he might be swept as by an irresistible current into the line of normal evolution again and so pass into the heaven-world.

Occasionally, though rarely, the pupil may be placed directly in an adult body whose previous tenant [Page 175] has no further use for it: but it is seldom that a suitable body is available.

Meanwhile the pupil is of course fully conscious on the astral plane and able to go on with the work given to him by his Master, even more effectively than when hampered by a physical body.

9. *The Nirmânakaya*.—It is very rarely indeed that a being so exalted as a Nirmânakaya manifests himself on the astral plane. A Nirmânakaya is one who,

having won the right to untold ages of rest in bliss unspeakable, yet has chosen to remain within touch of earth, suspended as it were between this world and Nirvana, in order to generate streams of spiritual force which may be employed for the helping of evolution. If He wished to appear on the astral plane he would probably create for himself a temporary astral body from the atomic matter of the plane. This is possible because a Nirmânakaya retains His causal body, and also the permanent atoms which He has carried all through His evolution, so that at any moment He can materialise round them mental, astral or physical bodies, if He so desires. [Page 176]

## CHAPTER 20

### ASTRAL ENTITIES: NON-HUMAN

I. *Elemental Essence*.—The word “elemental” has been used by various writers to mean many different kinds of entities. It is here employed to denote, during certain stages of its existence, monadic essence, which in its turn may be denoted as the outpouring of spirit or divine force into matter.

It is most important that the student should realise that the evolution of this elemental essence is taking place on the downward curve of the arc, as it is often called: *i.e.*, it is progressing *towards* the complete entanglement in matter which we see in the mineral kingdom, instead of away from it; consequently for it progress means *descent* into matter instead of ascent towards higher planes.

Before the “outpouring” arrives at the stage of individualisation at which it ensouls man, it has already passed through and ensouled six earlier phases of evolution, viz., the first elemental kingdom (on the higher mental plane), the second elemental kingdom (on the lower mental plane), the third elemental kingdom (on the astral plane), the mineral, vegetable and animal kingdoms. It has sometimes been called the animal, vegetable or mineral monad, though this is distinctly misleading, as long before it arrives at any of these kingdoms it has become not *one* but *many* monads.

We are here dealing, of course, only with the astral elemental essence. This essence consists of the divine outpouring which has already veiled itself in matter down to the atomic level of the mental plane, and then plunged down directly into the astral plane, aggregating round itself a body of atomic astral matter [Page 177] Such a combination is the elemental essence of the astral plane, belonging to the third elemental kingdom, the one immediately preceding the mineral.

In the course of its 2,401 differentiations on the astral plane, it draws to itself many and various combinations of the matter of the various sub-planes. Nevertheless these are only temporary, and it still remains essentially one kingdom.

Strictly speaking, there is no such thing as *an* elemental in connection with the group we are considering. What we find is a vast store of elemental essence, wonderfully sensitive to the most fleeting human thought, responding with inconceivable delicacy, in an infinitesimal fraction of a second, to a vibration set up in it by an entirely unconscious exercise of human will or desire.

But the moment that by the influence of such thought or will it is moulded into a living force, it becomes an elemental, and belongs to the "artificial" class, to which we shall come in our next chapter. Even then its separate existence is usually evanescent, for as soon as its impulse has worked itself out, it sinks back into the undifferentiated mass of elemental essence from which it came.

A visitor to the astral world will inevitably be impressed by the protean forms of the ceaseless tide of elemental essence, ever swirling around him, menacing often, yet always retiring before a determined effort of the will; and he will marvel at the enormous army of entities temporarily called out of this ocean into separate existence by the thoughts and feelings of man, whether good or evil.

Broadly, the elemental essence may be classified according to the kind of matter it inhabits: *i.e.*, solid, liquid, gaseous, etc. These are the "elementals" of the mediaeval alchemists. They held, correctly, that an "elemental", *i.e.*, a portion of the appropriate living elemental essence, inhered in each "element", or *constituent part*, of every physical substance.

Each of these seven main classes of elemental [Page 178] essence may also be sub-divided into seven sub-divisions, making 49 sub-divisions.

In addition to, and quite separate from, these *horizontal* divisions, there are also seven perfectly distinct types of elemental essence, the difference between them having nothing to do with degree of materiality, but rather with character and affinities. The student will be familiar with this classification as the "perpendicular" one, having to do with the seven "rays".

There are also seven sub-divisions in each ray-type, making 49 perpendicular sub-divisions: The total number of kinds of elemental essence is thus  $49 \times 49$  or 2,401.

The perpendicular division is clearly far more permanent and fundamental than the horizontal division: for the elemental essence in the slow course of evolution passes through the various horizontal classes in succession, but remains in its own perpendicular sub-division all the way through.

When any portion of the elemental essence remains for a few moments entirely unaffected by any outside influence — a condition hardly ever realised — it has no definite form of its own: but on the slightest disturbance it flashes into a bewildering confusion of restless, ever-changing shapes, which form, rush about,

and disappear with the rapidity of the bubbles on the surface of boiling water.

These evanescent shapes, though generally those of living creatures of some sort, human or otherwise, no more express the existence of separate entities in the essence than do the equally changeful and multiform waves raised in a few moments on a previously smooth lake by a sudden squall. They seem to be mere reflections from the vast storehouse of the astral light, yet they have usually a certain appropriateness to the character of the thought-stream which calls them into existence, though nearly always with some grotesque distortion, some terrifying or unpleasant aspect about them. [Page 179]

When the elemental essence is thrown into shapes appropriate to the stream of half-conscious, involuntary thoughts which the majority of men allow to flow idly through their brains, the intelligence which selects the appropriate shape is clearly not derived from the mind of the thinker: neither can it derive from the elemental essence itself, for this belongs to a kingdom further from individualisation even than the mineral, entirely devoid of awakened mental power.

Nevertheless, the essence possesses a marvellous adaptability which often seems to come very near to intelligence: it is no doubt this property that caused elementals to be spoken of in early books as "the semi-intelligent creatures of the astral light".

The elemental kingdoms proper do not admit of such conceptions as good or evil. Nevertheless there is a sort of bias or tendency permeating nearly all their sub-divisions which renders them hostile rather than friendly towards man. Hence the usual experience of the neophyte on the astral plane, where vast hosts of protean spectres advance threateningly upon him, but always retire or dissipate harmlessly when boldly faced. As stated by mediaeval writers, this bias or tendency is due entirely to man's own fault, and is caused by his . indifference to, and want of sympathy with, other living beings. In the "golden age" of the past it was not so, any more than it will be so in the future when, owing to the changed attitude of man, both the elemental essence and also the animal kingdom will once again become docile and helpful to man instead of the reverse.

It is thus clear that the elemental kingdom as a whole is very much what the collective thought of humanity makes it.

There are many uses to which the forces inherent. in the manifold varieties of the elemental essence can be put by one trained in their management. The vast majority of magical ceremonies depend almost entirely upon its manipulation, either directly by the will of the magician, or by some more definite astral entity evoked by him for the purpose. [Page 180]

By its means nearly all the physical phenomena of the *séance room* are

produced, and it is also the agent in most cases of stone-throwing or bell-ringing in haunted houses, these latter being the results of blundering efforts to attract attention made by some earth-bound human entity, or by the mere mischievous pranks of some of the minor nature-spirits belonging to our third class (see p. 181). But the “elemental” must never be thought of as a prime mover: it is simply a latent force, which needs an external power to set it in motion.

2. *The Astral Bodies of Animals*.—This is an extremely large class, yet it does not occupy a particularly important position on the astral plane, since its members usually stay there but a very short time. The vast majority of animals have not as yet permanently individualised, and when one of them dies, the monadic essence which has been manifesting through it flows back again into the group-soul whence it came, bearing with it such advancement or experience as has been attained during earth life. It is not, however, able to do this immediately; the astral body of the animal rearranges itself just as in man's case, and the animal has a real existence on the astral plane, the length of which, though never great, varies according to the intelligence which it has developed. In most cases it does not seem to be more than dreamily conscious, but appears perfectly happy.

The comparatively few domestic animals who have already attained individuality, and will therefore be re-born no more as animals in this world, have a much longer and more vivid life on the astral plane than their less advanced fellows.

Such an individualised animal usually remains near his earthly home and in close touch with his especial friend and protector. This period will be followed by a still happier period of what has been called dozing consciousness, which will last until in some future world the human form is assumed. During all that time he is in a condition analogous to that of a human [Page 181] being in the heaven-world, though at a somewhat lower level.

One interesting sub-division of this class consists of the astral bodies of those anthropoid apes mentioned in *The Secret Doctrine* (Vol. I, p. 184) who are already individualised, and will be ready to take human incarnation in the next round, or perhaps some of them even sooner.

In “civilised” countries these animal astral bodies add much to the general feeling of hostility on the astral plane, for the organised butchery of animals in slaughter-houses and for “sport” sends millions into the astral world, full of horror, terror and shrinking from man. Of late years these feelings have been much intensified by the practice of vivisection.

3. *Nature-Spirits of all Kinds*.—This class is so large and so varied that it is possible here to give only some idea of the characteristics common to all of them.

The nature-spirits belong to an evolution quite distinct from our own: they neither

have been nor ever will be members of a humanity such as ours. Their only connection with us is that we temporarily occupy the same planet. They appear to correspond to the animals of a higher evolution. They are divided into seven great classes, inhabiting the same seven states of matter permeated by the corresponding varieties of elemental essence. Thus, there are nature-spirits of the earth, water, air, fire (or ether) — definite, intelligent astral entities residing and functioning in each of those media.

Only the members of the air class normally reside in the astral world, but their numbers are so prodigious that they are everywhere present in it.

In mediaeval literature earth-spirits are often called gnomes, water-spirits undines, air-spirits sylphs, and ether-spirits salamanders. In popular language they have been variously called fairies, pixies, elves, brownies, peris, djinns, trolls, satyrs, fauns, kobolds, imps, goblins, good people, etc.

Their forms are many and various, but most [Page 182] frequently human in shape and somewhat diminutive in size. Like almost all astral entities they are able to assume any appearance at will, though they undoubtedly have favourite forms which they wear when they have no special object in taking any other. Usually they are invisible to physical sight, but they have the power of making themselves visible by materialisation when they wish to be seen.

At the head of each of these classes is a great Being, the directing and guiding intelligence of the whole department of nature which is administered and energised by the class of entities under his control. These are known by the Hindus as (1) *Indra*, lord of the Akâsha, or ether: (2) *Agni*, lord of fire: (3) *Pavana*, lord of air: (4) *Varuna*, lord of water: (5) *Kshiti*, lord of earth.

The vast kingdom of nature-spirits, as stated above, is in the main an astral kingdom, though a large section of it appertains to the etheric levels of the physical plane.

There is an immense number of sub-divisions or races among them, individuals varying in intelligence and disposition just as human beings do. Most of them avoid man altogether: his habits and emanations are distasteful to them, and the constant rush of astral currents set up by his restless, ill-regulated desires disturbs and annoys them. Occasionally, however, they will make friends with human beings and even help them.

The helpful attitude is rare: in most cases they exhibit either indifference or dislike, or take an impish delight in deceiving and tricking men. Many instances of this may be found in lonely mountainous districts and in the séance room.

They are greatly assisted in their tricks by the wonderful power of glamour they possess, so that their victims see and hear only what these fairies impress upon

them, exactly as with mesmerised subjects. The nature-spirits, however, cannot dominate the human will, except in the case of very weak-minded people, or of those who allow terror to paralyse [Page 183] their will. They can deceive the senses only, and they have been known to cast their glamour over a considerable number of people at the same time. Some of the most wonderful feats of Indian jugglers are performed by invoking their aid in producing collective hallucination.

They seem usually to have little sense of responsibility, and the will is generally less developed than in the average man. They can, therefore, readily be dominated mesmerically and employed to carry out the will of the magician. They may be utilised for many purposes, and will carry out tasks within their power faithfully and surely.

They are also responsible, in certain mountainous regions, for throwing a glamour over a belated traveller, so that he sees, for example, houses and people where he knows none really exist. These delusions are frequently not merely momentary, but may be maintained for quite a considerable time, the man going through -quite a long series of imaginary but striking adventures and then suddenly finding that all his brilliant surroundings have vanished, and that he is left standing in a lonely valley or on a wind-swept plain.

In order to cultivate their acquaintance and friendship, a man must be free from physical emanations which they detest, such as those of meat, alcohol, tobacco, and general uncleanliness, as well as from lust, anger, envy, jealousy, avarice and depression, *i.e.*, he must be clean and unobjectionable both physically and astrally. High and pure feelings which burn steadily and without wild surgings create an atmosphere in which nature-spirits delight to bathe. Almost all nature-spirits delight also in music: they may even enter a house in order to enjoy it, bathing in the sound-waves, pulsating and swaying in harmony with them.

To nature-spirits must also be attributed a large portion of what are called physical phenomena at spiritualistic séances: indeed, many a séance has been [Page 184] given entirely by these mischievous creatures. They are capable of answering questions, delivering pretended messages by raps or tilts, exhibiting "spirit" lights, the *apport* of objects from a distance, the reading of thoughts in the mind of any person present, the precipitation of writing or drawings, and even materialisations. They could, of course, also employ their power of glamour to supplement their other tricks.

They may not in the least mean to harm or deceive, but naively rejoice in their success in playing their part, and in the awe-stricken devotion and affection lavished upon them as "dear spirits" and "angel-helpers". They share the delight of the sitters and feel themselves to be doing a good work in thus comforting the afflicted.

They will also sometimes masquerade in thought-forms that men have made, and think it a great joke to flourish horns, to lash a forked tail, and to breathe out flame as they rush about. Occasionally an impressionable child may be terrified by such appearances, but in fairness to the nature-spirit it must be remembered that he himself is incapable of fear and so does not understand the gravity of the result, probably thinking that the child's terror is simulated and a part of the game.

None of the nature-spirits possess a permanent reincarnating individuality. It seems, therefore, that in their evolution a much greater proportion of intelligence is developed before individualisation takes place.

The life periods of the various classes vary greatly, some being quite short, others much longer than our human lifetime. Their existence on the whole appears to be simple, joyous, irresponsible, such as a party of happy children might lead among exceptionally favourable physical surroundings.

There is no sex among nature-spirits, there is no disease, and there is no struggle for existence. They have keen affections and can form close and lasting friendships. Jealousy and anger are possible to them, but seem quickly to fade away before the overwhelming [Page 185] delight in all the operations of nature which is their most prominent characteristic.

Their bodies have no internal structure, so that they cannot be torn asunder or injured, neither has heat or cold any effect upon them. They appear to be entirely free from fear.

Though tricky and mischievous, they are rarely malicious, unless definitely provoked. As a body they distrust man, and generally resent the appearance of a newcomer on the astral plane, so that he usually meets them in an unpleasant or terrifying form. If, however, he declines to be frightened by them they soon accept him as a necessary evil and take no further notice of him, while some may even become friendly.

One of their keenest delights is to play with and to entertain in a hundred different ways children on the astral plane who are what we call "dead".

Some of the less childlike and more dignified have sometimes been reverenced as wood-gods or local village gods. These would appreciate the flattery paid them, and would no doubt be willing to do any small service they could in return.

The Adept knows how to use the services of the nature-spirits, and frequently entrusts them with pieces of work, but the ordinary magician can do so only by invocation, that is, by attracting their attention as a suppliant and making some kind of a bargain with them, or by evocation, that is, by compelling their obedience. Both methods are extremely undesirable: evocation is also

exceedingly dangerous, as the operator would arouse a hostility which might prove fatal to him. No pupil of a Master would ever be permitted to attempt anything of the kind.

The highest type of nature-spirits consists of the sylphs or the spirits of the air, which have the astral body as their lowest vehicle. They have intelligence equal to that of the average man. The normal method for them to attain to individualisation is to associate with and love the members of the next stage above them — the astral angels. [Page 186]

A nature-spirit who desires experience of human life may obsess a person living in the physical world.

There have been times when a certain class of nature-spirits have physically materialised themselves and so entered into undesirable relationships with men and women. Perhaps from this fact have come the stories of fauns and satyrs, though these sometimes also refer to quite a different sub-human evolution.

In passing, it is worth noting that although the kingdom of the nature-spirits is radically dissimilar from the human — being without sex, fear, or the struggle for existence — yet the eventual result of its unfoldment is in every respect equal to that attained by humanity.

4. *The Devas*.—The beings called by the Hindus devas are elsewhere spoken of as angels, sons of God, etc. They belong to an evolution distinct from that of humanity, an evolution in which they may be regarded as a kingdom next above humanity.

In Oriental literature the word deva is also used vaguely to mean any kind of non-human entity. It is used here in the restricted sense stated above.

5. They will never be human, because most of them are already beyond that stage, but there are some of them who have been human beings in the past.

The bodies of devas are more fluidic than those of men, the texture of the aura being, so to speak, looser; they are capable of far greater expansion and contraction, and have a certain fiery quality which is clearly distinguishable from that of an ordinary human being. The form inside the aura of a deva, which is nearly always a human form, is much less defined than in a man: the deva lives more in the circumference, more all over his aura than a man does. Devas usually appear as human beings of gigantic size. They have a colour language, which is probably not as definite as our speech, though in certain ways it may express more.

Devas are often near at hand and willing to expound and exemplify subjects along their own line to any human being sufficiently developed to appreciate

them.[Page 187]

Though connected with the earth, the devas evolve through a grand system of seven chains, the whole of our seven worlds being as one world to them. Very few of our humanity have reached the level at which it is possible to join the deva evolution. Most of the recruits of the deva kingdom have been derived from other humanities in the solar system, some lower and some higher than ours.

The object of the deva evolution is to raise their foremost rank to a much higher level than that intended for humanity in the corresponding period.

The three lower great divisions of the devas are: (1) Kāmadevas, whose lowest body is the astral:

(2) Rūpadevas, whose lowest body is the lower mental: (3) Arûpadevas, whose lowest body is the higher mental or causal.

For Rūpadevas and Arûpadevas to manifest on the astral plane is at least as rare as for an astral entity to materialise on the physical plane.

Above these classes are four other great divisions, and above and beyond the deva kingdom are the great hosts of the Planetary Spirits.

We are concerned here principally with the Kāmadevas. The general average among them is much higher than among us, for all that is definitely evil has long ago been eliminated from them. They differ widely in disposition, and a really spiritual man may well stand higher in evolution than some of them.

Their attention can be attracted by certain magical evocations, but the only human will which can dominate theirs is that of a certain high class of Adepts.

As a rule they seem scarcely conscious of our physical world, though occasionally one of them may render assistance, much as any of us would help an animal in trouble. They understand, however, that at the present stage, any interference with human affairs is likely to do far more harm than good.

It is desirable to mention here the four *Devarâjas*, though they do not strictly belong to any of our classes.

These four have passed through an evolution which [Page 188] is certainly not anything corresponding to our humanity.

They are spoken of as the Regents of the Earth, the Angels of the four Cardinal Points, or the Chatur Mahârâjas. They rule, not over devas, but over the four “elements” of earth, water, air and fire, with their indwelling nature-spirits and essences. Other items of information concerning them are for convenience tabulated below:—

Name	Appropriate Point of Compass	Elemental Hosts	Symbolical Colour
Dhritarâshtra	East	Gandharvas	White
Virûdhaka	South	Kumbhandas	Blue
Virûpaksha	West	Nagas	Red
Vaishrâvana	North	Yakshas	Gold

*The Secret Doctrine* mentions them as “winged globes and fiery wheels”, and in the Christian Bible Ezekiel attempts to describe them in very similar words. References to them are made in the symbology of every religion, and they are always held in the highest reverence as the protectors of mankind.

They are the agents of man's Karma during his earth life, and they thus play an extremely important part in human destiny. The great Karmic deities of the Kosmos, the Lipika, weigh the deeds of each personality when the final separation of the principles takes place at the end of its astral life, and give as it were the mould of an etheric double exactly suitable to its Karma for the man's next birth. But it is the Devarâjas, who, having command of the “elements” of which that etheric double must be composed, arrange their proportion so as to fulfil accurately the intention of the Lipika.

All through life they constantly counterbalance the changes introduced into man's condition by his own [Page 189] free will and that of those around him, so that Karma may be accurately and justly worked out. A learned dissertation on these beings will be found in *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I, pp. 122-126. They are able to take human material forms at will, and cases are recorded where they have done so.

All the higher nature-spirits and hosts of artificial elementals act as their agents in their stupendous work: but all the threads are in their own hands and they assume the whole responsibility. They seldom manifest on the astral plane, but when they do they are certainly the most remarkable of its non-human inhabitants.

There must really be seven, not four, Devarâjas, but outside the circle of Initiation little is known and less may be said concerning the higher three. [Page 190]

## CHAPTER 21

### ASTRAL ENTITIES: ARTIFICIAL

THE artificial entities form the largest class and are also much the most important

to man. They consist of an enormous inchoate mass of semi-intelligent entities, differing among themselves as human thoughts differ, and practically incapable of detailed classification and arrangement. Being entirely man's own creation, they are related to him by close karmic bonds, and their action upon him is direct and incessant.

1. *Elementals formed Unconsciously.* — The way in which these desire - and thought-forms are called into being has already been described in Chapter 7. The desire and thought of a man seize upon the plastic elemental essence and mould it instantly into a living being of appropriate form. The form is in no way under the control of its creator, but lives out a life of its own, the length of which is proportional to the intensity of the thought which created it, and which may be anything from a few minutes to many days. For further particulars the student is referred back to Chapter 7.

2. *Elementals formed Consciously.* — It is clear that elementals formed, consciously, by those who are acting deliberately and know precisely what they are doing, may be enormously more powerful than those formed unconsciously. Occultists of both white and dark schools frequently use artificial elementals in their work, and few tasks are beyond the powers of such creatures when scientifically prepared and directed with knowledge and skill. One who knows how to do so can maintain a connection with his elemental and guide it, so that it will act practically as though endowed with the full intelligence of its master. [Page 191]

It is unnecessary to repeat here descriptions of this class of elemental, which have already been given in Chapter 7.

3. *Human Artificials.* — This is a very peculiar class, containing but few individuals, but possessing an importance quite out of proportion to its numbers, owing to its intimate connection with the spiritualistic movement.

In order to explain its genesis it is necessary to go back to ancient Atlantis. Among the lodges for occult study, preliminary to Initiation, formed by Adepts of the Good Law, there is one which still observes the same old-world ritual, and teaches the same Atlantean tongue as a sacred and hidden language, as in the days of Atlantis.

The teachers in this lodge do not stand at the Adept level, and the lodge is not directly a part of the Brotherhood of the Himalayas, though there are some of the Himâlayan Adepts who were connected with it in former incarnations.

About the middle of the nineteenth century, the chiefs of this lodge, in despair at the rampant materialism of Europe and America, determined to combat it by novel methods, and to offer opportunities by which any reasonable man could acquire proof of a life apart from the physical body.

The movement thus set on foot grew into the vast fabric of modern spiritualism, numbering its adherents by millions. Whatever other results may have followed, it is unquestionable that by means of spiritualism vast numbers of people have acquired a belief in at any rate some kind of future life. This is a magnificent achievement, though some think that it has been attained at too great a cost.

The method adopted was to take some ordinary person after death, arouse him thoroughly upon the astral plane, instruct him to a certain extent in the powers and possibilities belonging to it, and then put him in charge of a spiritualistic circle. He in his turn "developed" other departed personalities along [Page 192] the same lines, they all acted upon those who sat at their séances, and "developed" them as mediums. The leaders of the movement no doubt occasionally manifested themselves in astral form at the circles, but in most cases they merely directed and guided as they considered necessary. There is little doubt that the movement increased so much that it soon got quite beyond their control; for many of the later developments, therefore, they can be held only indirectly responsible.

The intensification of the astral life of the "controls" who were put in charge of circles distinctly delayed their natural progress, and although it was thought that full compensation for such loss would result from the good karma of leading others to truth, it was soon found that it was impossible to make use of a "spirit-guide" for any length of time without doing him serious and permanent injury.

In some cases such "guides" were withdrawn, and others substituted for them. In others, however, it was considered undesirable to make such a change, and then a remarkable expedient was adopted which gave rise to the curious class of creatures we have called "human artificials".

The higher principles of the original "guide" were allowed to pass on to their long-delayed evolution into the heaven-world, but the shade (see p. 170) which he left behind was taken possession of, sustained, and operated upon so that it might appear to the circle practically just as before.

At first this seems to have been done by members of the lodge, but eventually it was decided that the departed person who would have been appointed to succeed the late "spirit-guide" should still do so, but should take possession of the latter's shade or shell, and, in fact, simply wear his appearance. This is what is termed a "human artificial" entity.

In some cases more than one change seems to have been made without arousing suspicion, but, on the other hand, some investigators of spiritualism have [Page 193] observed that after a considerable time differences suddenly appeared in the manner and disposition of a "spirit".

None of the members of the Himalayan Brotherhood have ever undertaken the

formation of an artificial entity of this sort, though they could not interfere with any one who thought it right to take such a course.

Apart from the deception involved, a weak point in the arrangement is that others besides the original lodge may adopt the plan, and there is nothing to prevent black magicians from supplying communicating spirits, as, indeed, they have been known to do. [Page 194]

## CHAPTER 22

### SPIRITUALISM

THE term "spiritualism" is used nowadays to denote communication of many different kinds with the astral world by means of a medium.

The origin and history of the spiritualistic movement have already been described in Chapter 21.

The etheric mechanism which makes spiritualistic phenomena possible has been fully described in The Etheric Double, to which work the student is referred.

There remains now for us to consider the value, if any, of this method of communicating with the unseen world, and the nature of the sources from which the communications may come.

In the early days of the Theosophical Society, H. P. Blavatsky wrote with considerable vehemence on the subject of spiritualism, and laid great stress on the uncertainty of the whole thing, and the preponderance of personations over real appearances. There seems little doubt that these views have largely coloured and determined the unfavourable attitude which most members of the Theosophical Society take towards spiritualism as a whole.

C.W. Leadbeater, on the other hand, affirms that his own personal experience has been more favourable. He spent some years experimenting with spiritualism, and believes that he has himself repeatedly seen practically all the phenomena which may be read about in the literature of the subject.

In his experience, he found that a distinct majority of the apparitions were genuine. The messages they give are often uninteresting, and their religious teaching he describes as being usually "Christianity and water": nevertheless, as far as [Page 195] it goes, it is liberal, and in advance of the bigoted orthodox position.

C.W. Leadbeater points out that Spiritualists and Theosophists have much important ground in common, e.g., (1) that life after death is an actual, vivid, ever-present certainty; and (2) that eternal progress and ultimate happiness, for

every one, good and bad alike, is also a certainty. These two items are of such tremendous and paramount importance, constituting as they do so enormous an advance from the ordinary orthodox position, that it seems somewhat regrettable that Spiritualists and Theosophists cannot join hands on these broad issues and agree, for the present, to differ upon minor points, until at least the world at large is converted to that much of the truth. In this work there is ample room for the two bodies of seekers after truth.

Those who wish to see phenomena, and those who cannot believe anything without ocular demonstration, will naturally gravitate towards spiritualism. On the other hand, those who want more philosophy than spiritualism usually provides, will naturally turn to Theosophy. Both movements thus cater for the liberal and open-minded, but for quite different types of them. Meanwhile, harmony and agreement between the two movements seems desirable, in view of the great ends at stake.

It must be said to the credit of spiritualism that it has achieved its purpose to the extent of converting vast numbers of people from a belief in nothing in particular to a firm faith in at any rate some kind of future life. This, as we said in the last chapter, is undoubtedly a magnificent result, though there are those who think that it has been attained at too great a cost.

There is undoubtedly danger in spiritualism for emotional, nervous and easily influenced natures, and it is advisable not to carry the investigations too far, for reasons which by now must be apparent to the student. But there is no readier way of breaking [Page 196] down the unbelief in anything outside the physical plane than trying a few experiments, and it is perhaps worth while to run some risk in order to effect this.

C.W. Leadbeater fearlessly asserts that, in spite of the fraud and deception which undoubtedly have occurred in some instances, there are great truths behind spiritualism which may be discovered by anyone willing to devote the necessary time and patience to their investigation. There is, of course, a vast and growing literature on the subject.

Furthermore, good work, similar to that done by Invisible Helpers (see Chapter 28), has sometimes been done through the agency of a medium, or of some one present at a séance. Thus, though spiritualism has too often detained souls, who but for it would have attained speedy liberation, yet it has also furnished the means of escape to others, and thus opened up the path of advancement for them. There have been instances in which the deceased person has been able to appear, without the assistance of a medium, to his relatives and friends, and explain his wishes to them. But such cases are rare, and in most cases earth-bound souls can relieve themselves of their anxieties only by means of the services of a medium, or of a conscious "Invisible Helper".

It is thus an error to look only at the dark side of spiritualism: it must not be forgotten that it has done an enormous amount of good in this kind of work, by giving to the dead an opportunity to arrange their affairs after a sudden and unexpected departure.

The student of these pages should not be surprised that amongst spiritualists are some who are bigoted and narrow, who know nothing, for example, of reincarnation: it is probable, in fact, that the majority of English and American spiritualists do not yet know of that fact, though there are schools of spiritualism which do teach it. We have already seen that when a man dies, he usually resorts to the company of those [Page 197] whom he has known on earth: he moves among exactly the same kind of people as during physical life. Hence such a man is little more likely to know or recognise the fact of reincarnation after death than before it. Most men are shut in from all new ideas by a host of prejudices: they carry those prejudices into the astral world with them, and are no more amenable to reason and common-sense there than in the physical world.

Of course a man who is really open-minded can learn a great deal on the astral plane: he may speedily acquaint himself with the whole of the Theosophical teaching, and there are dead men who do this. Hence it often happens that portions of that teaching are found among spirit-communications.

It must also be borne in mind that there is a higher spiritualism of which the public knows nothing, and which never publishes any account of its results. The best circles of all are strictly private, restricted to a small number of sitters. In such circles the same people meet over and over again, and no outsider is ever admitted to make any change in the magnetism. The conditions set up are thus singularly perfect, and the results obtained are often of the most surprising character. Often the so-called dead are just as much part of the daily life of the family as the living. The hidden side of such séances is magnificent: the thought-forms surrounding them are good, and calculated to raise the mental and spiritual level of the district.

At public séances an altogether lower class of dead people appear, because of the promiscuous jumble of magnetism.

One of the most serious objections to the general practice of spiritualism, is that in the ordinary man after death the consciousness is steadily rising from the lower part of the nature towards the higher: the ego, as we have repeatedly said, is steadily withdrawing himself away from the lower worlds: obviously, therefore, it cannot be helpful to his evolution that the lower part should be re-awakened from the natural and [Page 198] desirable unconsciousness into which it is passing, and dragged back into touch with earth in order to communicate through a medium.

It is thus a cruel kindness to draw back to the earth-sphere one whose lower

manas still yearns after kâmic gratifications, because it delays his forward evolution and interrupts what should be an orderly progression. The period in kâmaloka is thus lengthened, the astral body is fed, and its hold on the ego is maintained; thus the freedom of the soul is deferred, "the immortal Swallow being still held by the birdlime of earth".

Especially in cases of suicide or sudden death is it most undesirable to re-awaken Trishnâ, or the desire for sentient existence.

The peculiar danger of this will appear when it is recollected that since the ego is withdrawing into himself, he becomes less and less able to influence or guide the lower portion of his consciousness, which, nevertheless, until the separation is complete, has the power to generate karma, and under the circumstances is far more likely to add evil than good to its record.

Furthermore, people who have led an evil life and !' are filled with yearnings for the earth life they have left, and for the animal delights they can no longer directly taste, tend to gather round mediums or sensitives, endeavouring to utilise them for their own gratification. These are among the more dangerous of the forces so rashly confronted in their ignorance by the thoughtless and the curious.

A desperate astral entity may seize upon a sensitive sitter and obsess him, or he may even follow him home  
and seize upon his wife or daughter. There have been many such cases, and usually it is almost impossible  
to get rid of such an obsessing entity.

We have already seen that passionate sorrow and desires of friends on earth also tend to draw departed entities down to the earth-sphere again, thus often causing acute suffering to the deceased as well as interfering with the normal course of evolution.

Turning now to the kinds of entities who may [Page 199] communicate through a medium, we may classify them as follows:—  
Deceased human beings on the astral plane.  
Deceased human beings in devachan.  
Shades.  
Shells.  
Vitalised shells.  
Nature-Spirits.  
The medium's ego.  
Adepts.  
Nirmânakâyas.

As most of these have already been described in Chapter 14 on *Astral Entities*, little more need be said about them here.

It is theoretically possible for any deceased person on the astral plane to communicate through a medium, though this is far easier from the lower levels, becoming more and more difficult as the entity rises to the higher-sub-planes. Hence, other things being equal, it is natural to expect that a majority of the communications received at séances will be from the lower levels and therefore from relatively undeveloped entities.

The student will recollect (see page 138) that suicides, and other victims of sudden death, including executed criminals, having been cut off in the full flush of physical life, are especially likely to be drawn to a medium, in the hope of satisfying their Trishna, or thirst for life.

Consequently, the medium is the cause of developing in them a new set of *Skandhas* (see page 209), a new body with far worse tendencies and passions than the one they lost. This would be productive of untold evils for the ego, and cause him to be re-born into a far worse existence than before.

Communication with an entity in devachan, *i.e.*, in the heaven-world, needs a little further explanation. Where a sensitive, or medium, is of a pure and lofty nature, his freed ego may rise to the devachanic plane and there contact the entity in devachan. The [Page 200] impression is often given that the entity from devachan has come to the medium, but the truth is the reverse of this: it is the ego of the medium who has risen to the level of the entity in devachan.

Owing to the peculiar conditions of the consciousness of entities in devachan (into which we cannot enter in this book), messages thus obtained cannot altogether be relied upon: at best the medium or sensitive can know, see and feel only what the particular entity in devachan knows, sees and feels. Hence, if generalisations are indulged in, there is much possibility of error, since each entity in devachan lives in his own particular department of the heaven-world.

In addition to this source of error, whilst the thoughts, knowledge and sentiments of the devachanic entity form the substance, it is likely that the medium's own personality and pre-existing ideas will govern the form of the communication.

A *shade* (see page 170) may frequently appear and communicate at séances; bearing the exact appearance of the departed entity, possessing his memory, idiosyncrasies, etc., it is often mistaken for the entity himself, though it is not itself conscious of any impersonation. It is in reality a "soulless bundle of the lowest qualities" of the entity.

A *shell* (see page 171) also exactly resembles the departed entity, though it is nothing more than the astral corpse of the entity, every particle of mind having left it. By coming within reach of a medium's aura it may be galvanised for a few moments into a burlesque of the real entity.

Such “spooks” are conscienceless, devoid of good impulses, tending towards disintegration, and consequently can work for evil only, whether we regard them as prolonging their vitality by vampirising at séances, or polluting the medium and sitters with astral connections of an altogether undesirable kind.

A *vitalised shell* (see page 172) may also communicate through a medium. As we have seen, it consists of an astral corpse animated by an artificial elemental, and [Page 201] is always malevolent. Obviously it constitutes a source of great danger at spiritualistic séances.

Suicides, shades and vitalised shells, being minor vampires, drain away vitality from human beings whom they can influence. Hence both medium and sitters are often weak and exhausted after a physical séance. A student of occultism is taught how to guard himself from their attempts, but without that knowledge it is difficult for one who puts himself in their way to avoid being laid more or less under contribution by them.

It is the use of shades and shells at séances which brands so many of spiritualistic communications with intellectual sterility. Their apparent intellectuality will give out only reproductions: the mark of non-originality will be present, there being no sign of new and independent thought.

*Nature-Spirits.* The part which these creatures so often play at séances has already been described on pages 182 *et seq.*

Many of the phenomena of the séance-room are clearly more rationally accounted for as the tricky vagaries of sub-human forces, than as the act of “spirits” who, while in the body, were certainly incapable of such inanities.

The *medium's ego*. If the medium be pure and earnest and striving after the light, such upward striving is met by a down-reaching of the higher nature, light from the higher streaming down and illuminating the lower consciousness. Then the lower mind is, for the time, united with its parent the higher mind, and transmits as much of the knowledge of the higher mind as it is able to retain. Thus some communications through a medium may come from the medium's own higher ego.

The class of entity drawn to séances depends of course very much on the type of medium. Mediums of low type inevitably attract eminently undesirable visitors, whose fading vitality is reinforced in the séance-room. Nor is this all: if at such séances there be present a man or woman of correspondingly low [Page 202] development, the spook will be attracted to that person and may attach itself to him or her, thus setting up currents between the astral body of the living person and the dying astral body of the dead person, and generating results of a deplorable kind.

An *Adept* or *Master* often communicates with His disciples, without using the ordinary methods of communication. If a medium were a pupil of a Master, it is possible that a message from the Master might "come through", and be mistaken for a message from a more ordinary "spirit".

A *Nirmânakâya* is a perfected man, who has cast aside his physical body but retains his other lower principles, remaining in touch with the earth for the sake of helping the evolution of mankind. These great entities can and do on rare occasions communicate through a medium, but only through one of a very pure and lofty nature. (See also page 175)

Unless a man has had very wide experience with mediumship, he would find it difficult to believe how many quite ordinary people on the astral plane are burning with the desire to pose as great world-teachers. Usually they are honest in their intentions, and really think they have teaching to give which will save the world. Having realised the worthlessness of merely worldly objects, they feel, quite rightly, that if they could impress upon mankind their own ideas the whole world would immediately become a very different place.

Having flattered the medium into believing that he or she is the sole channel for some exclusive and transcendent teaching, and having modestly disclaimed any special greatness for himself, one of these communicating entities is often imagined by the sitters to be at least an archangel, or even some more direct manifestation of the Deity. Unfortunately, however, it is usually forgotten by such an entity that when he was alive in the physical world, other people were making similar communications through various mediums, and that he paid not the slightest attention [Page 203] to them. He does not realise that others also, still immersed in the affairs of the world, will pay no more attention to him and will decline to be moved by his communications.

Sometimes such entities will assume distinguished names, such as George Washington, Julius Caesar, or the Archangel Michael, from the questionably pardonable motive that the teachings they give will so be more likely to be accepted than if they emanate from plain John Smith or Thomas Brown.

Sometimes also, such entities, seeing the minds of others full of reverence for the Masters, will personate these very Masters in order to command more ready acceptance for the ideas they wish to promulgate.

Also there are some who attempt to injure the work of the Master by assuming His form and so influencing His pupil. Although they might be able to produce an almost perfect physical appearance, it is quite impossible for them to imitate a Master's causal body, and consequently one with causal sight could not possibly be deceived by such an impersonation.

In a few instances the members of the lodge of occultists who originated the

spiritualistic movement (see page 191) have themselves given valuable teachings on deeply interesting subjects, through a medium. But this has invariably been at strictly private family séances, never at public performances for which money has been paid.

The Voice of the Silence wisely enjoins: "Seek not thy Guru in these mayavic regions." No teaching from a self-appointed preceptor on the astral plane should be blindly accepted: all communications and advice which comes thence should be received precisely as one would receive similar advice on the physical plane. Teaching should be taken for what it is worth, after examination by conscience and intellect.

A man is no more infallible because he happens to be dead than when he was physically alive. A man may spend many years on the astral plane and yet know no more than when he left the physical world.[Page 204]

Accordingly we should attach no more importance to communications from the astral world, or from any higher plane, than we should to a suggestion made on the physical plane.

A manifesting "spirit" is often exactly what it professes to be: but often also it is nothing of the kind. For the ordinary sitter there is no means of distinguishing the true from the false, since the resources of the astral plane can be used to delude persons on the physical plane to such an extent that no reliance can be placed even on what seems the most convincing proof. It is not for a moment denied that important communications have been made at séances by genuine entities: but it is claimed that it is practically impossible for an ordinary sitter to be quite certain that he is not being deceived in half a dozen different ways.

From, the above it will be seen how varied may be the sources from which communications from the astral world may be received. As said by H. P. Blavatsky: "The variety of the causes of phenomena is great, and we need to be an Adept, and actually look into and examine what transpires, in order to be able to explain in each case what really underlies it".

To complete the statement, it may be said that what the average person can do on the astral plane after death he can do in physical life: communications may be as readily obtained by writing, in trance, or by utilising the developed and trained powers of the astral body, from embodied as from disembodied persons. It would therefore seem to be more prudent to develop within oneself the powers of one's own soul, instead of ignorantly plunging into dangerous experiments. In this manner knowledge may be safely accumulated and evolution accelerated. Man must learn that death has no real power over him: the key of the prison-house of the body is in his own hands, and he may learn how to use it if he wills.

From a careful weighing of all the evidence available, both for and against

spiritualism, it would [Page 205] seem that, if employed with care and discretion, it may be justifiable, purely in order to break down materialism. Once this purpose is achieved, its use seems too beset with dangers, both to the living and the dead, to make it advisable, as a general rule, though in exceptional cases it may be practised with safety and benefit. [Page 206]

## CHAPTER 23

### ASTRAL DEATH

WE have now reached the end of the life-history of the astral body, and little remains to be said regarding its death and final dissolution.

The steady withdrawal of the ego, as we have seen, causes, in a time which varies within very wide limits, the particles of the astral body gradually to cease to function, this process taking place, in most cases, in layers arranged according to degree of density, the densest being on the outside.

The astral body thus slowly wears away and disintegrates as the consciousness is gradually withdrawn from it by the half-unconscious effort of the ego, and thus the man by degrees gets rid of whatever holds him back from the heaven-world.

During the stay on the astral plane, in kâmaloka, the mind, woven with the passions, emotions and desires, has purified them, and assimilated their pure part, and has absorbed into itself all that is fit for the higher ego, so that the remaining portion of kâma is a mere residue, from which the ego, the Immortal Triad of Atmâ-Buddhi-Manas (as it is often called), can readily free itself. Slowly the Triad or ego draws into itself the memories of the earth-life just ended, its loves, hopes, aspirations, etc., and prepares to pass out of kâmaloka into the blissful state of devachan, the “abode of the gods”, the “heaven-world”.

Into the history of the man when he has reached the heaven-world we cannot enter here, as it lies beyond the scope of this treatise: it is hoped, however, to deal with it in the third volume of this series.

For the moment, however, it may be said, in brief, that the period spent in devachan is the time for the [Page 207] assimilation of life experiences, the regaining of equilibrium, ere a new descent into incarnation is undertaken. It is thus the day that succeeds the night of earth-life, the subjective as contrasted with the objective period of manifestation.

When the man passes out of kâmaloka into devachan, he cannot carry thither with him thought-forms of an evil type; astral matter cannot exist on the devachanic level, and devachanic matter cannot answer to the coarse vibrations of evil passions and desires. Consequently all that the man can carry with him when he finally shakes off the remnants of his astral body will be the latent germs

or tendencies which, when they can find nutriment or outlet, manifest as evil desires and passions in the astral world. But these he does take with him, and they lie latent throughout his devachanic life, in the astral permanent atom. At the end of the kâmalokic life, the golden life-web (see *A Study in Consciousness*, pages 91-93) withdraws from the astral body, leaving it to disintegrate, and enwraps the astral permanent atom, which then retreats within the causal body.

The final struggle with the desire-elemental (see pp. 6 & 108) takes place at the conclusion of the astral life, for the ego is then endeavouring to draw back into himself all that he put down into incarnation at the beginning of the life which has just ended. When he attempts to do this he is met with determined opposition from the desire-elemental, which he himself has created and fed.

In the case of all ordinary people, some of their mental matter has become so entangled with their astral matter that it is impossible for it to be entirely freed. The result of the struggle is therefore that some portion of the mental matter, and even of causal (higher mental) matter is retained in the astral body after the ego has completely broken away from it. If, on the other hand, a man has during life completely conquered his lower desires and succeeded in absolutely freeing the lower mind from desire, there is practically [Page 208] no struggle, and the ego is able to withdraw not only all that he "invested" in that particular incarnation, but also all the "interest", i.e., the experiences, faculties, etc., that have been acquired. There are also extreme cases where the ego loses both the "capital" invested and the "interest", these being known as "lost-souls" or elementaries (see page 145).

The full treatment of the method in which the ego puts a portion of himself down into incarnation and then endeavours to withdraw it again, must clearly be reserved for the third and fourth volumes of this series, which will deal with the mental and causal bodies.

The exit from the astral body and the astral plane is thus a second death, the man leaving behind him an astral corpse which, in its turn, disintegrates, its materials being restored to the astral world, just as the materials of the physical body are returned to the physical world.

This astral corpse, and the various possibilities which may happen to it, have already been dealt with in Chapter 19 on *Astral Entities*, under the headings Shades (page 170), Shells (page 171), Vitalised Shells (page 172), etc. [Page 209]

## CHAPTER 24

### RE-BIRTH

AFTER the causes that carried the ego into devachan are exhausted, the experiences gathered having been wholly assimilated, the ego begins to feel again the thirst for sentient material life, that can be gratified only on the physical plane. That thirst is known by the Hindus as *trishnâ*.

It may be considered, first, as a desire to express himself: and second, as a desire to receive those impressions from without which alone enable him to feel himself alive. For this is the law of evolution.

Trishnâ appears to operate through kâma, which, for the individual as for the Cosmos, is the primary cause of reincarnation.

During the devachanic rest the ego has been free from all pain and sorrow, but the evil he did in his past life has been in a state, not of death, but of suspended animation. The seeds of past evil tendencies commence to germinate as soon as the new personality begins to form itself for the new incarnation. The ego has to take up the burden of the past, the germs or seeds coming over as the harvest of the past life being called by the Buddhists *skandhas*.

Kâma, with its army of skandhas, thus waits at the threshold of devachan, whence the ego re-emerges to assume a new incarnation. The skandhas consist of material qualities, sensations, abstract ideas, tendencies of mind, mental powers.

The process is brought about by the ego turning his attention, first to the mental unit, which immediately resumes its activity, and then to the astral permanent atom, into which he puts his will.

The tendencies, which we have seen are in a condition [Page 210] of suspended animation, are thrown outwards by the ego as he returns to re-birth, and draw around themselves, first, matter of the mental plane, and also elemental essence of the second great kingdom, these expressing exactly the mental development which the man had gained at the end of his last heaven-life. He thus begins in this respect exactly where he left off.

Next, he draws round himself matter from the astral world, and elemental essence of the third kingdom, thus obtaining the materials out of which his new astral body will be built, and causing to re-appear the appetites, emotions, and passions which he brought over from his past lives.

The astral matter is gathered by the ego descending to re-birth, not of course consciously, but automatically.

This material is, moreover, an exact reproduction of the matter in the man's astral body at the end of his "last astral life. The man thus resumes his life in each world just where he left it last time.

The student will recognise in the above a part of the workings of karmic law, into which we need not enter in this present volume. Each incarnation is inevitably,

automatically, and justly linked with the preceding lives, so that the whole series forms a continuous, unbroken chain.

The astral matter thus drawn round the man is not yet formed into a definite astral body. It takes, in the first place, the shape of that ovoid which is the nearest expression that we can realise of the true shape of the causal body. As soon as the baby physical body is formed, the physical matter exerts a violent attraction for the astral matter, which previously was fairly evenly distributed over the ovoid, and so concentrates the great bulk of it within the periphery of the physical body.

As the physical body grows, the astral matter follows its every change, 99 per cent, of it being concentrated within the periphery of the physical body, and only about 1 per cent, filling the rest of the ovoid and constituting the aura, as we saw in an earlier chapter (see page 7). [Page 211]

The process of gathering matter round the astral nucleus sometimes takes place rapidly, and sometimes causes long delay; when it is completed the ego stands in the karmic vesture he has prepared for himself, ready to receive from the agents of the Lords of Karma the etheric double, into which, as into a mould, the new physical body will be built (see The Etheric Double, page 67).

The man's qualities are thus not at first in action: they are simply the germs of qualities, which have secured for themselves a possible field of manifestation in the matter of the new bodies. Whether they develop in this life into the same tendencies as in the last one will depend largely upon the encouragement, or otherwise, given to them by the surroundings of the child during his early years. Any one of them, good or bad, may be readily stimulated into activity by encouragement, or, on the other hand, may be starved out for lack of that encouragement. If stimulated, it becomes a more powerful factor in the man's life this time than it was in his previous existence; if starved out, it remains merely as an unfructified germ, which presently atrophies and dies out, and does not make its appearance in the succeeding incarnation at all.

The child cannot thus be said to have as yet a definite mind-body or a definite astral body, but he has around and within him the matter out of which these are to be built.

Thus, for example, suppose a man was a drunkard in his past life: in Kâmaloka he would have burnt out the desire for drink and be definitely freed from it. But although the desire itself is dead, there still remains the same weakness of character which made it possible for him to be subjugated by it. In his next life his astral body will contain matter capable of giving expression to the same desire; but he is in no way bound to employ such matter in the same way as before. In the hands of careful and capable parents, in fact, being trained to regard such desires as evil, he would gain control over them, repress them as they [Page 212]

appear, and thus the astral matter will remain unvivified and become atrophied from want of use. It will be recollected that the matter of the astral body is slowly but constantly wearing away and being replaced, precisely as is that of the physical body, and as atrophied matter disappears it will be replaced by matter of a more refined order. Thus are vices finally conquered and made virtually impossible for the future, the opposite virtue of self-control having been established.

During the first few years of the man's life the ego has but little hold over his vehicles, and he therefore looks to his parents to help him to obtain a firmer grasp and to provide him with suitable conditions.

It is impossible to exaggerate the plasticity of these unformed vehicles. Much as can be done with the physical body in its early years, as in the case of children trained as acrobats, for example, far more can be done with the astral and mental vehicles. They thrill in response to every vibration which they encounter, and are eagerly receptive of all influences, good or evil, emanating from those around them. Moreover, though in early youth they are so susceptible and so easily moulded, they soon set and stiffen and acquire habits which, once firmly established, can be altered only with great difficulty. Thus to a far larger extent than is realised by even the fondest parents, the child's future is under their control.

It is only the clairvoyant who knows how enormously and how rapidly child-characters would improve if only adult characters were better.

A very striking instance is recorded where the brutality of a teacher irreparably injured the bodies of a child so as to make it impossible for the child in this life to make the full progress that was hoped for it.

So vitally important is the early environment of a child that the life in which Adeptship is attained must have absolutely perfect surroundings in childhood.

In the case of lower-class monads with unusually strong astral bodies, who reincarnate after a very [Page 213] short interval, it sometimes happens that the shade or shell left over from the last astral life still persists, and in that case it is likely to be attracted to the new personality. When that happens it brings with it strongly the old habits and modes of thought, and sometimes even the actual memory of that past life.

In the case of a man who has led such an evil life that his astral and mental bodies are torn away from the ego after death, the ego, having no bodies in which to live in the astral and mental worlds, must quickly form new ones. When the new astral and mental bodies are formed, the affinity between them and the old ones, not yet disintegrated, asserts itself, and the old mental and astral bodies become the most terrible form of what is known as the "dweller on the

threshold".

In the extreme case of a man, returning to re-birth, who by vicious appetite or otherwise, has formed a very strong link with any type of animal, he may be linked by magnetic affinity to the astral body of the animal whose qualities he has encouraged, and be chained as a prisoner to the animal's physical body. Thus chained he cannot go onward to re-birth: he is conscious in the astral world, has his human faculties, but cannot control the brute body with which he is connected, nor express himself through that body on the physical plane. The animal organism is thus a jailor, rather than a vehicle. The animal soul is not ejected, but remains as the proper tenant and controller of its own body.

Such an imprisonment is not reincarnation, though it is easy to see that cases of this nature explain at least partially the belief often found in Oriental countries that man may under certain circumstances reincarnate in an animal body.

In cases where the ego is not degraded enough for absolute imprisonment, but in which the astral body is strongly animalised, it may pass on normally to human re-birth, but the animal characteristics will be largely reproduced in the physical body — as witness the [Page 214] "monsters" who in appearance are sometimes repulsively animal, pig-faced, dog-faced, etc. The suffering entailed on the conscious human entity, thus temporarily cut off from progress and from self-expression, is very great, though, of course, reformatory in its action. It is somewhat similar to that endured by other egos, who are linked to human bodies with unhealthy brains, i.e., idiots, lunatics, etc., though idiocy and lunacy are the results of other vices.

Insanity is often the result of cruelty, more especially when the cruelty is of a refined and intentional character.[Page 215]

## CHAPTER 25

### THE MASTERY OF EMOTION

THIS book will have been compiled in vain if the student has not become impressed with the necessity, first, of controlling the astral body: secondly, of gradually training it into a vehicle of consciousness, completely subservient to the will of the real man, the ego: and thirdly, in due time, of steadily developing and perfecting its various powers.

The average worldly person knows little and cares less about such matters: but to the student of occultism it is clearly of fundamental importance that he should attain full mastery over all his vehicles — physical, astral and mental. And although for purposes of analysis and study it is necessary to separate these three bodies and study them individually, yet, in practical life, it will be found that to a great extent the training of all of them can be carried on simultaneously, any

power gained in one helping to some extent in the training of the other two.

We have already seen (page 64) the desirability of purifying the physical body, by means of food, drink, hygiene, etc., in order to make slightly less difficult the control of the astral body. The same principle applies with even greater force to the mental body, for it is in the last analysis only by the use of mind and will that the desires, emotions and passions of the astral body can be brought into perfect subjection.

For many temperaments, at least, a careful study of the psychology of emotion is of very great assistance, as it is clearly much easier to bring under control a force the genesis and nature of which is thoroughly understood.

For this purpose, the present writer very strongly recommends a thorough study of the principles laid [Page 216] down in that masterly treatise *The Science of the Emotions*, by Bhagavan Das. (An admirable epitome of this work has been written by Miss K. Browning, M.A., under the title *An Epitome of the Science of the Emotions*.) The main thesis may be very briefly set out as follows.

All manifested existence may be analysed into the Self, the Not-Self, and the Relationship between these two.

That Relationship may be divided into (1) Cognition (Gnyânam): (2) Desire (Ichchâ): (3) Action (Kriyâ). To know, to desire, and to endeavour or act — those three comprise the whole of conscious life.

Feeling or emotion is of two kinds — pleasurable or painful. Pleasure, fundamentally a sense of moreness, produces attraction, love (ragâ): pain, fundamentally a sense of lessness, produces repulsion, hate (dvesha).

From attraction proceed all love-emotions: from repulsion proceed all hate-emotions. All emotions arise from love or hate, or from both, in varying degrees of intensity.

The precise nature of a particular emotion is also determined by the relationship between the one who experiences the emotion and the object which is the occasion of the emotion. The one who experiences the emotion may be, *so far as the circumstances connected with the particular emotion are concerned*, (1) Greater than: (2) Equal to: or (3) Less than the object.

Pursuing this analysis, we arrive at the six possible types of emotion-elements given in column three of the table appended. Column four gives sub-divisions of the primary elements in varying degrees of intensity, the strongest being at the head and the weakest at the foot of each group.

All human emotions consist of one of these six emotion-elements, or, more frequently, of two or more of them combined together. The student must now be

referred to the treatise mentioned above for a detailed elaboration of the fundamental principles set forth above. His labour will be amply rewarded. [Page 217]

GENESIS OF EMOTIONS			
Relation towards the object		Primary Emotion-Element	Degrees of the Emotion
Qualitative -1-	Quantitative -2-		
Love (for)	Superior	Reverence	Worship Adoration Reverence Esteem Respect Admiration
	Equal	Affection	Affection Comradeship Friendliness Politeness
	Inferior	Benevolence	Compassion Tenderness Kindness Pity
Hate (for)	Superior	Fear	Horror Dread Fear Apprehension
	Equal	Anger	Hostility Rudeness Aversion Coldness Aloofness
	Inferior	Pride or Tyranny (a)	Scorn Disdain Contempt Superciliousness
(a) The English language appears to possess no one word which accurately describes this emotion-element.			

Another valuable line of study, for the student who is aiming at self-knowledge in order to attain self-mastery, is that of collective or crowd-consciousness. By far the best book, with which the present writer is acquainted, on this interesting subject is *The Crowd in Peace and War*, by Sir Martin Conway. [Page 218]

With wonderful lucidity and richness of illustration - Sir Martin demonstrates the following fundamental facts.

(1) The great majority of men are brought up in, and all their lives belong to,

certain psychological "crowds", *i.e.*, groups of people who think, and above all, feel similarly. Such crowds are those of the home, friends and associates, schools and universities, professions, religious sects, political parties, schools of thought, nations, races, and so on. Even those who read the same newspapers or belong to the same club form a psychological "crowd".

(2) Such crowds are in the main formed by, nourished on, and dominated by feeling or emotion — *not by thought*. A crowd has all the emotions, but no intellect: it can feel, but it cannot think. The opinions of crowds are seldom or never reached by reason, but are merely infectious passions which sweep through the whole body like an electric current, these frequently originating from a single brain. Once caught up in the crowd, the individual rapidly loses his power of individual thought and feeling, and becomes one with the crowd, sharing its life, its opinions, its attitudes, prejudices, and the like.

(3) Very few ever have the courage or the strength to break away from the various crowds to which they belong; the vast majority remain all their lives under the sway of the crowds which have absorbed them.

Our author then proceeds to enumerate and describe the various crowd virtues and to show that they differ from the virtues of the individual, being on the whole at a much lower and more primitive level.

Every crowd, being unable to lead itself, needs and finds a leader. Of such leaders there are three main types.

(a) The *Crowd-Compeller*. He is one who dominates and leads the crowd by imposing upon it his own ideas by the sheer force of his own personality. Examples of this type are Napoleon, Disraeli, Caesar, Charlemagne. [Page 219]

(6) The *Crowd-Exponent*. This type, totally distinct from the Crowd-Compeller, is one which feels by natural sensitiveness what the crowd feels, or is going to feel, and which expresses in clear and usually graphic language the emotions of the crowd, which on its own account is inarticulate. Such men seldom think out problems for themselves and then proclaim their gospel. Rather they wait for the emotions of the crowd to take form: then they plunge into the thick of the fray and say with eloquence, power and enthusiasm that which people about them are dimly and vaguely feeling. Examples of this type are very common, especially in the field of politics,

(c) The *Crowd-Representative*. Crowd leaders of this type are picturesque figureheads rather than individual forces. Typical examples are a constitutional king, a consul, an ambassador, a judge (at any rate in England). These men are merely the people, "public opinion", personified: they speak with the voice of the people, act for them, and stand for them in the sight of the world. They must suppress or conceal their own individual opinions, and appear to feel as the

public feels, to act in conformity with the public wishes and sentiments.

The above is the merest sketch of the leading principles enunciated in the extremely able book mentioned, and the student is urged to make a careful study of that work for himself. It will help him not only to appreciate more justly the forces by which "the public" is swayed, but also to assess at their true value many of his own beliefs, opinions and attitudes towards many questions of the day.

It is clearly of the utmost importance that, in all his feelings and thoughts, the student of occultism should act deliberately and consciously. The Greek saying *Gnothi seauton*, Know Thyself, is a fine piece of advice, for self-knowledge is absolutely necessary to any candidate for progress. The student should not allow himself to be swept off his feet by becoming; submerged in a collective emotion — or thought-form, [Page 220] which forms a kind of atmosphere through which every thing is seen and by which everything is coloured, and which so manifestly dominates and sways the many crowds amongst which he moves. It is no easy matter to stand against a strong popular bias, owing to the ceaseless beating upon us of the thought-forms and currents of thought which fill the atmosphere: yet the student of occultism must learn to do so.

He should, moreover, be able to recognise the various types of crowd-leaders and to refuse to allow himself to be dominated, persuaded or cajoled into accepting ideas or following lines of action unless he does so quite deliberately, and with all his own faculties alert.

The influence of psychological crowds and crowd-leaders in the world today, as well probably as in every age, is very great indeed, and the forces they wield subtle and far-reaching, so that the student who aims at self-mastery and who wishes to lead his own emotional and intellectual life, must be continuously on his guard against these insidious influences.

The present writer is of opinion that a study of *The Science of the Emotions* and *The Crowd in Peace and War* is an invaluable preliminary to the task of training and developing the astral body till it becomes a useful and obedient servant of the sovereign will of the ego.

One other line of study is also strongly urged upon the student, viz., that of the sub-conscious mind, today often called the "unconscious" For this purpose, as an introduction to the subject, *The Law of Psychic Phenomena* by T. J. Hudson, is recommended.

In studying this book, the student should recollect that it was written in 1892. In the light of present day knowledge it is not necessary to subscribe wholly to Hudson's analysis, classification, or terminology. Moreover, in the opinion of the present writer, Hudson builds a great deal too much on his premises, straining his theories far beyond breaking-point. Nevertheless, the book is still of great

value, first as encouraging a healthy scientific scepticism towards accepting too readily plausible and glib explanations of many psychic [Page 221] phenomena, and secondly, in bringing home with great force the tremendous potentialities latent in the subconscious part of man's nature, which may be utilised by the careful and discreet student to considerable effect in bringing his own astral nature under control and, in general, purifying and building up his own character. There are, of course, hosts of other and more modern books which will also help towards this end. Briefly, Hudson states:—

- (1) That the mentality of man is clearly divisible into two parts, each with its own separate powers and functions. These he calls the *objective* and the *subjective minds*.
- (2) That the objective mind is that which takes cognisance of the objective world, using as its medium of observation the physical senses, and having as its highest function the reason.
- (3) That the subjective mind takes cognisance of its environment by means independent of the physical senses. It is the seat of the emotions and the storehouse of memory. It performs its highest functions when the objective senses are in abeyance, e.g., in a state of hypnotism or somnambulism. Many of the other faculties attributed by Hudson to the subjective mind are clearly those of the astral body, e.g., the ability to travel to distant places, to read thoughts, etc.

Furthermore, whilst the objective mind is not controllable by "suggestion". against reason, positive knowledge, or the evidence of the senses, the subjective mind is constantly amenable to the power of suggestion, whether from other people, or *from the objective mind of its owner*.

With the help of modern knowledge regarding our astral and mental bodies, and the nature and use of thought and emotion forms, the student will recognise here many interesting and independent confirmations of what he has learnt from Theosophical authorities, and, as already said, he will be better able to realise that virtually limitless powers latent in his own psychological [Page 222] make-up, which he may proceed to use along lines laid down by occultists of repute: such as that of meditation, for example. He will also, perhaps, realise rather more vividly than before the way in which kâma, or desire, and manas, or mind, are entangled, and how they may be disentangled, to the great benefit and strengthening of both.

It must ever be remembered that it is by thought that desire can be changed, and finally mastered. As mind learns to assert control, desire becomes transmuted into will, the governance then not being by external objects that attract or repel, but by the spirit of the man, the ego, the inner ruler.

We shall now return to our more specific "Theosophical" authorities, and proceed

to consider certain other factors in the development and training of the astral body.

It is obvious that the student should aim at mastering and eliminating certain minor defects, such as emotional weaknesses or vices. In this task it is important to recollect that such a vice as irritability, for example, which has become a habit through repeated indulgence, is stored up, not in the ego as an inherent quality, but in the astral permanent atom (see page 207). However great the force that is there piled up, it is a scientific certainty that perseverance will in due time lead to victory. On the side of the ego, there is the force of his own will, and behind that the infinite force of the Logos Himself, because progress by means of evolution is His will. A grasp of the idea of unity thus gives the man an adequate motive for the undoubtedly hard, and at times distasteful, work of character-building. However great the struggle, the forces of infinity being on his side, he is bound ultimately to overcome the finite forces for evil which he has stored up in his past lives.

A man who seeks to kill out desire, in order to balance his karma perfectly and so obtain liberation for himself, may achieve his object. He cannot, however, escape from the law of evolution, and sooner or [Page 223] later he will be swept forward again into the stream by its resistless pressure, and so be forced into re-birth. Killing out desire is not the path of the true occultist.

Personal loves are not to be killed out, but are to be expanded till they become universal: loves are to be levelled up, not down. The failure to realise this, and the tremendous difficulty of the task, when realised, have led in some cases to the stifling of love instead of its growth. But overflowing love, not lovelessness, will save the world. The Mahâtmâ is the Ocean of Compassion: not an iceberg. To try to kill out love is the way of the left-hand path.

It is, however, necessary to kill out completely the lower and coarser desires; the remainder must be purified and transmuted into aspirations, and resolution. It is waste of force to desire or wish: the occultist wills instead. Will is a higher aspect of desire.

It has also been said that we should slay the "lunar form", i.e., the astral body. This does not mean that all feelings and emotions should be destroyed, but rather that the astral body should be completely under control, that we should be able to slay the lunar form at will. As the man develops, he makes his will one with the will of the Logos, and the Logos wills evolution. Needless to say, such an at-one-ment *ipso facto* eliminates such desires as ambition, desire for progress, and the like.

The Voice of the Silence warns us that beneath each flower in the astral world, however beautiful it may be, lies coiled the serpent of desire. In the case of affection, for example, everything of a grasping nature must be altogether

transcended: but high, pure and unselfish affection can never be transcended, since it is a characteristic of the Logos Himself, and is a necessary qualification for progress upon the Path which leads to the Masters and to Initiation. [Page 224]

## CHAPTER 26

### DEVELOPMENT OF ASTRAL POWERS

THE possession of psychic powers does not necessarily involve high moral character, any more than does the possession of physical strength, neither are psychic powers in themselves a sign of great development in any other direction, e.g., that of intellect.

While, therefore, it is not true that the great psychic is necessarily a spiritual person, it is true, on the other hand, that a great spiritual person is inevitably psychic.

Psychic powers can be developed by anyone who will take the trouble, and a man may learn clairvoyance or mesmerism just as he may learn the piano, if he is willing to go through the necessary hard work.

Astral senses exist in all men, but are latent in most, and generally need to be artificially forced if they are to be used in the present stage of evolution. In a few they become active without any artificial impulse; in very many they can be artificially awakened and developed. The condition, in all cases, of the activity of the astral senses is the passivity of the physical, and the more complete the physical passivity the greater the possibility of astral activity.

Clairvoyance is often possessed by primitive peoples, or by ignorant and uncultured individuals of more advanced races. This is sometimes called the lower psychism, and is by no means the same thing as the faculty possessed by a properly trained and more advanced man, nor is it arrived at in the same way.

The occasional appearance of psychism in an undeveloped person is a kind of massive sensation vaguely belonging to the whole vehicle rather than an exact and definite perception coming through specialised organs. This was especially characteristic of the Atlantean [Page 225] (Fourth) Root Race. It works not through the astral Chakrams, but through the astral centres connected with the physical senses. These are not distinctively astral, although they are aggregations of astral matter in the astral body. They are of the nature of connecting bridges between the astral and physical planes, and are not developed astral senses in the proper sense of the term. "Second sight" belongs to this type of sensitiveness, and is often symbolical, the perceiver transmitting his knowledge in this curious symbolical way. To stimulate the centres which are bridges, instead of evolving the Chakrams, which are the astral organs, is a complete

blunder. This lower psychism is also associated with the sympathetic nervous system, whereas the higher psychism is associated with the cerebro-spinal system. To revive control of the sympathetic system is a retrograde and not a forward step.

In course of time the lower psychism disappears, to re-open at a later stage when it will be brought under the control of the will.

Hysterical and highly nervous people may occasionally become clairvoyant, the fact being a symptom of their disease, and due to the weakening of the physical vehicle to such a degree that it no longer presents any obstacle to a measure of etheric or astral vision. Delirium tremens is an extreme example of this class of psychism, victims of the disease often being able temporarily to perceive certain loathsome elemental and etheric entities.

For those who have not yet developed astral vision, it is desirable to appreciate intellectually the reality of the astral world, and to realise that its phenomena are open to competent observation just as are those of the physical world.

There exist definite methods of Yoga by which the astral senses may be developed in a rational and healthy way. But it is not only useless, it may be dangerous, to attempt these until the preparatory stage of purification has first been passed. Both the physical and the astral body must first be purified, [Page 226] by breaking the bonds of evil habits in eating, drinking, giving way to hate-emotions of all kinds, etc.

Speaking generally, it is not desirable to force the development of the astral body by artificial means, for until spiritual strength is attained the intrusion of astral sights, sounds, and other phenomena is apt to be disturbing and even alarming.

Sooner or later, according to the karma of the past, one who follows the "ancient and royal" path will find knowledge of astral phenomena gradually coming to him: his keener vision will awaken, and new vistas of a wider universe will be unfolded to him on every side. It is an illustration of the saying: "Seek ye first the Kingdom of Heaven, and all these things shall be added unto you."

The attainment of astral powers as an end in itself inevitably leads to what is called in the East the *laukika* method of development: the powers obtained are only for the present personality and, there being no safeguards, the student is extremely likely to misuse them. To this class belong the practices of Hatha Yoga, prâṇayama or breath-control, invocation of elementals, and all systems which involve deadening the physical senses in some way, *actively* by drugs (e.g., bhang, haschish, etc.), by self-hypnotisation, or, as among the dervishes, by whirling in a mad dance of religious fervour until vertigo and insensibility supervene: or *passively* by being mesmerised — so that the astral senses may come to the surface. Other methods are crystal-gazing (which leads to nothing

but the lowest type of clairvoyance), the repetition of invocations, or the use of charms or ceremonies.

A man who entrances himself by the repetition of words or charms may probably return in his next life as a medium or at any rate be mediumistic. Mediumship should not be regarded as a psychic power at all: for a medium, so far from exercising power, on the contrary abdicates control over his own bodies in favour of another entity. Mediumship is thus not a power but a condition. [Page 227]

There are many stories of some mysterious ointment or drug which, when applied to the eyes, enables a man to see fairies, etc. Anointing of the eyes might stimulate etheric sight but could not by any possibility open astral vision, though certain ointments rubbed over the whole body will greatly assist the astral body to leave the physical in full consciousness — a fact, the knowledge of which seems to have survived to mediaeval times, as can be seen from the evidence given at some of the trials for witchcraft.

The *lokottara* method consists of Râja Yoga or spiritual progress, and this is unquestionably the best method. Though slower, the powers gained by it belong to the permanent individuality, and are never again lost, while the guiding of a Master ensures perfect safety so long as His orders are scrupulously obeyed.

Another great advantage of being trained by a Master is that whatever faculties the pupil may achieve are definitely under his command and can be used fully and constantly when needed: whereas in the case of the untrained man such powers often manifest themselves only very partially and spasmodically, and appear to come and go, as it were, of their own sweet will.

The temporary method is like learning to ride by stupefying the horse: the permanent method is like learning to ride properly, so that any horse can be ridden. The permanent method means real evolution, the other does not necessarily involve anything of the sort, as the powers gained by it may perish with the death of the body.

The wider sight of the astral plane is not an unmixed blessing, as it reveals the sorrow and misery, the evil and greed of the world. The words of Schiller spring to mind: "Why hast thou cast me thus into the town of the ever-blind, to proclaim thine oracle with the opened sense ? Take back this sad clear-sightedness; take from mine eyes this cruel light! Give me back my blindness — the happy darkness of my senses; take back thy dreadful gift! " [Page 228]

Clairvoyant power, if properly and sensibly used, may be a blessing and a help: misused, it may be a hindrance and a curse. The principal dangers attendant upon it arise from pride, ignorance, and impurity. It is obviously foolish for a clairvoyant to imagine that he or she is the only one thus endowed, and the one person specially selected under angelic guidance to found a new dispensation:

and so on. Moreover, there are always plenty of sportive and mischievous astral entities ready and anxious to foster such delusions and to fulfil any rôle that may be assigned to them.

It is useful for a clairvoyant to know something of the history of the subject and to understand something of the conditions of the higher planes, as well, if possible, as to possess some knowledge of scientific subjects.

Further, a man of impure life or motive inevitably attracts to himself the worst elements in the invisible world. A man who is pure in thought and life, on the other hand, is by that very fact guarded from the influence of undesirable entities from other planes.

In many cases a man may have occasional flashes of astral consciousness without any awakening of etheric vision at all. This irregularity of development is one of the principal causes of the extreme liability of error in matters of clairvoyance in at any rate its earlier stages.

In the normal course of things people awake to the realities of the astral plane very slowly, just as a baby awakes to the realities of the physical plane. Those who are deliberately and, as it were, prematurely entering upon the Path, are developing such knowledge abnormally, and are consequently more liable to err at first.

Danger and injury might easily come were it not that all pupils under proper training are assisted and guided by competent teachers who are already accustomed to the astral plane. That is the reason why all sorts of horrible sights, etc., are shown to the neophyte, as tests, so that he may understand them and [Page 229] become accustomed to them. Unless this were done, he might receive a shock which might not only prevent his doing useful work but might also be positively dangerous to his physical body.

The first introduction to the astral world may come in various ways. Some people only once in their whole lives become sensitive enough to experience the presence of an astral entity or some astral phenomenon. Others find themselves with increasing frequency seeing and hearing things to which others are blind and deaf : others again begin to recollect their sleep-experiences.

When a person is beginning to become sensitive to astral influences, he will occasionally find himself suddenly overpowered by inexplicable dread. This arises partly from the natural hostility of the elemental world against the human, on account of man's many destructive agencies on the physical plane, which react upon the astral, and partly to the many unfriendly artificial elementals, bred by human minds. This has been especially noted in and near such a city as Chicago.

Some people begin by becoming intermittently conscious of the brilliant colours of the human aura: others may see faces, landscapes, or coloured clouds floating before their eyes in the dark before they sink to rest. Perhaps the most common experience is to begin to recollect with increasing clearness experiences of the other planes acquired during sleep.

Sometimes a person once in his whole life will perceive, for example, the apparition of a friend at the point of death. This may be due to two causes, in each the strong wish of the dying man being the impelling force. That force may have enabled the dying man to materialise himself for a moment, in which case, of course, no clairvoyance is needed: more probably it may have acted mesmerically upon the percipient and momentarily dulled his physical and stimulated his higher sensitiveness.

A man with developed astral vision is of course no longer limited by physical matter: he sees through all [Page 230] physical bodies, physically opaque substances being to him as transparent as glass. At a concert, he sees glorious symphonies of colours: at a lecture, he sees the speaker's thoughts in colour and form, and is therefore in a position to understand him more fully than one without astral vision.

A little examination will reveal that many people gain from a speaker more than the mere words convey: many will find in their memory more than the speaker uttered. Such experiences indicate that the astral body is developing and becoming more sensitive, responding to the thought-forms created by the speaker.

Some places afford greater facilities for occult work than others: thus California has a very dry climate with much electricity in the air, which is favourable for the development of clairvoyance.

Some psychics require a temperature of 80 degrees in order to do their best work: others do not work well except at a lower temperature.

A trained clairvoyant being able to see a man's astral body, it follows that on the astral plane no man can hide or disguise himself: what he truly is, that he is seen to be by any unprejudiced observer. It is necessary to say unprejudiced, because a man sees another through the medium of his own vehicles, which is somewhat like seeing a landscape through coloured glass. Until he has learnt to allow for this influence, a man is liable to consider as most prominent in another man those characteristics to which he himself most readily responds. Practice is needed to free oneself from the distortion produced by this personal equation so as to be able to observe clearly and accurately.

Most of the psychics who occasionally get glimpses of the astral world, as well as most of the communicating entities at spiritualistic séances, fail to report many of

the complexities of the astral plane which are described in this book. The reason is that few people see things as they really are on the astral plane until after very long experience. Even those who do see fully are often [Page 231] too dazed and confused to understand or to remember, and hardly any one can translate the recollection into physical plane language. Many untrained psychics never examine their visions scientifically: they simply obtain an impression, which may be quite correct, but may also be half false, or even wholly misleading.

Also, as we have seen, frequent tricks are played by sportive denizens of the astral world, against which the untrained person is usually defenceless.

In the case of an astral entity who constantly works through a medium, his finer astral senses may even become so coarsened as to become insensitive to the higher grades of astral matter.

Only the trained visitor from the physical plane, who is fully conscious on both planes, can depend upon seeing both astral and physical planes clearly and simultaneously.

True, trained, and absolutely reliable clairvoyance demands faculties belonging to a plane higher than the astral. The faculty of accurate prevision also belongs to that higher plane: yet flashes or reflections of it frequently show themselves to purely astral sight, more especially among simple-minded people who live under suitable conditions — what is called second-sight among the Highlanders of Scotland being a well-known example.

There are astrally, as well as physically, blind persons, so that many astral phenomena escape ordinary astral vision. At first, in fact, many mistakes may be made in using astral vision, just as a child makes mistakes when it first begins to use its physical senses, though after a time it becomes possible to see and hear as accurately on the astral as on the physical plane.

Another method of developing clairvoyance, which is advised by all the religions alike, and which if adopted carefully and reverently can do no harm to any human being, is that of meditation, by means of which a very pure type of clairvoyance may sometimes be developed. A succinct account of the processes [Page 232] involved in meditation is given in *The Other Side of Death*, by C. W. Leadbeater, pages 469-476, as well of course as in many other books.

By means of meditation extreme sensitiveness can be developed, and at the same time perfect balance, sanity and health.

The student will readily recognise that the practice of determined meditation builds higher types of matter into the bodies. Grand emotions may be felt, which come from the buddhic level, *i.e.*, from the plane next above the higher mental, and are reflected in the astral body. It is, however, necessary also to develop the

mental and causal bodies in order to give balance. A man cannot leap from the astral consciousness to the buddhic without developing the intervening vehicles. With feeling alone we can never obtain perfect balance or steadiness: grand emotions that have swayed us in the right direction may very readily become a little twisted and sway us along less desirable lines. Emotions provide motive force, but directing power comes from wisdom and steadiness.

There is a close connection between the astral and the buddhic planes, the astral body being in some ways a reflection of the buddhic.

An example of the close relationship between the astral and buddhic planes is found in the Christian Mass. At the moment of Consecration of the Host a force rays out which is strongest in the buddhic world, though also powerful in the higher mental world: in addition, its activity is marked in the first, second and third astral sub-planes, though this may be a reflection of the mental or an effect of sympathetic vibration. The effect may be felt by people even far away from the church, a great wave of spiritual peace and strength passing over the whole countryside, though many would never connect it with the Mass being celebrated.

In addition to the above, another effect is produced as a result of and in proportion to the intensity of the conscious feeling of devotion of each individual during the celebration. A ray, as of fire, darts from the [Page 233] uplifted Host and sets the higher part of the astral body glowing intensely. Through the astral body, by reason of its close relation with it, the buddhic vehicle also strongly affected. Thus both buddhic and astral vehicles act and react on one another.

A similar effect occurs when the Benediction given with the blessed Sacrament. [Page 234]

## CHAPTER 27

### CLAIRVOYANCE IN SPACE AND TIME

THERE are four methods by which it is possible to observe events taking place at a distance.

I. By *means of an astral current*. This method is somewhat analogous to the magnetisation of a bar of steel, and consists of what may be called polarisation, by an effort of the will, of a number of parallel lines of astral atoms from the observer to the scene he wishes to observe. All the atoms are held with their axes rigidly parallel to one another, forming a kind of temporary tube, along which the clairvoyant may look. The line is liable to be disarranged or even destroyed by any sufficiently strong astral current which happens to cross its path: this, however, seldom happens.

The line is formed either by the transmission of energy from particle to particle, or by the use of force from a higher plane, which acts upon the whole line simultaneously: the latter method implies far greater development, involving the knowledge of, and power to use, forces of a considerably higher level. A man who could make a line in this way would not, for his own use, need such a line at all, because he could see far more easily and completely by means of a higher faculty.

The current or tube may be formed even quite unconsciously and unintentionally, and is often the result of a strong thought or emotion projected from one end or the other — either from the seer or from the person who is seen. If two persons are united by strong affection, it is probable that a fairly steady stream of mutual thought is constantly flowing between them, and some sudden need or dire extremity on the part of one of them may endue this stream temporarily [Page 235] with the |polarising power which is needful to create the astral telescope.

The view obtained by this means is not unlike that seen through a telescope. Human figures, for example, would usually appear very small, but perfectly clear: sometimes, but not usually, it is possible to hear as well as to see by this method.

The method has distinct limitations, as by it the astral telescope reveals the scene from one direction only, and has a limited and particular field of view. In fact, astral sight directed along such a tube is limited much as physical sight would be under similar circumstances.

This type of clairvoyance may be greatly facilitated by using a physical object as a starting point — a focus for the will power. A ball of crystal is the most common and effective of such foci, as, owing to its peculiar arrangement of elemental essence, it also possesses within itself qualities which stimulate psychic faculty. Other objects are also used for the same purpose, such as a cup, a mirror, a pool of ink (Egypt and India), a drop of blood (among the Maories of New Zealand), a bowl of water (Red Indian), a pond (Roman and African), water in a glass bowl (in Fez), or almost any polished surface, or, on the other hand, a dead black one, produced by a handful of powdered charcoal in a saucer.

There are some who can determine what they see by their will, that is to say they can point their telescope as they wish: but the great majority form a fortuitous tube and see whatever happens to present itself at the end of it.

Some psychics are able to use the tube method only when under the influence of mesmerism. There are two varieties of such psychics: (1) those who are able to make the tube for themselves: (2) those who look through a tube made by the mesmeriser.

Occasionally, though rarely, magnification is also possible by means of the tube, though in these cases it is probable that an altogether new power is beginning to

dawn. [Page 236]

2. By *the projection of a thought-form*. This method consists of the projection of a mental image of oneself, round which astral matter is also drawn, such connection with the image being retained as will render it possible to receive impressions by means of it: the form thus acts as a kind of outpost of the consciousness of the seer. Such impressions would be transmitted to the thinker by sympathetic vibration. In a perfect case, the seer is able to see almost as well as he would if he himself stood in the place of the thought-form. In this method it is possible also to shift the point of view, if desired. Clairaudience is perhaps less frequently associated with this type of clairvoyance than with the first type. The moment that the intentness of the thought fails the whole vision is gone, and it will be necessary to construct a fresh thought-form before it can be resumed. This type of clairvoyance is rarer than the first type because of the mental control required and the finer nature of the forces employed. It is tedious except for quite short distances.

3. *By travelling in the astral body*, either in sleep or trance. This process has already been described in previous chapters.

4. *By travelling in the mental body*. In this case, the astral body is left behind with the physical, and, if it is desired to show oneself on the astral plane, a temporary astral body, or *mâyâvirûpa* is formed, as described on p. 255.

It is possible also to obtain information regarding events at a distance by invoking or evoking an astral entity, such as a nature-spirit, and inducing or compelling him to undertake the investigation. This, of course, is not clairvoyance, but magic.

In order to find a person on the astral plane, it is necessary to put oneself *en rapport* with him, a very slight clue being usually sufficient, such as a photograph, a letter written by him, an object which belonged to him, etc. The operator then sounds out the man's keynote when, if the man sought is on the astral plane, an immediate response will be forthcoming. [Page 237]

This keynote of the man on the astral plane is a sort of average tone which emerges from all the different vibrations which are habitual to his astral body. There is also a similar average tone for each man's mental and other bodies, all the keynotes together forming the man's chord — or mystic chord as it is often called.

The trained seer attunes his own vehicles for the moment exactly to the man's note, and then by an effort of will sends forth its sound. Wherever in the three worlds the man sought may be, an instant response is evoked from him; this response is at once visible to the seer, so that he is able to form a magnetic line of connection with the man.

Another form of clairvoyance enables the seer to perceive events that have happened in the past. There are many degrees of this power, from the trained man who can consult the Akâshic Records for himself at will, down to the person who gets occasional glimpses only. The ordinary psychometer needs an object physically connected with the scene in the past that he wishes to see, or, of course, he may use a crystal or other object as his focus.

The **Akâshic Records** represent the **Divine memory**, which is briefly mentioned on p. 155. The records seen on the astral plane, being but a reflection of a reflection from a much higher plane, are exceedingly imperfect, fragmentary in the extreme, and often seriously distorted. They have been compared to the reflections in the surface of water ruffled by wind. On the mental plane the records are full and accurate and can be read with exactitude: but this, of course, demands faculties pertaining to the mental plane. [Page 238]

## CHAPTER 28

### INVISIBLE HELPERS

THE student of the preceding pages will by now have perceived that the instances of “intervention” in human affairs by invisible agents, which occur from time to time, and which are, of course, quite inexplicable from the materialistic standpoint, may readily be explained, rationally and simply, by one who understands something of the astral plane and its possibilities.

In the East the existence of “invisible helpers” has always been recognised; even in Europe we have had the old Greek stories of the interference of gods in human affairs, and the Roman legend that Castor and Pollux led the legions of the infant republic in the Battle of Lake Regillus. In mediaeval times there were many stories of saints who appeared at critical moments and turned the fortune of war in favour of the Christian hosts — such as that of St. James having led the Spanish troops — and of guardian angels who sometimes saved a traveller from serious danger or even death.

Help may be given to men by several of the classes of inhabitants of the astral plane. It may come from nature-spirits, from devas, from those who are physically dead, or from those who, whilst still alive physically, are able to function freely on the astral plane.

The cases in which help is given to men by nature-spirits are few. Nature-spirits (see Chapter 20) mostly shun the haunts of man, disliking his emanations, his bustle and his unrest. Also, excepting some of their higher orders, they are generally inconsequent and thoughtless, more like happy children at play than like grave and responsible entities. As a rule they cannot be relied upon for anything like steady co-operation in [Page 239] this class of work, though

occasionally one of them will become attached to a human being and do him many a good turn.

The work of the Adept, or Master, lies chiefly upon the arûpa levels of the mental plane, where He may influence the true individualities of men, and not the mere personality, which is all that can be reached in the astral or physical world. It is seldom, therefore, that He finds it necessary or desirable to work on a plane so low as the astral.

The same consideration applies to devas, those of this class of entity, who sometimes respond to man's higher yearnings or appeals, working on the mental plane rather than on the astral or physical, and more frequently in the periods between incarnations than during physical existence.

Help is sometimes given by those who have recently died physically and who remain still in close touch with earthly affairs. The student will readily perceive, however, that the amount of such help must in the nature of things be exceedingly limited, because the more unselfish and helpful a person is, the less likely is he to be found after death lingering in full consciousness on the lower levels of the astral plane, from which the earth is most readily accessible.

Furthermore, in order that a dead person may be able to influence one still living physically, either the latter must be unusually sensitive, or the would-be helper must possess a certain amount of knowledge and skill. These conditions are of course fulfilled only very rarely.

It follows, then, that at present the work of helping on the astral and lower mental planes is chiefly in the hands of pupils of the Masters, and any others who are sufficiently evolved to function consciously upon these two planes.

Varied as is this class of work on the astral plane, it is all, of course, directed to the one great end of furthering evolution. Occasionally it is connected with the development of the lower kingdoms, elemental as well as vegetable and animal, which it is possible [Page 240] to accelerate under certain conditions. It is, in fact, in some cases only through connection with or use by man that the progress of these lower kingdoms takes place. Thus, for example, an animal can individualise only through certain classes of animals which have been domesticated by man.

By far the largest and most important part of the work is connected with humanity in some way or other, chiefly with his spiritual development, though very rarely even purely physical assistance may be given.

In the classic book on the subject, Invisible Helpers, by C. W. Leadbeater, a number of typical examples of physical intervention are given. Sometimes an invisible helper, with his wider vision, is able to perceive a danger which is

threatening some one, and to impress the idea upon the person threatened, or upon a friend who will go to his assistance. In this way, shipwrecks have sometimes been prevented. At other times the helper may materialise himself, or be materialised by a more experienced helper, sufficiently to lead some one out of danger, e.g., to take a child out of a burning building, to save some one from falling over a precipice, to bring home children who have lost their way, and so on. One instance is given where a helper, finding a boy who had fallen over a cliff and cut an artery, was materialised in order that he might tie a bandage and so stop the bleeding, which otherwise would have proved fatal, another helper meanwhile impressing the idea of danger upon the boy's mother and leading her to the spot.

It may be asked how it is that an astral entity becomes aware of a physical cry, or an accident. The answer is that any cry which has in it a strong feeling or emotion would produce an effect upon the astral plane, and would convey exactly the same idea there as on the physical plane. In the case of an accident the rush of emotion caused by pain or fright would flame out like a great light, and could not fail to attract the attention of an astral entity if he were anywhere near. [Page 241]

In order to bring about the necessary materialisation of an astral body, so that a means of performing purely physical acts may be obtained, a knowledge of the method of doing this is clearly essential.

There are three well-defined varieties of materialisation: (2) that which is tangible, though not visible to ordinary physical sight; at séances, this is the commonest kind; it is used for moving small objects and for the "direct voice". An order of matter is used which can neither reflect nor obstruct light, but which under certain conditions can be used to produce sound. A variety of this class is one which is able to affect some of the ultra-violet rays, thus enabling "spirit-photographs" to be taken. (2) That which is visible, but not tangible. (3) The perfect materialisation, which is both visible and tangible. Many spiritualists are familiar with all these three types.

Such materialisations as we are here considering are brought about by an effort of will. This effort, directed towards changing matter from its natural state into another, is temporarily opposing the cosmic will, as it were. The effort must be maintained the whole time, for if the mind be taken off it for one half-second, the matter flies back to its original condition like a flash of lightning.

At spiritualistic séances, a full materialisation is usually brought about by utilising matter from the etheric and the physical bodies of the medium, and also from those of the sitters. In such cases, it is clear that the very closest connection is thus set up between the medium and the materialised body. The significance of this we shall consider in a moment.

In the case of a trained helper, who finds it necessary to produce a temporary materialisation, quite another method is employed. No pupil of a master would ever be permitted to put such a strain on anyone else's body as would occur were matter from that body to be used for the materialisation: nor, indeed, would such a plan be necessary. A far less dangerous method is to condense from the circumambient ether, or even from [Page 242] the physical air, such amount of matter as may be required. This feat, though no doubt beyond the power of the average entity manifesting at a séance, presents no difficulty to a student of occult chemistry.

In a case of this kind, whilst we have an exact reproduction of the physical body, it is created by a mental effort, out of matter entirely foreign to that body. Consequently, the phenomenon known as repercussion could not possibly take place, as it could happen where a form is materialised with matter drawn from a medium's body.

Repercussion occurs where an injury inflicted upon a materialised form is reproduced, with faithful accuracy, upon the corresponding part of the medium's body. Or it may occur, as is very common at spiritualistic séances, where chalk is rubbed, say, on a materialised hand; after the materialised hand has vanished, the chalk is found upon the hand of the medium.

An injury to a form materialised by a helper from the ether or air could no more affect the helper's physical body by repercussion than a man could be affected by an injury to a marble statue of himself.

But if on the astral plane one is unwise enough to think that a danger which belongs to the physical, e.g., a falling object, can injure one, an injury to the physical body through repercussion is possible.

The subject of repercussion is abstruse and difficult, and as yet by no means fully understood. In order to understand it perfectly, it would probably be necessary to comprehend the laws of sympathetic vibration on more planes than one.

There is no doubt whatever as to the stupendous power of will over matter of all planes, so that if only the power be strong enough, practically *any* result may be produced by its direct action, without any knowledge or even thought on the part of the man exercising the will as to *how* it is to do its work.

There is no limit to the degree to which will may be developed. [Page 243]

This power holds good in the case of materialisation, . although ordinarily it is an art which must be learnt just like any other. An average man on the astral plane would no more be able to materialise himself without having previously learnt how to do it, than an average man on this plane would be able to play the violin without having previously learnt to do so.

There are, however, exceptional cases where intense sympathy and firm deliberation enable a person to effect a temporary materialisation even though he does not consciously know how to do it.

It is worth noting that these rare cases of physical intervention by an astral helper are often made possible by the existence of a karmic tie between the helper and the one to be helped. In this way, old services are acknowledged and a kindness rendered in one life is repaid in a future life, even by such unusual methods as those described.

Or, in great catastrophes, where many people are killed, it is sometimes permitted for one or two persons to be "miraculously" saved, because it so happens that it is not their "karma" to die just then, i.e., they owe to the Divine law no debt that can be paid in that particular fashion.

Very occasionally, physical assistance is given to human beings even by a Master.

C.W. Leadbeater describes a case which happened to himself. Walking along a road, he suddenly heard in his ear the voice of his Indian teacher, who at the time was physically 7,000 miles away, cry "Spring back!" He started violently back just as a heavy metal chimney pot crashed upon the pavement less than a yard in front of his face.

Another remarkable case is recorded where a lady, who found herself in serious physical peril in the middle of a dangerous street *fracas*, was suddenly whirled out of the crowd and placed quite uninjured in an adjoining and empty by-street. Her body must have been lifted right over the intervening houses, and set down in the next street, a veil, probably of etheric [Page 244] matter, being thrown round her whilst in transit so that she should not be visible as she passed through the air.

From a perusal of the chapters on *After-Death Life*, it will be evident that there is ample scope for the work of invisible helpers among people who have died. Most of these being in a condition of complete ignorance regarding life after death, and many, in western countries at least, being also terrified at the prospect of "hell", and "eternal damnation", there is much to be done in enlightening people as to their true state and the nature of the astral world in which they find themselves.

The main work done by the invisible helper is that of soothing and comforting the newly dead, of delivering them, where possible, from the terrible though unnecessary fear which but too often seizes them, and not only causes them much suffering, but retards their progress to higher spheres, and of enabling them, so far as may be, to comprehend the future that lies before them.

It is stated that this work was in earlier periods attended to exclusively by a high class of non-human entities; but for some time past those human beings who are able to function consciously upon the astral plane have been privileged to render assistance in this labour of love.

In cases where the rearrangement by the desire-elemental of the astral body has taken place, an astral helper may break up that arrangement and restore the astral body to its previous condition, so that the dead man can perceive the whole of the astral plane instead of only one sub-plane of it.

Others who have been longer on the astral plane may also receive help from explanations and advice as to their course through its different stages. Thus they may be warned of the danger and delay caused by attempting to communicate with the living through a medium, and sometimes, though rarely, an entity already drawn into a spiritualistic circle may be guided into higher and healthier life. The memory of such [Page 245] teaching cannot, of course, be directly carried over to the next incarnation, but there always remains the real inner knowledge, and therefore the strong predisposition to accept it immediately when heard again in the new life.

Some of the newly-dead see themselves on the astral plane as they really are, and are therefore filled with remorse. Here the helper is able to explain that the past is past, that the only repentance worth while is the resolve to do better in future, that each man must take himself as he is and steadily work to improve himself and lead a truer life in the future.

Others, again, are troubled by their desire to make reparation for some injury they did whilst on earth, to ease their conscience by disclosing a discreditable secret they have jealously guarded, to reveal the hiding place of important papers or money, and so forth. In some cases it is possible for the helper to intervene in some way on the physical plane and so satisfy the dead man; but in most cases the best he can do is to explain that it is now too late to make reparation and therefore useless to grieve over the trouble, and to persuade the man to abandon his thoughts of earth which hold him down in close touch with earth-life, and to make the best of his new life.

An immense amount of work is also done for the living by putting good thoughts into the minds of those who are ready to receive them.

It would be perfectly easy — easy to a degree quite incredible to those who do not understand the subject practically — for a helper to dominate the mind of an average man and make him think just as the helper pleased, without arousing any suspicion of outside influence in the mind of the subject. Such a proceeding, however, would be entirely inadmissible. All that may be done is to throw the good thought into the person's mind among the thousands that are constantly surging through it, and hope that the person will take it up, make it his own, and

act upon it.

Very varied assistance can be given in this manner, [Page 246] Consolation is often given to those in sorrow or sickness; reconciliations are attempted between those who have been separated by conflict of opinions or interests; earnest truth-seekers are guided towards the truth; it is often possible to put the solution of some spiritual or metaphysical problem into the mind of one who is - spending anxious thought upon it. Lecturers may be helped by suggestions or illustrations either materialised in subtler matter before the speaker or impressed upon his brain.

A regular invisible helper soon acquires a number of "patients", whom he visits every night, just as a doctor upon earth makes a regular round among his patients. Each worker thus usually becomes the centre of a small group, the leader of a band of helpers for whom he is always able to find constant employment. Work can be found in the astral world for any number of workers, and every one who wishes — man, woman or child — may be one of them.

A pupil may often be employed as an agent in what practically amounts to the answering of prayer. Although it is true that any earnest spiritual desire, such as may be expressed in prayer, is a force which automatically brings about certain results, it is also a fact that such a spiritual effort offers an opportunity of influence to the Powers of Good. A willing helper may thus be made the channel through which energy is poured forth. This is true of meditation to an even greater extent.

In some cases such a helper is taken to be the saint, etc., to whom the petitioner prayed, and there are many stories to illustrate this.

Pupils who are fitted for the work are also employed to suggest true and beautiful thoughts to authors, poets, artists and musicians.

Sometimes, though more rarely, it is possible to warn people of the danger to their moral development of some course that they are pursuing, to clear away evil influence from about some person or place, or to counteract the machinations of black magicians. [Page 247]

There is so much work for invisible helpers on the astral plane that it is clearly emphatically the duty of the student to fit himself by every means in his power to assist in its performance. The work of the invisible helpers would not be done unless there were pupils at the stage where it is the best work that they can do. As soon as they pass beyond that stage and can do higher work, the higher work will certainly be given to them.

It should be borne in mind that when power and training are given to a helper, they are given to him under restrictions. He must never use them selfishly, never

display them to gratify curiosity, never employ them to pry into the business of others, never give what at spiritualistic séances are called tests, *i.e.*, he must never do anything which can be proved as a phenomenon on the physical plane. He might take a message to a dead man, but not, unless under direct instructions from his Master, bring back a reply from the dead to the living. Thus the band of invisible helpers is neither a detective office nor an astral information bureau, but is intended simply and quietly to do such work as is given to it to do or as comes in its way.

As an occult student progresses, instead of assisting individuals only, he learns to deal with classes, nations, and races. As he acquires the requisite powers and knowledge, he begins to wield the greater forces of the âkâsha and the astral light, and is shown how to make the utmost possible use of each favourable cyclic influence. He is brought into relationship with the great Nirmânakâyas, and becomes one of their almoners, learning how to dispense the forces which are the fruit of their sublime self-sacrifice.

There is no mystery as to the qualifications needed by one who aspires to be a helper: to some extent *fl* these have already been incidentally described, but it may be useful also to set them out fully and categorically.

(i) *Single-mindedness*, sometimes called one-pointedness; the would-be helper must make the work of [Page 248] helping others his first and highest duty: the work which the Master would have him do must be the one great interest of his life.

Furthermore, intelligent discrimination is needed not only between useful and useless work, but also between the different kinds of useful work. Economy of effort is a prime law of occultism, and every student should devote himself to the very highest work of which he is capable. It is also essential that the student should on the physical plane do the utmost that lies in his power to further the same great ends of helping his fellows.

(2) *Self-Control*.—This comprises complete control of temper, so that nothing seen or heard can cause real irritation, for the consequences of such irritation would be far more serious on the astral than on the physical plane. If a man with fully awakened faculty on the astral plane were to feel anger against a person on that plane, he would do him serious and perhaps fatal injury. Any manifestation of irritability, excitement or impatience in the astral world would at once make a helper a fearsome object, so that those whom he wished to help would fly from him in terror.

A case is recorded where an invisible helper keyed herself up to such a state of excitement that her astral body greatly increased in size, vibrating violently and flashing forth fiery colours. The newly-dead person she was hoping to help was horrified to see the huge, flaming, flashing sphere rushing at him, took it for the

theological devil *in propriâ persona*, and fled in terror, his terror being increased by the would-be helper persistently following him.

In addition, control of nerve is essential, so that none of the fantastic or terrible sights that may be encountered may be able to shake the student's dauntless courage. As previously stated, it is to make sure of this control of nerve, and to fit him for the work that has to be done, that candidates are always made, now as in days of old, to pass what are called the tests of earth, water, air and fire [Page 249]

The student has to realise that in the astral body the densest rock offers no impediment to his freedom of movement, that he may leap with impunity from the highest cliffs, and plunge with absolute confidence into the heart of a raging volcano or the deepest abyss of the fathomless ocean. These things have to be sufficiently realised for the student to act upon them instinctively and confidently.

Further, control of mind and desire are needed: of mind, because without the power of concentration it would be impossible to do good work amid all the distracting currents of the astral plane; of desire, because in the astral world to desire is very often to have, and, unless desire were well controlled, the student might find himself faced with creations of his own of which he should be heartily ashamed.

(3) *Calmness*.—This means the absence of worry, and depression. Much of the work consisting of soothing those who are disturbed and cheering those in sorrow, it is clear that a helper could not do such work if his own aura were vibrating with continual fuss and worry, or grey with the gloom of depression. Nothing is more fatal to occult progress or usefulness than worrying over trifles. The optimistic view of everything is always nearest to the divine view, and therefore to the truth, because only the good and beautiful can be permanent, while evil by its very nature is temporary; unruffled calm leads to a serenity which is joyous, making depression impossible.

As stated previously, depression is exceedingly contagious, and must be entirely eliminated by one who aims at becoming an invisible helper. Such an one would be characterised by his absolute serenity under all possible difficulties, and by his radiant joy in helping others.

(4) *Knowledge*.—The more knowledge a man has in any and every direction, the more useful he will be. He should fit himself by careful study of every thing that has been written about the astral plane and astral work in occult literature, for he cannot [Page 250] expect others, whose time is already fully occupied, to expend some of it in explaining to him what he might have learnt for himself in the physical world by taking the trouble to read books.

There is perhaps no kind of knowledge of which a use cannot be found in the work of the occultist.

(5) *Love.* — This, the last and greatest of the qualifications, is also the most misunderstood. Emphatically it is not backboneless sentimentalism, overflowing with vague and gushing generalities, which fears to stand firm for the right lest it should be stigmatised by the ignorant as “unbrotherly”. What is wanted is love strong enough to act without talking about it; the intense desire for service which is ever on the watch for an opportunity to render it, even though it prefers to do so anonymously; the feeling which springs up in the heart of him who has realised the great work of the Logos, and, having once seen it, knows that for him there can be in the three worlds no other course but to identify himself with it to the utmost limit of his power — to become, in however humble a way, and at however great a distance, a tiny channel of that wondrous love of God which, like the peace of God, passeth man's understanding.

It will be recollected that for two persons on the astral plane to communicate with one another astrally, it is necessary that they should have a language in common; therefore the more languages an astral plane helper knows, the more useful he is.

The standard set for an Invisible Helper is not an impossible one; on the contrary it is attainable by every man, though it may take him time to reach it. Every one knows of some case of sorrow or distress, whether among the living or the dead does not matter. On going to sleep a resolution should be made to do what is possible, whilst asleep and in the astral body, to help that person. Whether the memory of what has been done penetrates into the waking consciousness or not is of no consequence; it may be taken as a certainty that something has been achieved, and some day, [Page 251] sooner or later, evidence will be forthcoming that success has been attained.

With a person who is fully awakened to the astral plane the last thought before going to sleep would matter less, because he would have the power of turning readily from one thought to another in the astral world. In his case, the general trend of his thought would be the important factor, for equally during day and night his mind would be likely to move in its accustomed fashion. [Page 252]

## CHAPTER 29

### DISCIPLESHIP

Reference has already been made to the possibility of receiving training, with special reference to the astral body, from a Master of the Wisdom. It is possible to add a little further information on this subject, which is one of very great moment to the occult student.

The necessary qualifications of character have already been described in detail in the preceding chapter.

When a man is approaching the stage at which he will be fit to be accepted as a pupil of a Master, the Master may place him upon "probation", which means that for some time he will remain under very close observation. The Master makes what is called a "living image" of the probationary pupil, *i.e.*, an exact duplicate of the man's causal, mental, astral and etheric bodies. This image He keeps in a place where He can easily reach it, and He places it in magnetic *rapport with* the man, so that every modification of thought or feeling in the man's own vehicles is faithfully reproduced in the image. These images are examined daily by the Master, who in this way obtains with the least possible trouble a perfectly accurate record of His prospective pupil's thoughts and feelings, and from this He is able to decide when He can take him into the far closer relationship of the next stage — that of the accepted pupil.

When a pupil is "accepted", the living image is dissolved, and the pupil is taken into his Master's consciousness to so great an extent that whatever the pupil feels or thinks is within the astral and mental bodies of his Master.

Should, unfortunately, a thought come into the [Page 253] mind of the pupil which is not fit to be harboured by the Master, He at once erects a barrier and shuts off from Himself that vibration.

The effect produced by this wonderfully close association is the harmonising and attuning of the pupil's vehicles. The pupil thus becomes a kind of outpost of the Master's consciousness, so that the strength of the Great Ones may be poured out through him, and the world may be definitely the better for his presence in it. When the pupil sends a thought of devotion to his Master, it is as though a valve were opened: there is a tremendous downflow of love and power from the Master, the Master's power flowing ever outwards and in all directions like the sunlight.

The pupil is so closely in touch with the Master's thought that he can at any time see what that thought is upon any given subject, and in that way he is often saved from error. The Master can, moreover, at any moment send a thought through the pupil either in the form of a suggestion or a message.

An accepted pupil has the right and the duty to bless in the Master's name.

The use by a Master of His pupil's body must on no account be confused with ordinary spiritualistic mediumship, as the condition is a totally different one. The highest form of spiritualistic control may possibly more or less approximate to the relation between a Master and His pupil, but probably this is very rarely reached, and hardly ever completely.

The difference between the two phenomena is fundamental, the two conditions being as wide as the poles asunder. In mediumship a person is passive, and lays himself open to the influence of any astral entity who happens to be in the

neighbourhood. When under the influence he is usually unconscious and he remembers nothing when he awakes from his trance. His state is really one of temporary obsession. Even the spirit-guide, who is generally present, is sometimes unable to protect the medium from undesirable or even disastrous influences. [Page 254]

When, on the other hand, a Master chooses to speak through one of His pupils, the pupil is fully conscious of what is being done, and knows perfectly to Whom he is for the moment lending his vocal organs. He stands aside from his vehicle, but remains keenly alert and watchful. He hears every word that is uttered through him, and remembers everything clearly. There is nothing in common between the two cases except that in both of them the body of one man is temporarily used by another.

The third stage is one of even more intimate union, when the pupil becomes a "son" of the Master, the ego of the pupil in the causal body being enfolded within that of the Master.

This union is so close and so sacred that even the power of the Master cannot undo what has been done, to the extent of separating the two consciousnesses even for a moment. Naturally before this stage is reached, the Master must have been quite certain that nothing can arise in the mind or astral body of the pupil which will ever need to be shut off.

These relationships — Probation, Acceptance and Sonship — have of course nothing whatever to do with Initiations or steps on the Path. These latter are tokens of the man's relation, not to his Master, but to the Great White Brotherhood and its august Head. All these matters are dealt with far more fully than is possible or desirable here in *The Masters and the Path*, by C. W. Leadbeater, a book of immeasurable value to the serious student of White Occultism.

Before, however, leaving the subject, it may be mentioned that at Initiation, the Monad identifies himself with the ego, this act having an interesting effect on the astral body: a great rhythmical swing is given to it, without disturbing the stability of its equilibrium, so that it is able thenceforth to feel with far greater keenness than before, without being shaken from its base, or escaping from its owner's control.

Pupils will be employed by their Masters in many different ways. Some are set to take up the lines of [Page 255] work which were indicated in the preceding chapter on *Invisible Helpers*: others are employed specifically in assisting the Masters personally in some piece of work which They may have undertaken. Some are set astrally to deliver lectures to less developed entities, or to help and teach others who are free temporarily during sleep, or who are living their after-death life.

When a pupil falls asleep he usually reports himself to his Master. If there happens to be nothing special for him to do, he will pursue his usual nocturnal work, whatever that may be. There is always plenty of astral work to be done: sudden catastrophes, for example, throw out a large number of people into the astral plane in a condition of terror, and in need of help. Most of the training in astral work is usually given by one of the older pupils of the Master.

The student must not confuse an ordinary astral body with a Mâyâvi Rûpa, or "body of illusion". A pupil of the Masters habitually leaves his astral body with the physical when he goes to sleep, and travels in his mental body. When he needs a temporary astral body for astral work he materialises one from the surrounding matter. Such a body may or may not resemble the physical body, the form given to it being adapted to the purpose in hand. It may also be made physically visible or invisible at will: it may be made indistinguishable from a physical body, warm and firm to the touch, as well as visible and able to carry on a conversation like an ordinary human being. Only Masters and Their pupils have the power to form true Mayavi Rupas, this power being acquired at or near the Second Initiation. An advantage of using the Mayavi Rupa is that it is not subject to deception and glamour on the astral plane, as is the astral body.

When a man functions in the mental vehicle and leaves his astral body behind him in a condition of suspended animation, along with the physical, he can, if necessary, easily surround the torpid astral body with a shell, or he can set up vibrations which render it impervious to all evil influences. [Page 256]

In the lesser mysteries of Ancient Greece, celebrated at Agrar, the principal teaching concerned the astral plane and the astral life after death. The official dress of the initiates was the skin of a fawn, the spotted appearance of which was thought to be emblematical of the colours of an ordinary astral body. Originally the teacher produced out of astral and etheric matter images representing what, in the astral world, would be the results of certain modes of physical life. Later, the teachings were represented in other ways, by a kind of play or drama, the parts being taken by the priests, or even by puppets mechanically moved.

The initiates had a number of proverbs or aphorisms peculiar to themselves, some of which were very characteristic: thus: "Death is life, and life is death" was one: another was: " Whosoever pursues realities during life will pursue them after death: whosoever pursues unrealities during this life will pursue them also after death."

The Greater Mysteries, celebrated at Eleusis, dealt with the mind-body and the mental plane, the golden fleece of Jason being the symbol of the mental body.

Another of the symbols used in the mysteries was the Thrysus, a staff with a pine

cone on its top: frequently it was said to be filled with fire. In India a bamboo with seven knots is used. The Thrysus was magnetised by the priest and laid against the spinal column of the candidate, thus giving him some of the priest's magnetism and helping the candidate to pass in full consciousness to the astral plane. The fire symbolised kundalini.

The Southern Buddhists enumerate five psychic powers which may be gained by the man who is making progress on the Path, (1) The ability to pass through the air and through solid objects, and to visit the heaven-world while still physically alive. This may perhaps mean nothing more than ability to function freely in the astral body, the heaven-world mentioned being perhaps merely the higher levels of the astral plane. (2) Divinely clear hearing, this is evidently [Page 257] the astral faculty of clairaudience. (2) The ability to comprehend and sympathise with all that is in the minds of others: this appears to be thought-reading, or telepathy. (4) The power to remember former births. This is clearly a faculty of the higher mental or causal body. (5) Divinely clear vision, *i.e.*, clairvoyance. In some lists there is added also the deliverance by wisdom, which means the attainment of freedom from re-birth. This is clearly a very high attainment and scarcely seems to belong to the same category as the other powers enumerated. [Page 258]

## CHAPTER 30

### CONCLUSION

Although there are at present relatively few who possess direct, personal knowledge of the astral world, its life and its phenomena, yet there are many reasons for believing that this small group, of those who know these things from their own experience, is rapidly growing and is likely to be very largely increased in the near future.

Psychic faculty, especially among children, is becoming less and less rare: as it gradually becomes accepted, and ceases to be regarded as unhealthy or "tabu", it is likely to increase both in extent and in intensity. Thus, for example, books have recently been published, and widely read, dealing with nature-spirits, better known as fairies, and showing even photographs of these dainty creatures and their work in the economy of nature: whilst any open-minded enquirer will experience little difficulty in finding people, young and old, who frequently see fairies, at work and at play, as well as many other entities and phenomena of the astral world.

Again, the enormous vogue of spiritualism has made the astral world and many of its phenomena objectively real and thoroughly familiar to many millions of persons in every part of the globe.

Physical science, with its ions and electrons, is on the threshold of the astral world, while the researches of Einstein and others are rapidly making acceptable the conception of the fourth dimension, which for so long has been familiar to students of the astral world.

In the realm of psychology, modern analytical methods give promise of being able to reveal the true nature of, at any rate, the lower fraction of man's [Page 259] psychic mechanism, confirming, incidentally some of the statements and teachings put forward by ancient Eastern books and by Theosophists and occultists of today. Thus, for example, a well-known author of books on psychology and psycho-analysis, recently informed the present writer that in his view the "complex" was identical with the "skandhâra" of the Buddhist system, while another psychologist of worldwide repute told a friend of the present writer that his psychological — *not* psychic — researches had led him irresistibly to the fact of re-incarnation.

These are some of the indications that the methods of orthodox Western science are leading to results identical with those which have for ages been common knowledge in certain parts of the East, and which have, during approximately the last half-century, been rediscovered by a small group of individuals who, guided by Eastern teachings, have developed within themselves the faculties necessary for the direct observation and investigation of the astral (as well as higher) worlds.

It would be a platitude to remark that the acceptance by the world in general of the existence of the astral plane and its phenomena — which cannot be much longer deferred — will inevitably and immeasurably enlarge and deepen man's conception of himself and his own destiny, as well as revolutionise his attitude towards the outer world, including the other kingdoms of nature, physically visible and invisible. Once a man succeeds in establishing to his own satisfaction the reality of the astral world, he is compelled to re-orient himself, and to make for himself a new set of values for the factors which affect his life and determine his activities.

Sooner or later, but inevitably, the broad conception that merely physical things play a very small part in the life of the human soul and spirit, and that man is essentially a spiritual being, unfolding his latent powers with the help of the various vehicles, physical, astral, and other, which from time to time he assumes — will [Page 260] displace all other viewpoints and lead men to a complete re-alignment of their lives.

A realisation of his own true nature, of the fact that through life after life on earth, with interludes in other and subtler worlds, he is steadily evolving and becoming more and more spiritual, logically and inevitably leads man to see that, if and when he chooses, he may cease from dallying with life and with drifting on the broad current of the evolutionary stream, and may instead assume the helm of

his own life-voyage. From this point in the growth of his "awareness" of things, and of his own inherent possibilities, he will pass to the next stage, where he approaches the "ancient and narrow" Path, upon which he will find Those Who, outstripping Their fellows, have achieved the maximum possible in purely *human* development. These are They Who, eagerly, yet with limitless patience, wait for Their younger brothers to come out of the nursery of ordinary worldly life into Their higher life where, with Their guidance and assisted by Their compassion and power, man may rise to the stupendous heights of spirituality to which They have attained, and become in his turn a saviour and helper of mankind, thus speeding the mighty plan of evolution towards its goal.[Page 261]

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# THE MENTAL BODY

by Arthur E. Powell

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## DEDICATION

This book, like its two predecessors,  
is dedicated with gratitude and appreciation to those  
whose painstaking labour and researches  
have provided the materials out of which it has been compiled

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## **INTRODUCTION**

This book is the third of the series dealing with man's bodies, its two predecessors having been The Etheric Body and The Astral Body. In all three, identically the same method has been followed: some forty volumes, mostly from the pens of Annie Besant and C.W.Leadbeater, recognised to-day as the authorities par excellence on the Ancient wisdom in its guise of modern Theosophy, have been carefully searched for data connected with the mental body; those data have been classified, arranged and presented to the student in a form as coherent and sequential as the labours of the compiler have been able to make it.

Throughout this series no attempt has been made to prove, or even to justify, the statements made, except in so far as their own internal evidence and reasonability justify them. The bona fides of these veteran investigators and teachers being unquestionable, the results of their investigations and their teachings are here set out, without evasion or reservation of any kind, so far as possible in their own words, modified and abridged only where necessary to suit the requirements of an orderly and logical presentation of the subject-matter.

The question of proof is an entirely separate issue, and one, moreover, of vast dimensions. To have attempted to argue or prove the statements made would have defeated the primary object of these books, which is to lay before the serious student a condensed synthesis, within reasonable compass, of the teachings from the sources named regarding the bodies of man and the planes or worlds to which these belong. Those who desire proofs must search for them elsewhere.

The fact that, after some two and a half years of intensive study of the writings of the two authors named, no discrepancies or contradictions, beyond, [xii] literally, two or three of trifling moment, have been discovered, constitutes a striking testimonial to the faithfulness in detail of the investigators, and to the coherence of the Theosophical system.

As in the two preceding volumes, marginal references have been given in order that the student may, if he wish, verify for himself any statement made at the

original sources. The indices of the series of three books, together with the marginal references, thus virtually constitute in themselves a fairly complete index to everything dealing with the etheric, astral, and lower mental worlds in the writings of Annie Besant and C.W. Leadbeater.

It is hoped that there will be added to the series in due time a fourth volume, on The Causal Body.

As already mentioned, by far the greater part of the material presented in this book, has been obtained directly from the writings of Dr. Besant and Bishop Leadbeater. The works of H. P. Blavatsky are not included in the list of authorities quoted. To have searched the Secret Doctrine for references to the Mental Body and the Mental Plane would, frankly have been a task beyond the powers of the compiler, and would, also, in all probability have resulted in a volume too abstruse for the class of student for whom this series of books is intended. The debt to H. P. Blavatsky is greater than ever could be indicated by quotations from her monumental volumes. Had she not shown the way in the first instance, later investigators might never have found the trail at all, let alone made it into a path where others may follow with comparative ease and safety.

**A.E. Powell.**

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## **CHAPTER I**

### **GENERAL DESCRIPTION**

Before proceeding to describe in detail the mental body of man, its functions, and the part it plays in his life and evolution, it will be useful to give a brief outline of the ground which our study will cover.

First, we shall have to consider the mental body as the vehicle through which the Self manifests as concrete intellect, in which are developed the powers of the mind, including those of memory and imagination, and which, in the later stages of man's evolution, serves as a separate and distinct vehicle of consciousness, in which the man can live and function quite apart from both his physical and his astral bodies.

At the outset the student must realise quite clearly that in occult psychology the mental equipment of man is divided into two distinct portions: [a] the mental body, which deals with particulars, with what are known as concrete thoughts: eg., a particular book, house, triangle, etc. ; [b] the causal body which deals with principles, with abstract thoughts: eg., books or houses in general, the principle of triangularity common to all triangles. The mental body thus deals with rupa or form-thoughts, the causal body with arupa or formless thoughts. A rough analogy may be taken from mathematics : arithmetic, dealing with particular numbers, belongs to the lower form aspect of mind : algebra, which deals with symbols representing numbers in general, belongs to the higher or formless aspect of

mind. The terms form and formless are, of course, used not in an absolute, but in a relative sense. Thus a cloud or a flame while possessing form are yet formless relatively to, say, a house or a log of wood.

Next we shall have to deal with that strange, semi-intelligent, and intensely active life-substance known as the Mental Elemental Essence, and the part it plays in helping man to think. The details of the structure and composition of the mental body will next engage our attention, and this will be followed by a description of typical examples of mental bodies of men at various stages of development.

A prominent feature in our study will be an examination of Kama-Manas, that association, or entanglement, between Desire and Thought, in terms of which it would perhaps be possible to write a history, both of the human race as a whole, and of every individual man. So intimate, in fact, is this entanglement that some schools of thought go so far as to class the astral and the mental bodies of man as one vehicle of consciousness, as indeed they are, for practical purposes, for the great majority of mankind.

The twofold action of thought in its own world must be described: viz., the radiation of waves of thought, and the formation, and in many cases the projection into space, of thought-forms. The effects which these two classes of phenomena produce on their creators and on other men must be examined when we come to deal with Thought-Transference, which, for convenience, we shall consider as Unconscious and as Conscious, the later division including Mental Healing, of which a brief outline will be given.

It will be necessary to consider the effect which the physical body, and, in fact, physical surroundings in general, produce on the mental body and its workings; conversely, we must examine the effects which the mental body produces on the physical body and on other physical objects.

Then it will be necessary to treat of the astral body in a similar manner: viz., how it influences the mental body, and how the mental body in its turn influences the astral body.

Then we shall turn to the mental body itself and show how it operates, how its faculties may be developed and trained both when working through the physical brain, and also when it is operating on its own account as an independent vehicle of consciousness.

This naturally leads us to the more deliberate training of the mental body, embracing Concentration, that sine qua non of an effective mental life; Meditation, and finally, Contemplation, leading to mystic consciousness.

The use of the mental body during sleep of the physical body will be briefly dealt with, and then a short description of that artificial and temporary mental body known as the ayavi Rupa will be added.

The life after physical and astral death, i.e., on the mental plane itself, will next occupy our attention. This will have to be dealt with at some length, for we have to study the general principles underlying the course of that mental life and many of its details. We must further examine shortly typical examples of life on each of the four lower mental sub-planes, in what the Theosophist calls Devachan, the Christian "Heaven".

After proceeding so far we shall be in a position to have grasped the reality and possibilities of the mental plane regarded as a world in itself, and we shall therefore study it as such a world, examining the nature of the life there, and the general character of its phenomena.

Amongst all these we shall find the Thought-Centres, which constitute an interesting and important feature. From these we shall pass to the Akashic Records, that wonderful and infallible Memory of nature in which everything is remembered and recorded, so that it may be read by anyone possessing the necessary qualifications.

A chapter will then be devoted to the inhabitants of the Mental Plane, and then, as man passes out of the lower mental plane on the death of his mental body, we shall follow him just sufficiently to gain a glimpse of his wider and fuller life on the higher mental, or causal plane.

Having thus traced the pilgrimage of the man through physical death [vide The Etheric Double], his course through the astral plane [vide The Astral Body] and, in this volume, followed him to the threshold of his true home, the causal or higher mental world, we can gain some idea of the relationship between the man in his three lower vehicles, those of the Personality, and the true man in his causal body, the Soul or Individuality. This aspect of our study will be dealt with in the chapter on the Personality and the Ego.

Then we take up the history once again as the man emerges from his "home" on his descent to re-birth in the lower worlds.

Finally, a chapter will be devoted to the life of the man who has reached the stage where he is worthy to be accepted as a Chela or Disciple by those masters of the Wisdom who, as the Elder Brethren of humanity, serve Their younger brothers with such unerring wisdom, such tireless patience, such never-failing and infinite love. For it is today within the reach of many a man who will address himself to the task of making himself worthy, to be trained by Them to assist, in however small a measure, in Their work for the service of the world, and it is also possible to set out, more or less categorically, the qualifications necessary before that inestimable privilege can be conferred.

## CHAPTER II

### MENTAL ELEMENTAL ESSENCE

Before we can study fruitfully the mental body, either as to its composition, structure, or methods of functioning, it is necessary to describe [though in general outline only] what is known as Mental Elemental Essence.

The student will recollect that after the formation of the atomic states of matter in each of the planes of nature, the Third Aspect of the Trinity [the Holy Spirit the Life giver, in Christian terminology] pours Himself down into the sea of virgin matter [the true Virgin Maria] and, by His vitality, awakens the atomic matter to new powers and possibilities, resulting in the formation of the lower sub-divisions of each plane.

Into matter thus vivified the Second great Outpouring of the Divine Life descends; again in Christian terminology, the Son is “incarnated of the Holy Ghost and the Virgin Mary”.

This Outpouring of the Divine Life is called by various names at various stages of Its descent. Regarded as a whole it is often spoken of as a Monadic essence, more especially when clothed only in atomic matter of the various planes, because it has then become fit to be used to supply permanent atoms to Monads.

When it ensouls non-atomic, *i.e.*, molecular matter, it is called Elemental Essence a name, borrowed from mediaeval occultists; it was bestowed by them on the matter of which the bodies of the nature-spirits were composed, for they spoke of these as “Elementals”.

When on its downward course it energises the matter of the three higher levels of the mental plane, it is known as the First Elemental Kingdom.

After spending a whole Chain Period in that evolution, it descends to the four lower levels of the mental plane, and there ensouls the Second Elemental Kingdom for another Chain period: here it is known as Mental Elemental Essence.

The next Chain Period is spent on the astral plane, where it is called the Third Elemental Kingdom, or Astral Elemental Essence.

[A Chain Period is the time occupied by the passage of the life-wave seven times round the seven globes of a Chain. There are thus forty-nine globe or world periods in each Chain Period. For further details, see A Textbook of Theosophy by C. W. Leadbeater.]

Each of these three is a kingdom of nature, as varied in manifestations of its different forms of life as are the animal and vegetable kingdoms, with which we are more familiar. Moreover, on each kingdom there are, of course, the usual seven perfectly distinct types or “rays” of essence, each with its seven sub-types.

Both Mental and Astral Elemental Essence are intimately connected with man, with his bodies and his evolution, as we shall see more clearly as we proceed with our study of his mental body.

It is important to realise that both on the astral and mental planes, elemental essence is quite distinct from the mere matter of those planes.

Another point of great importance is that the life animating both mental and astral matter is upon the downward or outward arc of evolution: progress for it, therefore means to descend into denser forms of matter, and to learn to express itself through them.

For man, evolution is just the opposite of this: he has already sunk deeply into matter, and is now rising out of it towards his source. There is consequently a constant conflict of interests between the man within, and the life inhabiting the matter of his various vehicles. The full bearing of this supremely important fact we shall see more clearly in later chapters, as our subject unfolds.

### CHAPTER III

### COMPOSITION AND STRUCTURE

The mental body is built of particles of the four lower sub-divisions of the mental world, i.e., of mental matter which corresponds to the four lower sub-divisions of astral matter, and to solid, liquid, gaseous and etheric matter of the physical plane.

The three higher grades of mental matter are used to build the Causal, or Higher Mental Body, with which we are not here concerned.

In addition to ordinary mental matter, the mental body contains also mental elemental essence, i.e., matter of the Second Elemental Kingdom.

The physical body, as we know, is built up of cells, each of which is a tiny separate life animated by the Second Outpouring, which comes from the Second Aspect of the Deity. The same thing applies in the astral and mental bodies. In the cell life which permeates them there is as yet nothing in the way intelligence but there is a strong instinct pressing downwards into matter, as we saw in the preceding chapter.

The shape of the mental body is ovoid, following that ovoid section of the causal body which alone of its characteristics can manifest in the lower worlds. The matter of the mental body, however, is not evenly distributed through out the egg. In the midst of the ovoid is the physical body, which strongly attracts astral matter: in its turn the astral matter strongly attracts mental matter. Consequently by far the greater part of the matter of both astral and mental bodies is gathered within the physical frame. To clairvoyant sight, therefore, the mental body appears as built of dense mist, of the shape of the physical body, and

surrounded by an ovoid of much finer mist. For this reason, in the mental world an acquaintance is just as recognisable as in the physical world.

The portion of the mental body which projects beyond the periphery of the physical body forms the mental "aura".

The size of both the astral and mental bodies is the same as that of the causal body, or more accurately of the section of the causal body on the lower planes. Thus, unlike the physical body, which has remained substantially the same size since Atlantean days, the mental body grows in size as the man himself develops.

The particles of the mental body are in ceaseless motion. Moreover, they are constantly changing, the mental body automatically drawing to itself, from the general storehouse, matter that can maintain the combinations already existing in it.

In spite of the intensely rapid motion of the mental particles among themselves, the mental body has yet at the same time a kind of loose organisation. There are in it certain striations which divide it more or less irregularly into segments, each of these corresponding to a certain department of the physical brain, so that every type of thought should function through its duly assigned portion. The mental body is yet so imperfectly developed in ordinary men, however, that there are many in whom a great number of special departments are not yet in activity, and any attempt at thought belonging to those departments has to travel round through some inappropriate channel which happens to be fully open. The result is that thought on those subjects is for those people clumsy and uncomprehending. That is why, as we shall see more fully in a later chapter, some people have a head for mathematics and others are unable to perform a simple mathematical process – why some people instinctively understand, appreciate and enjoy music, while others do not know one tune from another.

Good thoughts produce vibrations of the finer matter of the body, which by its specific gravity tends to float in the upper part of the ovoid: whereas bad thoughts, such as selfishness and avarice, are always oscillations of the grosser matter, which tends to gravitate towards the lower part of the ovoid. Consequently, the ordinary man who yields himself not infrequently to selfish thoughts of various kinds, usually expands the lower part of his mental body, and presents roughly the appearance of an egg with its larger end downwards. The man who has not indulged in those lower thoughts, but has devoted himself to higher ones, tends to expand the upper part of his mental body and therefore presents the appearance of an egg standing in its smaller end. All such appearances, however, are only temporary, the tendency being for the symmetry of the ovoid to re-assert itself by degrees.

From a study of the colours and striations of a man's mental body, the clairvoyant can perceive his character and the progress he has made in his present life.

[From similar features of the causal body he can see what progress the ego has made since its original formation when the man left the animal kingdom.]

The mental body is more or less refined in its constituents, according to the stage of intellectual development at which the man has arrived. It is an object of great beauty, and delicacy and rapid motion of its particles giving it an aspect of living iridescent light, and this beauty becomes an extraordinary radiant and entrancing loveliness as the intellect becomes more highly evolved and is employed chiefly on pure and sublime topics. As we shall see in detail later, every thought gives rise to vibrations in the mental body, accompanied by a play of colour described as like that of the spray of a waterfall as the sunlight strikes it, raised many degrees in colour and vivid delicacy.

Every mental body has a single molecule or unit, usually called the mental unit, of the fourth mental sub-plane, which remains with the man during the whole of his incarnations. As we shall see in the course of our study, the materials of the mental body are scattered and re-gathered again and again, in life after life but the mental unit remains a stable centre the whole time.

The mental unit may be regarded as the heart and centre of the mental body, and upon the relative activity of the different parts of that unit the appearance of that body as a whole to a great extent depends.

The mental unit may, of course, belong to any one of the seven great "types" or "rays" of matter: it should be noted that all the permanent atoms and the mental unit of a man belong to the same "type" or "ray".

The mental unit thus corresponds, in the mental body, to the permanent atoms in the causal, astral, and etheric bodies.

The use of the permanent atoms, and of the mental unit, is to preserve within themselves, as vibrating powers, the results of all the experiences through which the bodies with which they have been associated have passed.

The various activities of the mind fall naturally into certain classes or divisions, and these divisions are expressed through different parts of the mental unit. Mental units are by no means all the same. They differ greatly, according to the type, and to the development of their owners. If a mental unit lay at rest the force radiating from it would make a number of funnels in the mental body, just as the light shining through the slide in a magic lantern makes a large radiating funnel of light in the air between the lantern and the sheet.

In this case the surface of the mental body may be likened to the sheet because it is only at the surface that the effect becomes visible to one who is looking at the mental body from the outside; so that, if the mental unit were at rest there would be seen on the surface of the mental body a number of pictures in colour, representing the various types of thought common to the person with, presumably dark spaces between them. But the mental unit, like all other chemical combinations, is rotating rapidly on its axis, and the effect

of this is that in the mental body there is a series of bands, not always quite clearly defined, nor always of the same width, but still readily distinguishable, and usually in about the same relative positions.

The student will by now be familiar with colours and their meaning, a full list being given [which is not considered necessary to repeat here] in The Astral Body pp.11-12.

Where aspirational thought exists it invariably shows itself in a beautiful little violet circle at the top of the ovoid of the mental body. As the aspirant draws near to the gateway of the Path this circle increases in size and radiancy, and in the Initiate it is a splendid glowing cap of the most lovely colour imaginable.

Below it often comes the blue ring of devotional thought, usually rather a narrow one, except in the case of the few whose religion is really deep and genuine.

Next to that, there may be the much broader zone of affectionate thought, which may be of any shade of crimson or rose-colour according to the type of affection which it indicates.

Near to the zone of affection, and frequently closely connected with it, there is found the orange band, which expresses proud and ambitious thought.

Again, in intimate relation with pride comes the yellow belt of intellect, commonly divided into two bands, denoting respectively the philosophical and the scientific types of thought. The place of this yellow colour varies much in different men; sometimes it fills the whole upper part of the egg, rising above devotion and affection, and in such a case pride is generally excessive.

Below the group just described, and occupying the middle section of the ovoid, is the broad belt devoted to concrete shapes –the part of the mental body from which all ordinary thought-forms issue. [These thought-forms will be described in Chapter VIII].

The principal colour here is green, shaded often with brown or yellow, according to the disposition of the person.

There is no part of the mental body which varies more widely than this. Some people have their mental bodies crowded with a vast number of concrete images, whereas others have only a few. In some they are clear and well outlined, in others they are vague and hazy to the last degree; in some they are classified, labeled and arranged in the most orderly fashion, in others they are not arranged at all, but are left in hopeless confusion.

In the lower part of the ovoid come the belts expressing all kinds of undesirable thoughts. A kind of muddy precipitate of selfishness often fills the lower third, or even half, of the mental body, and above this is sometimes a ring portraying hatred, cunning or fear. Naturally, as a man develops, this lower part vanishes,

the upper part gradually expanding until it fills the whole body, as shown in the illustrations in *Man Visible and Invisible*, by Bishop Leadbeater.

The general rule is, the stronger the thought the larger the vibration; the more spiritual and unselfish the thought, the higher and more rapid is the vibration. Strength of thought produces brilliancy, spirituality produces delicacy of colour.

In a later chapter, we shall describe a few typical mental bodies, and indicate how various other mental qualities show themselves.

## CHAPTER IV

### FUNCTIONS

The mental body is the vehicle through which the Self manifests and expresses itself as the concrete intellect.

The mind is the reflection of the cognitional aspect of the Self, of the Self as Knower: the mind is the Self working in the mental body.

The majority of people are unable to separate the man from the mind; consequently, to them the Self, which they are seeking, is the mind.

This is the more natural, if not inevitable, because at the present stage of evolution men of the Fifth Race are working especially at the development of the mental body.

In the past the physical body has been vivified as a vehicle of consciousness: the astral body is also at least partially vivified by most men: the vivification of the mental body is the work upon which humanity should now be more especially engaged.

The development of the astral body, with its function of expressing kama, or emotion, was the special work of the Fourth Root Race, the Atlantean, as it is the special work of the Fourth Sub-Race of the Fifth Root Race, the Keltic.

As stated above, the quality which the Fifth Race –and this applies both to the Fifth Root Race and the Fifth Sub-Race –is intended specially to develop is manas or mind: that type of intellect that discriminates, that notes the differences between things.

At the present stage of half-development most men look for differences from their own point of view, not in order to understand so much as to resist them, even violently to oppose them. When the faculty is perfectly developed, however, differences will be noted calmly, solely for the purpose of understanding them and judging what is best.

We may go further and say that at the present stage of development of the Fifth Sub-Race, weakness in others is a field to exploit, a thing to enslave, something to trample under foot, in order to rise on it rather than to help it to exist for itself.

Nevertheless, unpleasant as it may be in its earlier stages, this mental development is essential, for the true critical spirit is absolutely necessary for true progress.

The Sixth Root Race, as well as the Sixth Sub-Race of the Fifth Root Race, will be occupied principally with the development of spirituality, synthesis compassion, and eagerness to serve being strongly marked characteristics.

The stage of development of mind and emotion in the human race at the present time, however, calls for a little further explanation. The present or Fourth Round is primarily intended for the development of desire or emotion; the Fifth Round is intended for the unfolding of intellect. Owing however to the stimulus provided by the "Lords of the Flame" the intellect has already considerably developed a whole Round in advance of what we may call the normal programme. At the same time it should be understood that the intellect of which man is today so proud is infinitesimal compared with that which the average man will possess at the culminating point of the next or Fifth Round.

The "Lords of Flame" came from the planet Venus to this earth during the Third Root Race, and at once took charge of our evolution. Their Leader is called in Indian books Sanat Kumara: with Him came three lieutenants, and some twenty-five other Adepts as assistants. About 100 ordinary human beings were also brought over from Venus and merged into the ordinary humanity of the earth.

It is these Great Ones who are spoken of in The Secret Doctrine as projecting a spark into the mindless men and awakening the intellect within them. Their action was really rather more in the nature of a magnetic stimulus, their influence drawing humanity towards Themselves, and enabling men to develop the latent spark and to become individualised.

Returning from this necessary digression, it must ever be remembered that, although for purposes of analysis and study it is necessary to separate man from the vehicles which he uses, yet the Self is one, however varying may be the forms in which it manifests itself. Consciousness is a unit, and the divisions we make in it are either [1] made for purposes of study, or [2] illusions due to our perceptive power being limited by the organs through which it works in the lower worlds.

The Self has three aspects: knowing, willing and energising; from these arise severally thoughts, desires and actions. Yet the whole Self knows, wills and acts. Nor are the functions wholly separated; when he knows, he also acts and wills; when he acts, he also knows and wills; when he wills, he also acts and knows. One function is predominant, and sometimes to such an extent as wholly to veil the others; but even in the intensest concentration of knowing – the most separate of the three – there is always present a latent energising and a latent willing, discernible as present by careful analysis.

A little further explanation may help towards understanding. When the Self is still, then is manifested the aspect of Knowledge, capable of taking on the likeness of any object presented [as we shall see in detail later on]. When the Self is concentrated, intent on change of state, then appears the aspect of Will. When the Self, in presence of any object, puts forth energy, to contact that object, then shows forth the aspect of Action. It will thus be seen that these three are not separate divisions of the Self, not three things joined into one or compounded, but that there is one indivisible whole, manifesting in three ways.

From the standpoint of Eastern Yoga, "mind" is simply the individualised consciousness –the whole of that consciousness, including activities. Yoga describes the process of consciousness thus: [1] awareness of objects, the aspect of intelligence, the dominant note of the mental plane; [2] desire to obtain objects, the aspect of desire, the dominant note of the astral plane; [3] endeavour to attain objects, the aspect of activity, the dominant note of the physical plane. On the buddhic plane, cognition, as pure reason, predominates. Each of these aspects is present all the time, but one predominates at one time, another at another time.

Returning now to a more detailed examination of mind, we learn that abstract thinking is a function of the Self expressing itself through the higher mental or causal body : concrete thinking [as previously stated] is performed by the Self working in the mental body –the lower mental body, as it is sometimes called. The mechanism of concrete thinking we shall consider in detail presently.

It is also in the mental body that memory and imagination begin. The germ of memory lies in Tamas, the inertia of matter, which is a tendency to repeat vibrations once started, when acted upon by energy.

The mental body is thus the vehicle of the ego, of the real Thinker, who himself resides in the causal body. But, while the mental body is intended eventually to be the vehicle of consciousness on the lower mental plane, it also works on and through the astral and physical bodies in all manifestations that are usually called the "mind" in ordinary waking consciousness.

In detail the process is as follows : The act of concrete thinking sets in vibration the matter of the mental body. This vibration is transferred an octave lower, as it were, to the grosser matter of the thinker's astral body; from that in turn the etheric particles of the brain are affected, and through them finally the denser grey matter of the dense body is brought into action. Thus before a thought can be translated into active consciousness on the physical brain all these successive steps must be taken.

The sympathetic nervous system is mostly connected with the astral body, while in the cerebrospinal system is [page 17] more under the influence of the ego working through the mental body.

The process described above may be elucidated a little further. Every particle in the physical brain has its astral counterpart, and this in turn has its mental counterpart. If then we suppose, for the purposes of our examination, that the whole of the physical brain be spread out so as to be one particle thick, we may further suppose that the corresponding astral and mental matter is also laid out in layers in a similar manner, the astral a little above the physical, the mental a little above the astral.

We thus have three layers of matter of differing density, all corresponding one to the other, but not joined in any way except that here and there wires of communication exist between the physical and astral particles, and between the astral and mental particles. That would fairly represent the condition of affairs in the brain of the average man.

When, therefore, such a man wishes to send a thought down from the mental to the physical level, the thought –owing to many channels not yet being open –may have to go out of its way, as it were, going laterally through the brain of mental matter until it can find a way down, passing eventually through a tube not at all suited to it, and then, when it reaches the physical level, having to move laterally again in the physical brain before it meets the physical particles which are capable of expressing it.

It is obvious that such a method is awkward and clumsy. We thus can understand why it is that some people have no comprehension of mathematics, or no taste for music, art, etc. The reason is that in the part of the brain devoted to that particular faculty or subject the communications have not yet been opened up.

In the Adept, the perfected man, every particle has its own wire or tube, and there is also full communication in every part of the brain alike. Hence every thought has its own appropriate channel, through which it can descend directly to the correspondingly appropriate material in the physical brain.

If we analyse the process of consciousness, in rough outline, working from the Not-Self inward to the Self, we observe first contact on the physical body from without : this contact is converted by the astral body into sensation; the sensation is transformed by the mental body into a precept; then the precepts are elaborated into concepts, thus preserving the ideal form which is the material for all possibility of future thought.

Every contact with the Not-Self modifies the mental body by re-arranging a part of its materials as a picture or image of the external object.

Thinking, on the form-side, is the establishment of relations between these images; on the life-side it consists of corresponding modifications within the Knower himself.

The peculiar work of the Knower is the establishment of relationships between the images formed in his mental body, the addition which he makes changing the images into thoughts.

When the Thinker re-forms the same images over and over again, the time-element, there appear memory and anticipation.

The consciousness thus working is further illuminated from above with ideas that are not fabricated from materials supplied by the physical world, but are reflected into it directly from the Universal Mind [see chapter XXVIII].

When a man reasons he is adding something of his own to the information contributed from outside. As his mind works on the materials supplied to it, it links perceptions together, blending the various streams of sensation onto one, combining them into one image. This work of establishing relations, of synthesising, is, in fact, the peculiar work of the Knower; it is a speciality of the mind.

Such activity of the mental body acts on the astral body as said above, and this, again, on the etheric and dense bodies, and the nervous matter of the sense body then vibrates under the impulses sent into it. This action shows itself as electrical discharges, and magnetic currents play between the particles causing intricate inter-relations.

These leave what is called a nervous track, a track along which another current can run, say, across it. Hence, if a group of particles that were concerned in a particular vibration should again be made active by the consciousness repeating the same idea, the vibration runs readily along the track already formed, thus re-awakening the other group of particles into activity and presenting to the consciousness an associated idea.

This briefly, is the mechanism of associated ideas, the importance of which mental phenomenon is too well known to every student of psychology to need emphasis here.

It was indicated above that the peculiar work of the mind is that of establishing relations between objects of consciousness. This phrase covers all the varied processes of the mind. Hence the Hindu speaks of the mind as the sixth sense because it takes in the sensations that enter through the five senses and combines them into a single precept, making from them one idea. The mind has also been spoken of as the "Rajah" of the senses.

Hence, also, the meaning of the sutra, that the "vrttis", or modes of the mind, are pentads". The word pentad is used in the sense in which the chemist speaks of the valency, or power of forming combinations of an element. For the mind is like a prism which gathers up the five diverse rays of sensation from the organs of sense, the five ways of knowing, the Jnanendriyas, and combines them into one ray.

If we also take into account the five organs of action, the Karmendriyas, as well as the five organs of sense the Jnanendriyas, then the mind becomes the eleventh sense; hence in the Bhagavad Gita speaks of the "ten senses and the one" [XIII.5].

Referring, not to the mind as the sixth or the eleventh "sense", but to the senses of the mental body itself, we find that they differ very much from the senses of the physical body. The mental body comes into contact with the things of the mental world as it were directly, and over its whole surface, becoming conscious all over itself of everything which is able to impress it at all. There are thus no distinct organs for sight, hearing, touch, taste and smell in the mental body; the word "senses" is, in fact a misnomer : it is more accurate to speak of the mental "sense".

From this it is clear that, being able to communicate directly by thought - transference, without having to formulate thoughts in words, the barrier of language, no longer exists on the mental plane, as it does on the astral plane

If a trained student passes into the mental world and there communicates with another student, his mind, in "speaking", speaks at once by colour, sound and form, so that complete thought is conveyed as a coloured and musical picture, instead of only a fragment of it being shown, as is the case on the physical plane, by the symbols we call words.

There are certain ancient books written by great Initiates in colour-language, the language of the Gods. The language is known to many chelas [i.e., pupils of Masters] and is taken, so far as form and colour are concerned, from the 'speech' of the mental world, in which, as already said, a single thought gives rise to form, colour and sound simultaneously.

It is not that the mind thinks in colour, a sound, or a form: it thinks a thought, which is a complex vibration in mental matter, and that thought expresses itself in all these ways by the vibrations it sets up. In the mental body, therefore, a man is freed from the limitations of his separate sense-organs, and is receptive at every point to every vibration which in the physical world would present itself as separate and different from its fellows.

The mental body of the average man today is much less developed, relatively, than the astral and physical bodies. The normal man, at the present stage of evolution, identifies himself with the brain - consciousness, the consciousness working in the cerebrospinal system. Here he feels himself, distinctly and consecutively, as 'I', only on the physical plane; that is, in the waking state.

Except so far as the cerebrospinal system is concerned, however, the consciousness of the average man works from the astral plane, from the realm of sensation.

But in the more highly evolved men of the Fifth Race the centre of consciousness is in the mental body, working from the lower mental world, the man being moved by ideas more than by sensations.

Thus the average man is conscious but not self-conscious, on the astral and mental planes. He recognises astral and mental changes within himself, but does distinguish between those initiated by himself from within, and those caused by impacts from without on his astral and mental vehicles. To him, they are all alike changes within himself.

Hence, the physical plane alone is the only ‘real’ world for him, and all phenomena of consciousness belonging to the astral and mental worlds are what he calls ‘unreal’, ‘subjective’, ‘imaginary’. He regards them as created by his own ‘imagination’, and not as results of impacts upon his astral and mental bodies from external worlds. He is, in fact, an infant on the astral and mental planes.

Hence, in the undeveloped man, the mental body cannot function separately on the mental plane, as an independent vehicle of consciousness during his earth-life. When such a man exercises his mental faculties these must clothe themselves in astral matter before he can become conscious of their activity.

We may tabulate the principle functions of the mental body thus:

- [1] To serve as the vehicle of the Self for the purpose of concrete thinking.
- [2] To express such concrete thoughts through the physical body, working through the astral body, the etheric brain, and the cerebrospinal system.
- [3] To develop the powers of memory and imagination.
- [4] To serve, as evolution proceeds, as a separate vehicle of consciousness on the mental plane.

To these, must be added the further function [elucidation of which must postpone to a later chapter] : viz.:

- [5] To assimilate the results of experience gathered in each earth-life and to pass on their essence to the ego, the real man living in his causal body.

We may here note that the animal kingdom also employs mental matter to some extent. The higher domestic animals at least undoubtedly exercise the power of reason, although naturally the lines along which their reason can work are few and limited, and the faculty itself is far less powerful than is the case with human beings.

In the case of the average animal, only the matter of the lowest sub-division of the mental plane would be employed, but with the highly developed domestic animal the matter of the highest of the four lower levels might be to some degree utilised.

## CHAPTER V

### TYPICAL EXAMPLES

The mental body of a savage is illustrated in Man Visible and Invisible, Plate VI., opposite p. 87. So far as its colours are the same, the mental body agrees fairly with the astral body in a condition of repose; but it is also much more than this, for in it appears whatever has been developed in the man of spirituality and intellectuality. This might not, in the case of the savage, be much, but it would be of considerable importance later on, as we shall see in due course.

Examining such a body in detail we perceive at the top a dull yellow, which indicates some intellect, though the muddiness of the colour shows that it is applied exclusively selfish ends.

Devotion, denoted by grey-blue, must be a fetish-worship, largely tinged with fear and prompted by considerations of self-interest. Muddy crimson suggests a commencement of affection which must as yet be principally selfish also.

A band of dull orange implies pride, but of quite a low order. A large dash of scarlet expresses a strong tendency to anger, which would evidently blaze out upon very slight provocation.

A broad band of dirty green, which occupies so great a portion of the body, shows deceit, treachery and avarice – the latter quality being indicated by a brownish tint. At the bottom of the aura there is a sort of deposit of mud colour, suggesting general selfishness and the absence of any desirable quality.

In an undeveloped man the mental body contains but a small amount of mental matter, unorganised, and chiefly from the lowest sub-division of the plane. It is played on almost entirely from the lower bodies, being set vibrating by emotional storms from the astral body. Except when stimulated by these astral vibrations, it remains almost quiescent, and even under their impulse is sluggish. No definite activity is generated from within, blows from the outer world being necessary to arouse distinct response.

Hence, the more violent the blows, the better for the progress of the man; riotous pleasure, anger, pain, terror, and other passions, causing whirlwinds in the astral body, stir the mental consciousness, which then adds something of its own to the impressions made on it from without.

The ordinary person uses matter of the seventh or lowest mental sub-plane only; that being very near to the astral plane, all his thoughts are coloured by reflections from the astral or emotional world. Very few people can as yet deal with the sixth sub-plane; great scientific men certainly use it a good deal, but unfortunately, they often mingle it with the matter of the lowest sub-plane, and then they become jealous of other people's discoveries and inventions. The matter of the fifth sub-plane is much more free from the possibility of astral

entanglement. The fourth sub-plane, being next to the causal body, is far away from the possibility of entanglement with astral vibrations.

On Plate IX, opposite p. 93 of the work quoted, is illustrated the mental body of an ordinary man. In it is seen more in proportion of intellect [yellow], love [rose-pink], and devotion [blue]; there is also a marked improvement in their quality, the colours being much clearer.

Although the amount of pride is high as before, it is now at a higher level, the man being proud of his good qualities instead of merely of his brute force or cruelty.

A good deal of scarlet persists, indicating liability to anger; the green is decidedly better, indicating versatility and adaptability rather than deceit or cunning.

In the savage the green was lower down the aura, below the scarlet, because the qualities it represented needed for their expression a type of matter coarser than that needed by the scarlet of anger.

In the average man the green is above the scarlet in the aura, indicating that the type of matter it needs is less coarse than that required for the scarlet of anger. There has thus been an improvement in the general quality of matter in the mental body.

Although there is still a large proportion of the brown of selfishness in the aura, yet the colour is a trifle warmer and less grim than in the case of the savage.

Thus the mental body of the average man is much increased in size, shows a certain amount of organisation, and contains some matter from the sixth, fifth, and fourth sub-divisions of the mental plane.

As with the physical and astral, so with the mental body; exercise increases, disuse atrophies and finally destroys. Every vibration set up in the mental body causes a change in its constituents, throwing out of it the matter that cannot vibrate sympathetically, and replacing it by suitable materials drawn from the practically illimitable store around.

Plate XXII, opposite p. 121 in the same book, illustrates the mental body of a developed man. From this pride [orange], anger [scarlet], and selfishness [brown] have completely disappeared; the remaining colours have expanded so as to fill the whole oval, and have also so improved in tone as to give quite a different impression. As all thought of self has vanished from them, they are more refined and delicate. In addition there has appeared at the top of the aura a pure violet with golden stars, indicating the acquisition of new and greater qualities —to wit, spiritual aspiration.

The power from above, which radiates through the causal body of a developed man, acts also through his mental body, though with somewhat less force.

Allowing for the difference between what we may call the octaves of colour, i.e., between the hues belonging to the lower and the higher levels of the mental plane, the mental body has now become almost a reproduction of the causal body, just as the astral body is almost a copy, at its own lower level, of the mental body.

The mental body of a developed man thus becomes a reflection of the causal, because the man has learned to follow solely the promptings of the higher self, and to guide his reason exclusively by them. The colour in fact, which expresses a certain quality in the causal body expresses itself not only in the mental body but even in the astral body; the colour however, as already stated, will be less delicate, less luminous and ethereal, as it descends to the lower planes.

In a *spiritually developed man* all the coarser combinations of mental matter have been eliminated so that it contains only the finer varieties of matter of the four lower mental sub-divisions, and of these again the materials of the fourth and fifth sub - planes very much predominate over those of the sixth and seventh sub-planes. The mental body is thus responsive to all the higher workings of the intellect, to the delicate contacts of the higher arts, to the pure thrills of the loftier emotions. Such a body is rapidly becoming ready to reproduce every impulse from the real man in the causal body, the Thinker, which is capable of expression in lower mental matter.

Both the astral and mental bodies of a spiritual man should exhibit continually four or five splendid emotions – love, devotion, sympathy, and intellectual aspiration among them.

The mental body [and also the astral body] of an Arhat [one who has taken the Fourth Great Initiation] have very little characteristic colour of their own, but are reproductions of the causal body in so far as their lower octaves can express it. They have a lovely shimmering iridescence –a sort of opalescent, mother of pearl effect –far beyond either description or pictorial representation.

A *matter-of-fact* person has generally much of yellow in his mental body, and his various bands of colour are usually regular and in order. He has far less emotion and less imagination than the *intuitionial* man, and, therefore, often in certain ways less power and enthusiasm; but, on the other hand, he is far less likely to make mistakes, and what he does will generally be well and carefully done.

It may be noted also that the scientific and orderly habit of mind has a distinct influence upon the arrangement of the colours in the astral body; they tend to fall into regular bands, and the lines of demarcation between them become more definite.

In the mental body of an *intuitionial* man there is much more of blue, but the colours are generally vague and the whole body is ill regulated. He suffers much

more than the steadier type, but sometimes through that suffering he is able to make rapid progress.

In the perfect man, of course, both the glow and enthusiasm, and the steadfastness, and regularity, have their place; it is merely a question which is required first.

In addition to the qualities enumerated above, which are expressed as colours in the mental body, there are a number of other qualities —such as courage, dignity, cheerfulness, truthfulness, and the like—which are represented broadly speaking rather by form than by colour. They are indicated by differences in the structure of the mental body, or by changes in its surface.

Within the different rings or zones of colour described above there are usually to be seen more or less clearly marked striations, and many qualities of the man can be judged by an examination of these striations.

The possession of a *strong will*, for example, brings the whole mental body into far more level definite lines. All striations and radiations are steady, firm and clearly distinguishable, whereas in the case of a weak and vacillating person this firmness and strength of line would be consequently absent; the lines separating the different qualities would be indeterminate, and the striations would be small, weak and wavy.

*Courage* is shown by firm and very strongly-marked lines, especially in the orange band connected with pride, and by the calm, steadfast shining of the colours indicating the higher qualities.

When *fear* over powers a person all the colours are dimmed and overwhelmed by a livid grey mist, and the striations are lost in a quivering mass of palpitating jelly, the man having for the time, lost the power of guiding and controlling his vehicles.

*Dignity* also expresses itself principally in the same part of the mental body as that expressing courage, but by a calm steadiness and assuredness which is quite different from the lines of courage.

*Truthfulness and accuracy* are portrayed very clearly by regularity in the striations of the part of the mental body devoted to concrete forms, and by the clearness and correctness of the images which appear there.

*Loyalty* shows itself by an intensification both of affection and devotion, and by the constant formation in that part of the ovoid, of figures of the person to whom the loyalty is felt. In many cases of loyalty, affection and devotion, there is made a very strong permanent image of the object of those feelings, and that remains floating in the aura of the thinker, so that, when his thought turns towards the loved or adored one, the force which he pours out strengthens that already existing image, instead of forming a new one, as it would normally do.

*Joy* shows itself in a general brightening and radiancy of both the mental and the astral bodies, as also in a peculiar rippling of the surface of the body.

*Generally Cheerfulness* shows itself in a modified bubbling form of this, and also in a steady serenity which is pleasant to see.

*Surprise*, on the other hand, is shown by a sharp constriction of the mental body accompanied by an increased glow in the bands of affection if the surprise is a pleasant one, and by a change of colour usually involving the display of a good deal of brown and grey in the lower part of the ovoid when the surprise is an unpleasant one. This constriction is usually communicated to both the astral and the physical bodies, and often causes singularly unpleasant feelings which affect sometimes the solar plexus [resulting in sinking and sickness] and sometimes the heart-centre, in which case it brings palpitation or even death.; so that a sudden surprise may occasionally kill one who has a weak heart.

*Awe* is the same as wonder, except that it is accompanied by a profound change in the devotional part of the mental body, which usually swells out under this influence and has its striations more strongly marked.

*Mystical Thought* and the presence of psychic faculties are indicated by colours of which there are no equivalents on the physical plane.

When a man uses any part of his mental body, directing his thought strongly into one or more of the channels previously mentioned, the mental body not only vibrates for the time more rapidly, thereby brightening in colour, but the portion of it which corresponds to that thought usually swells out temporarily and increases in size, so disturbing for a time the symmetry of the ovoid.

In many people such bulging is permanent, and that always means that the amount of thought of that type is steadily increasing. If, for example, a person takes up some scientific study, and therefore suddenly turns his thoughts in that direction much more than before, the first effect will be such protuberance as has been described. But if he keeps the amount of his thoughts on scientific subjects at the same level which he has now adopted, the protruding portion will gradually sink back into the general outline of the ovoid, but the band of its colour will have become wider than before.

If however, the man's interest in scientific subjects steadily increases in force, the protrusion will still remain in evidence even though the band has widened.

Injury may thus be done to the mental body by over-specialisation leading to a lop -sided development. It becomes over developed in some parts, and proportionately undeveloped in other regions, perhaps equally important. Harmonious and proportionate all-round development is the object to be sought, and for this is needed a calm self-analysis and a definite direction of means to ends; this aspect of our subject we shall consider further in a later chapter.

Reference has already been made to the ceaseless motion of the matter in the mental body. The same phenomenon occurs also in the case of the astral body. When for example, the astral body is disturbed by a sudden emotion all the matter is swept about as if by a violent hurricane, so that for the time being the colours become very much mixed. Presently, however, by the specific gravity of the different types of matter the whole arrangement will sort itself once more into its usual zones. Even then the matter is by no means at rest as the particles are all the time running round these zones, though comparatively rarely leaving their own belt and intruding on another. This movement within its own zone is entirely healthy ; in fact, one in whom there is no circulation is a mental crustacean, incapable of growth until it bursts its shell. The activity of the matter in any particular zone increases in proportion to the amount of thought devoted to the subject of which it is an expression.

Disturbances of the mental body are similar to those in the astral body and are equally disastrous in their effects. Thus, if a man allows himself to be greatly worried over some problem and turns it over and over again in his mind without reaching any conclusion, he sets up a sort of storm in his mental body; perhaps an even better description would be a sore place in the mental body, like an irritation produced by friction .

An argumentative person has his mental body in a state of perpetual inflammation, and the inflammation is liable, on slight provocation, to break out at any moment into an actual sore. For such a one there is no hope of any kind of occult progress until he has brought balance and common sense to bear on his diseased condition.

If a man should permit his thought upon any given subject to stagnate, that stagnation will be reproduced in the matter appropriate to the subject. In this manner, by allowing his thought on that subject to set and solidify, a congestion is set up which appears as a prejudice. A small eddy is formed in which the mental matter runs round and round until it coagulates and becomes a kind of wart. Unless and until this wart is worn away, or forcibly rooted out, the man cannot use that particular part of his mental body, and is incapable of rational thought on that subject. The foul thickened mass blocks all free movement either outward or inward; it prevents him, on the one hand from seeing accurately, and from receiving any reliable new impressions on the matter in question, and on the matter in question, and on the other, from sending out any clear thought with regard to it.

These diseased spots in the mental body are, unfortunately, also centres of infection; the inability to see clearly therefore increases and spreads. Stagnation in one part of the mental body is thus likely to lead to stagnation in other parts also. So that if a man has a prejudice on one subject he will probably soon develop prejudices on others, because the healthy flow of mental matter has been checked, and the habit of untruth has been formed.

Religious prejudice is the commonest and the most serious of all, and completely prevents any approach to rational thought with regard to the subject. A very large number of people have the whole of that part of the mental body which should be occupied with religious matters inactive, ossified and covered with warts, so that even the most rudimentary conception of what religion really is remains utterly impossible for them until a catastrophic change has taken place.

In general, we may repeat that in all the best of men of the more advanced races at the present day, the physical body is fully developed, and fairly under control; the astral body is also fully developed, but not by any means under perfect control; the mental body is in process of evolution, but its growth is as yet very far from complete. They have a long way to go before these three bodies are entirely subordinate to the soul. When that happens the lower self will have been absorbed into the higher self, and the ego, or soul, will have dominated the man. In such a man there is no longer conflict between his various bodies; though he is not yet perfect, yet his different vehicles are so far harmonised that they have but one aim.

## CHAPTER VI

### KAMA-MANAS [DESIRE MIND]

In the *Astral Body*, p. 23/5, we considered Kama, or desire, and on pp.26-9, we dealt with Kama-Manas, or the entanglement of desire and mind. In the present book we must again deal with Kama-Manas, taking for granted much of what was said in the *Astral Body* regarding Kama, and confining ourselves mainly to the Manas aspect of the subject.

Recapitulating briefly what was said in *The Astral Body*, Kama is the life manifesting in the astral vehicle; its characteristic attribute is that of feeling; it comprises animal appetites, passions and desires; it is the “ape and tiger” in us which most avails to bind us to earth. Kama or Desire is also the reflected, lower aspect of Atma or Will.

Kama is sometimes used in to limited a sense, to imply nothing but gross sensual desire; it means, however, all desire; and desire is the outward-turned aspect of love, the love of the things of the three worlds, love proper being love of life or love of the divine, and belonging to the higher or inward- turning self.

In the *Rig Veda* [x. 129] Kama is the personification of that feeling which leads and propels to creation. It is essentially the longing for active sentient existence, existence of vivid sensation, the tossing turbulence of passionate life. Thus for the individual as for the Kosmos, Kama becomes the primary cause of reincarnation and, as Desire differentiates into desire, these chain down the Thinker to earth and bring him back, time after time to rebirth.

In the East, this thirst or desire that forces man into incarnation, is known as Trishna, in Pali, Tanha; the realisation or consummation of Trishna is known as Upadana.

Manas comes from the Sanskrit word man, the root of the verb to think: it is the Thinker in us, spoken of vaguely in the West as mind. Manas is the immortal individual, the real "I".

Manas, the Thinker, however, himself a spiritual entity living on the higher mental or causal plane, cannot come into direct contact with the lower worlds; he therefore projects from himself the lower manas, which is variously called a reflection, a shadow, a ray, etc.

It is this Ray that plays on and in the brain, manifesting through the brain such mental powers as that brain, by its configuration and other physical qualities, is able to translate. The Ray sets in vibration the molecules of the brain nerve-cells and so gives rise to consciousness on the physical plane.

This lower manas is engulfed in the quaternary, which consists of:-

Kama, or desire  
Prana or Vitality  
Etheric Double  
Physical Body.

It may be regarded as clasping kama with one hand, whilst with the other it retains its hold on its father, higher manas.

During earth life, kama and lower manas are joined together, and are often spoken of as Kama-Manas. Kama supplies, as we have seen, the animal and passionnal elements; lower manas rationalises these, and adds the intellectual faculties. The two together, Kama-Manas, are so closely interwoven during life that they rarely act separately, for there is scarcely a thought which is uninfluenced by desire; Kama Manas is not a new principle, but the interweaving of the lower part of manas with Kama. Kama-Manas, that is manas with desire, has been well described as manas taking an interest in external things.

The workings of lower manas in man shows themselves as mental ability, intellectual strength, acuteness, subtlety; they comprise comparison, reason, judgement, imagination, and other mental faculties. These may reach us as far as what is often called genius, but what H. P. Blavatsky called "artificial genius", the outcome of culture and of purely intellectual acuteness.

What we ordinarily call the mind or intellect is, in H.P. Blavatsky's words, "a pale and too often distorted reflection of manas itself." Its true nature is often demonstrated by the presence of kamic elements in it, such as passion, vanity, arrogance.

True genius consists of flashes of higher manas penetrating into the lower consciousness. As is said in the *Bindopanishat*: "Manas verily is declared to be

twofold, pure and impure; the impure is determined by desire, the pure is desire-free."

Genius, which sees instead of arguing, is thus of the higher manas, or ego; true intuition is one of its faculties. Reason, the weighing and balancing process which arranges the facts gathered by observation, balances them one against another, argues from them, draws conclusions from them-this is the exercise of the lower manas through the brain apparatus; its instrument is ratiocination; by induction it ascends from the known to the unknown, building up by a hypothesis; by deduction it descends again to the known, verifying the hypothesis by fresh experiment.

There is a difference also in the mechanism of ordinary reasoning, and of the peculiar flashes of consciousness known as genius. Reasoning comes to the brain through the successive sub-planes of the astral and mental planes step by step; but genius results from the consciousness pouring downwards through the atomic sub-planes only, *i.e.*, from the atomic astral and the atomic physical.

Reason, the faculty of the physical brain, being wholly dependent on the evidence of the senses, cannot be the quality pertaining directly to the divine spirit in man. The latter *knows* - hence all reasoning, which implies discussion and argument, is useless to it. The spirit or ego, speaks through the conscience, which is the instantaneous perception between right and wrong. Hence prophecy and vaticination, and the so-called divine inspiration are simply the effects of the illumination from above by a man's own immortal spirit. [This aspect of our subject will be further considered in Chapter XXXI].

Kama-Manas, is the personal self of man; in Isis Unveiled it is termed the "astral soul" it is lower manas that gives the individualising touch that makes the personality recognise itself as "I". It becomes intellectual, it recognises itself as separate from all other selves; deluded by the separateness it feels, it does not realise a unity beyond all that it is able to sense.

Lower manas, swayed by the rush of kamic emotions, passions and desires, attracted by all material things, blinded and deafened by the storm-voices among which it is plunged, is apt to forget the pure and serene glory of its birthplace, and to throw itself into the turbulence which gives rapture but not peace. It is lower manas which gives the last touch of delight to the senses and to the animal nature; for there could be no passion without memory or anticipation, no ecstasy without the subtle force of imagination and the delicate colours of dream and fancy.

Kama thus binds lower manas fast to earth. So long as any action is undertaken with the object of obtaining love, recognition, power or fame, however grand the ambition, however far reaching the charity, however lofty the achievement-manas is tainted with kama, and is not pure at its source.

Kama and manas act and react on each other, each stimulating and arousing the other. The mind is continually impelled by desire, and is made to serve constantly as a minister of pleasure. That which gives pleasure is ever sought by the mind, and it ever seeks to present images that give pleasure and to exclude those that give pain. The mental faculties add to the animal passions a certain strength and quality not apparent in them when they work as purely animal qualities. For the impressions made on the mental body are more permanent than those made on the astral body, and the mental body constantly reproduces them through the agency of memory and imagination. Thus the mental body stimulates the astral, arousing in it the desires that, in the animal, slumber until awakened by a physical stimulus. Hence we find in an undeveloped man a persistent pursuit of sense-gratification never found in the lower animals, a lust, a cruelty, a calculation to which they are strangers. Thus the powers of the mind, yoked to the service of the senses, make of man a far more dangerous and savage brute than any animal.

The part which is the Desire-Elemental, i.e., the instinctive life in the astral body, plays in this entanglement of manas with kama, has already been fully described in *The Astral Body*, pp. 77-8, 108-111 and 207-228, to which the student is referred.

So closely are men's astral and mental bodies intertwined that it is often said they act as a single body. In the Vedantic classification, in fact, the two are classed together as one kosha or sheath, thus:-

Buddhic Body ..... Anandamayakosha  
Causal Body ..... Vignanamayakosha

Mental Body}

Astral Body } ..... Manomayakosha

Etheric Double]

Dense Body ] ..... Annamayakosha

The student will recollect that the centres of sensation are situated in kama; hence the saying in the Mundakopanishat [iii,9] that "the organ of thinking of every creature is pervaded by the senses." This emphasises the double action of the Manomayakosha, which is the organ of thinking, but is also "pervaded by the senses".

We may note here the connection between kama-manas and the spirillae of atoms. In the First Round of the Earth-Chain the first set of spirillae of the physical plane atoms were vivified by the life of the Monad; this set is used by the currents of prana [Vitality] affecting the dense physical body.

In the Second Round, the second set of spirillae become active, the prana connected with the etheric double flowing through them.

In the Third Round the third set of spirillae is vivified, the prana connected to the astral body flowing through them, thus making sensibility possible.

In the Fourth Round, the fourth set of spirillae becomes active, the kama-manasic prana flowing through them, thus making them fit to be used for a brain which is to act as the instrument for thought.

The vivification of further sets of spirillae for the use of the higher consciousness, in the case of those preparing for entering the Path, can be brought about by certain Yoga practices.

In the ordinary course of evolution, a new set of spirillae will be developed in each Round, so that in the Seventh Round the entire seven spirillae will be active. Hence the people who live in that Round will find it far easier than people do to-day to respond to inner things and to live the higher life.

In the course of each incarnation, manas may do one of three things: -[1] it may rise towards its source and by unremitting and strenuous effort become one with its "Father in heaven", i.e., higher manas; [2] it may partially aspire and partially tend downwards, as indeed is mostly the case with the average man; [3] it may become so clogged with kamic elements as to become one with them, and be forcibly wrenched away from its parent and perish.

Whenever lower manas can, for the time being, disconnect itself from kama, it becomes the guide of the highest mental faculties, and is the organ of freewill in physical man. The condition of this freedom is that kama shall be subdued and conquered.

Freewill resides in manas itself; from manas comes the feeling of liberty, the knowledge that we can rule ourselves, that the higher nature can rule the lower, however much that lower nature may rebel and struggle. As soon as the consciousness identifies itself with manas instead of kama, the lower nature becomes the animal which the higher consciousness can bestride, which is no longer the "I".

Thus the difference between a strong-willed and weak-willed person is that the weak-willed person is moved from outside by outer attractions and repulsions, by desire, which is "Will discrowned", while the strong-willed man is moved from inside by pure Will, continually mastering external circumstances by bringing to bear upon them appropriate forces, guided by his store of experiences.

Further, as lower manas frees itself from kama it becomes more and more capable of transmitting to the lower consciousness impulses received from higher manas, and then as we have seen, genius flashes forth, the light from the ego streaming through lower manas into the brain. Of this we may be sure: so long as we are in the vortex of the personality, so long as the storms and desires and appetites surge around us, so long as we are tossed to and fro on waves of emotion –so long the voice of the higher manas or ego cannot reach our ears. The mandate of the ego comes not in the fire or the whirlwind, not in the

thunderclap or the storm, but only when there has fallen the stillness of a silence that can be felt, only when the very air is motionless and the calm is profound, only when the man wraps his face in a mantle which closes his ear even to the silence that is of the earth, then only sounds the voice that is stiller than silence, the voice of his true higher self, or ego.

As an unruffled lake mirrors the moon and stars, but, when ruffled by a passing breeze yields only broken reflections, so may a man, steadying his mind, calming his desires, imposing stillness on his activities, reproduce within himself the image of the higher. Even so may the disciple mirror the mind of his Master. But if his own thoughts spring up, his own desires arise, he will have broken reflections, dancing lights, that tell him nothing.

In the words of a Master "*It is upon the serene and placid surface of the unruffled mind that the visions gathered from the invisible find a representation in the visible world. It is with jealous care we have to guard our mind-plane from all the adverse influences which daily arise in our passage through earth life.*"

The ego, as part of the Universal Mind, is unconditionally omniscient on its own plane, but only potentially so in the lower worlds because it has to work through the medium of the personal self. The causal body is the vehicle of all knowledge, past, present and future, and it is from this fountain-head that its double, lower manas, catches occasional glimpses of that which is beyond the senses of man, and transmits them to certain brain-cells, thus making the man a seer, a soothsayer and a prophet.

This triumph can be gained only by many successive incarnations, all consciously directed towards this end. As life succeeds life, the physical body becomes more and more delicately attuned to the vibrations of the manasic impulses, so that the lower manas needs less and less of the coarser astral matter as its vehicle. It is part of the mission of the manasic "ray". I.e., lower manas, gradually to get rid of "blind deceptive element" [kama] which brings it so closely into contact with matter as entirely to becloud its divine nature and stultify its intuitions.

When at last the mastery of kama is achieved, and the body is responsive to manas, lower manas becomes one with its source, higher manas; this in Christian terminology, is the "Father in Heaven" becoming one with the "Son" on all planes, as they always have been one in "heaven". This of course, is a very advanced stage, being that of an Adept, for Whom incarnation is no longer necessary though it may be voluntarily undertaken.

Hence that great statement in the Mundakopanishat: "The organ of thinking is pervaded by the senses; that organ purified, Atma manifests Itself."

With most people, lower manas, partially aspires and partially tends downwards. The normal experience of the average man is that life is a battlefield, manas continually wrestling with kama; sometimes aspiration conquers, the chains of

sense are broken, and lower manas soars upwards; at other times kama wins and chains lower manas down to earth.

It thus appears, as was briefly indicated in Chapter IV, that for most people the centre of consciousness is embedded in kama-manas. But the more cultured and developed are beginning to govern desire by reason, i.e., the centre of consciousness is gradually transferring itself from the higher astral to the lower mental. As men progress it will move further up still, men being dominated by principle, rather than by interest and desire.

For, ultimately, man's intellect demands that his surroundings, both of life and matter, shall be intelligible; his mind demands order, rationality, logical explanation. It cannot live in a chaos without suffering; it must know and understand, if it is to exist in peace.

In extreme cases lower manas becomes entangled so inextricably with kama that the slender link which unites the higher to the lower manas, the "silver thread that binds it to the Master," snaps in two.

Then, even during earth life, the higher nature being severed wholly from the lower, the human being is rent in twain, the brute has broken free, and it goes forth unbridled, carrying with it the reflections of manas, which should have been its guide through life. Such a being, human in form but brute in nature, may now and then be met with in the haunts of men, putrescent while still living, a thing to shudder at, even though with pity.

After physical death such an astral body is an entity of terrible potency, and is known as an Elementary, a description of it being in *The Astral Body*, pp. 144-45.

From the point of view of the ego there has been no harvest of useful experience from that personality; the "ray" has brought nothing back, the lower life has been a total and complete failure.

In The Voice of The Silence is contained the following injunction: "Let not thy "heaven born", merged in the sea of Maya, break from the universal Parent [Soul] but let the fiery power retire into the inmost chamber of the heart, and the abode of the world's Mother." The "heaven born" is chitta, the lower mind. It is born from the soul above, when manas becomes dual in incarnation. The planes of Atma-Buddhi-Manas are typified by heaven, while those of the personality are spoken of as earth.

It is the presence in man of the "heaven born" that confers on him some freedom, and because he has this liberty and power to go his own way his life is usually more disorderly, less regulated, than that of the lower kingdoms of external nature.

Even with most people some of their mental matter has become so entangled with their astral matter that it is impossible for it to be entirely freed after death.

The result of the struggle between their kama and their manas, therefore is that some portion of the mental matter, and even of causal [ higher mental matter] is retained in the astral body after the ego has completely broken away from it.

If, on the other hand, a man has during life completely conquered his lower desires and succeeded in completely freeing the lower mind from desire, there is practically no struggle, and the ego is able to withdraw not only all that he "invested" in that particular incarnation, but also all the "interest", i.e., the experiences, faculties, etc. that have been acquired.

## CHAPTER VII

### THOUGHT WAVES

When a man uses his mental body, i.e., when he thinks, a vibration is set up in the mental body, and this vibration produces two distinct results. The first result is that of radiating vibrations or waves; these we shall deal with in the present chapter, reserving the second result –the production of thought-forms –for a later chapter.

A vibration in the mental body, like all other vibrations, tends to communicate itself to any surrounding matter which is capable of receiving it precisely as the vibration of a bell communicates itself to the surrounding air. Hence, since the atmosphere is filled with mental matter, which responds very readily to such impulses, there is produced a sort of ripple, a kind of vibrating shell, formed in the matter of the plane, which spreads out through circumambient space exactly as the dropping of a stone into a pond produces ripples which radiate from the centre of impact over the surface of the water in every direction.

In the case of a mental impulse the radiation is not in one plane only but in many dimensions, more like the radiations from the sun or from a lamp.

The rays thrown out cross in all directions without interfering with one another in the slightest degree, just as do rays of light on the physical plane.

Moreover, the expanding sphere of vibrations is many-coloured and opalescent, but its colours grow fainter as it spreads away.

As already said, the mental vibration also tends to reproduce itself wherever opportunity is offered to it. Consequently, whenever the thought-wave strikes upon another mental body it will tend to set up in it vibrations similar to those which gave it birth in the first instance. That is to say, when a man's mental body is struck by a thought-wave there arises a tendency in his mind to produce a thought similar to that which had previously arisen in the mind of the originator of the wave.

The thought-wave becomes less powerful in proportion to the distance from its source, though it is probable that the variation is proportional to the cube of the distance instead of to the square, because of the additional dimension involved.

Nevertheless, these mental vibrations lose their power very much more gradually than those in physical matter and seem to be exhausted, or at least to become so faint as to be imperceptible, only at an enormous distance from their source.

The distance to which a thought-wave penetrates, the strength and persistence with which it impinges upon the mental bodies of others, depend upon the strength and clearness of the original thought. Thus a strong thought will carry further than a weak and undecided one, but clearness and definiteness are of even greater importance than strength.

Other factors affecting the distance to which a thought-wave may radiate are its nature and the opposition with which it meets. Thus waves in the lower types of astral matter are usually soon deflected or overwhelmed by a multitude of other vibrations at the same level, just as in the midst of the roar of a city a soft sound is entirely drowned.

For this reason the ordinary self-centred thought of the average man, which begins on the lowest of mental levels, and instantly plunges down to correspondingly low levels of the astral, is comparatively ineffective. Its power in both the worlds is limited because, however violent it may be, there is such an immense sea of similar thought surging all around that its waves are inevitably lost and overpowered in the confusion.

A thought generated at a higher level, on the other hand, as a much clearer field for its action, because at the present time the number of thoughts producing such waves is very small. In fact, Theosophical thought is almost a class by itself from this point of view.

There are, of course, other religious people whose thoughts are quite elevated, but never so precise and definite. Even scientific thought is scarcely ever in the same class as Theosophical thought, so that there is practically a clear field for Theosophical thought in the mental world.

Theosophical thought is like a sound in a vast silence; it sets in motion a level of mental matter which is as yet but rarely used, the radiations which it causes impinging upon the mental body of the average man at a point where it is quite dormant. Hence it tends to awaken an entirely new part of the thinking apparatus.

Such a wave does not, of course necessarily convey Theosophical thought to those who are ignorant of it; but in awakening the higher portion of the mental body it tends to elevate and liberalise the man's thought as a whole, along whatever lines it may be in the habit of moving.

There is, of course, an infinite variety of thoughts; if the thought is perfectly simple there will be in the mental body only the one rate of vibration, and consequently only one type of mental matter will be strongly affected. The mental body, as we have seen, consists of matter of the four lower sub-planes of the mental plane, and in each of these sub-planes there are many sub-divisions of varying densities.

If a man is already deeply engrossed in some other line of thought, a strong wave of thought may sweep past him without affecting him, precisely as a man already occupied in business or pleasure may not hear the voice of another speaker.

As, however, large numbers of men do not think definitely or strongly except when in immediate prosecution of some business which demands their whole attention, they are likely at other times to be considerably affected by the thoughts which impinge upon them. Hence great responsibility rests upon everyone who thinks, because his thoughts, especially if strong and clear, will inevitably affect large numbers of other people.

It is not too much to say that one who harbours impure or evil thoughts thereby spreads moral contagion among his fellow men. Bearing in mind that large numbers of people have within them latent germs of evil, germs which may never bear fruit unless some force from without plays upon them and stirs them into activity, the thought-wave sent out by an impure or unholy thought may be the very factor which awakens a germ into activity and causes it to begin to grow. Hence such a thought may start some soul upon a downward career. This man may in a similar manner affect many others, and so the evil spreads and ramifies in countless directions. Much harm is constantly done in this way; and although it may be done unconsciously, yet the perpetrator of the evil is karmically responsible for what he has done.

It is of course equally true, that a beneficent thought may affect others for good in a similar manner. Hence a man who realises this may set himself to work to be a veritable sun, constantly radiating upon all his friends and neighbours thoughts of love, calm, peace etc. Very few realise how great a force for good they may thus wield, if they choose, through the power of thought.

It often happens that a man is unable to help another man physically; in fact, the physical presence of the would be helper may be even distasteful to the sufferer; his physical brain may be closed to suggestions by prejudice or by religious bigotry. But his astral and mental bodies are far more easily impressible than the physical, and it is always possible to approach these by a wave, of helpful thought, affection, soothing feeling, and so on.

There are many cases where the best will in the world can do nothing physically; but there is no conceivable case in which either in the mental or astral world some relief cannot be given by steady, concentrated, loving thought.

It should be noted that a thought-wave does not convey a definite complete idea, but rather tends to produce a thought of the same character as itself. Thus, for example, if the thought be one of devotion, its vibrations will excite devotion; but the object of the worship may be different in the case of each person upon whose mental body the thought-wave impinges.

A thought –wave or vibration thus conveys the *character* of the thought, but not its *subject*. If a Hindu sits wrapped in devotion to Krishna, the thought-waves which pour forth from him stimulate devotion in all those who come under their influence, though in the case of a Muslim, that devotion to Allah, while for the Zoroastrian it is to Ahuramazda, or for the Christian to Jesus.

If such a thought-wave touches the mental body of a materialist, to whom the very idea of devotion in any form is unknown, even then it produces an elevating effect, its tendency being to stir a higher part of his mental body into some sort of activity, though it cannot create a type of undulation to which the man is wholly unaccustomed.

A point of great importance, of which the student should take careful note, is that a man who habitually thinks pure, good and strong thoughts is utilising for that purpose the higher part of his mental body, a part which is not used at all by the ordinary man, and is entirely undeveloped in him. Such a one is, therefore, a power for good in the world, and is being of great use to all those of his neighbours who are capable of any sort of response. For the vibrations which he sends out tend to arouse a new and higher part of their mental bodies, and consequently to open before them altogether new fields of thought.

We may take the matter a little further still. A man who day by day is definitely and carefully thinking is not only improving his own thinking powers and sending out helpful thought-waves into the world around him, but he is also developing and improving mental matter itself. For the amount of consciousness which can be brought into the brain is obviously determined by the degree to which the atoms of matter can respond, i.e., to the number of spirillae in the atoms which are vivified and active. Normally, in the ordinary physical atom at the present stage of evolution, there are four of these seven spirillae active. The man who is capable of higher forms of thought is helping to develop further spirillae in the atoms, and, as these atoms are continually passing in and out of his bodies, they are available for absorption and use by any other person who is capable of using them. High thinking thus helps the world's consciousness by improving the very materials of thought.

There are thus many varieties of mental matter, and it is found that each variety has its own special and appropriate rate of vibration, to which it is most accustomed and to which it most readily responds. A complex thought may, of course, affect many varieties of mental matter simultaneously.

The general principle, underlying the effect of thought on the mental body [and also that of feeling on the astral body] as we saw in Chapter III, is that evil or selfish thoughts are always comparatively slow vibrations of the coarser matter, while good, unselfish thoughts are the more rapid undulations which play only in the finer matter.

The power of the united thought of a number of people is always far greater than the sum of their separate thoughts; it would be much more nearly represented by

their product. Hence, it is exceedingly beneficial for any city or community that there should be constantly meeting in its midst a number of people who are capable of generating thoughts at a high level.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THOUGHT FORMS

We come now to consider the second effect produced when a man uses his mental body in thinking, viz., the formation of thought forms.

As we have seen, a thought gives rise to a set of vibrations in the matter of the mental body. Under this impulse the mental body throws off a vibrating portion of itself shaped by the nature of the vibrations, much in the way that fine particles laid on a disc are thrown into a form when the disc is made to vibrate to a musical note.

The mental matter thus thrown off gathers from the surrounding atmosphere elemental essence of the mental world [i.e., of the Second Elemental Kingdom] of the appropriate type, and sets that essence into vibration in harmony with its own rate.

Thus is generated a thought form pure and simple. Such a mental thought-form resembles an astral or emotional form [described in The Astral Body ], but it is far more radiant and more brilliantly coloured, is stronger and more lasting, and more fully vitalised.

A graphic description of the effect of thought is as follows. "These [mental] vibrations, which shape the matter of the plane into thought-forms, give rise – from their swiftness and subtlety –to the most exquisite and constantly changing colours, waves of varying shades like the rainbow hues in mother-of- pearl, etherialised and brightened to an indescribable extent, sweeping over and through every form so that each presents a harmony of rippling, living, luminous, delicate colours, including many not even known on earth. Words can give no idea of the exquisite beauty and radiance shown in combinations of this subtle matter, instinct with life and motion. Every seer has witnessed it, Hindu, Buddhist, Christian, speaks in rapturous terms of its glorious beauty and ever confesses his utter inability to describe it; words seem but to coarsen and deprave it however deftly the praise."

A thought form is a temporary living entity of intense activity animated by the one idea that generated it. If made of the finer kinds of matter, it will be of great power and energy, and may be used as a most potent agency when directed by a strong and steady will. Into the details of such use we shall enter later.

The elemental essence is a strange semi-intelligent life which surrounds us, vivifying matter of the mental plane. It responds readily to the influence of human thought so that every impulse sent out from the mental body of a man

immediately clothes itself in a temporary vehicle of this essence. It is, in fact, even more instantaneously sensitive, if that be possible, to the action of thought than is astral elemental essence.

But mental elemental essence differs greatly from astral elemental essence; it is a whole chain behind the other, and, therefore, the force in it cannot work quite in the same concentrated way. It is trying to deal with, for it is largely responsible for our wandering thoughts, as it darts constantly from one thing to another.

A thought, then, as stated, becomes for the time a kind of living creature; the thought-force is the soul, the elemental essence the body. These thought-forms are called elementals, or sometimes artificial elementals.

The principles underlying the production of all thought-forms are:-

- [1] Quality of thought determines colour
- [2] Nature of thought determines form
- [3] Definiteness of thought determines clearness of outline.

Thought-forms may be of infinite variety, both as to colour and shape. With the various colours and their significance the student will now be familiar, as they are in agreement with those existing in the astral and mental bodies as described in The Astral Body and also in an earlier chapter of this book.

Thus for example, affection produces a glowing rose-colour; a wish to heal, a lovely silvery-white; a mental effort to steady and strengthen the mind, a beautiful flashing golden-yellow.

Yellow in any of the vehicles always indicates intellect, but its shades vary much, and it may be complicated by the admixture of other colours.

Generally speaking, it has a deeper and duller tint if it is directed to the lower channels, more especially if the objects are selfish.

In the astral or mental body of an average man of business it would show itself as yellow ochre, while pure intellect devoted to the study of philosophy or mathematics appears frequently as golden; this rises gradually to a beautiful clear and luminous primrose-yellow when a powerful intellect is employed absolutely unselfishly for the benefit of humanity.

Most yellow thought-forms are clearly outlined, a vague cloud of yellow being comparatively rare. It indicates intellectual pleasure such as appreciation of the result of ingenuity, or the delight in clever craftsmanship.

A cloud of this nature betokens the entire absence of any personal emotion, for if that were present it would inevitably tinge the yellow with its appropriate colour.

In many cases, thought -forms are merely revolving clouds of the colour appropriate to the idea which gave them birth. The student will realise that, at the present stage of humanity, there is a vast preponderance of cloudy and

irregularly-shaped thoughts, the product of ill-trained minds of the majority. It is among the rarest of phenomena to see clear and definite forms among the thousands that float about us.

Where a thought is definite a form is created, and a clear-cut and often beautiful shape is assumed. Such shapes while of infinite variety, are often in some way typical of the kind of thought which they express. Abstract ideas usually represent themselves by all kinds of perfect and most beautiful geometrical forms. It should be remembered in this connection that the merest abstractions to us down here become definite facts, on the mental plane.

The strength of thought and emotion determines the size of the thought-form as well as its duration as a separate entity. Its duration depends upon the nutriment supplied to it after its generation by the repetition of the thought either by its originator or by others.

If the thought be intellectual and impersonal –eg. If the thinker is attempting to solve a problem in algebra or geometry –then his thought-forms [as well as his thought waves] will be confined to the mental plane.

If his thought is of a spiritual nature, eg., if it be tinged with love and aspiration of deep, unselfish feeling, then it will rise upwards from the mental plane and will borrow much of the splendour and glory of the buddhic levels above. In such a case its influence is most powerful and every such thought is a mighty force for good.

If, on the other hand, the thought has in it something of self or personal desire, at once its vibrations turn downwards, and it draws round itself a body of astral matter in addition to its clothing of mental matter. Such a thought-form –which would be termed more accurately a thought – emotion –form -is, of course, capable of affecting both the mental and the astral bodies of other men.

This type of thought-form is by far the most common, as few thoughts of ordinary men and women are untinged with desire, passion, or emotion.

We may consider this class of thought-forms as generated by the activity of kama-manas, i.e., by mind dominated by desire.

When a man thinks of any concrete object –a book, a house, a landscape –he builds a tiny image of the object in the matter of his mental body. This image floats in the upper part of that body, usually in front of the face of the man and at about the level of the eye. It remains there as long as the man is contemplating the object, and usually for a little time afterwards, the length of time depending upon the intensity and the clearness of thought. This form is quite objective and can be seen by another person possessed of mental clairvoyance. If a man thinks of another person he creates a tiny portrait in just the same way.

The same result follows any effort of the “imagination”. The painter who forms a conception of his future picture builds it up out of the matter of his mental body,

and then projects it into space in front of him, keeps it before his mind's eye, and copies it. The novelist, in the same way, builds images of his characters in mental matter, and by the exercise of his will moves these puppets from one position or grouping to another, so that the plot of the story is literally acted out before him.

As already said, these mental images are so entirely objective that they may not only be seen by a clairvoyant, but they can even be moved about and rearranged by some one other than their creator. Thus for example, playful nature spirits [vide., *The Astral Body*, p. 53], or more often a "dead" novelist, watching the work of his fellow-author, will move the images or puppets about so that they seem to their creator to have developed a will of their own, the plot of the story thus working out on lines quite different from those originally intended by the author.

A sculptor makes a strong thought-form of the statue he intends to create, plants it in his block of marble, and then proceeds to cut away the marble which lies outside the thought-form until only that portion of it which it interpenetrated by the thought-form remains.

Similarly, a lecturer, as he thinks earnestly of the different parts of his subject, makes a series of thought-forms, usually strong ones, because of the effort. If he fails to make his audience understand him it must be largely because his own thought is not sufficiently clear cut. A clumsy and indefinite thought-form makes but a slight impression, and even that with difficulty, whilst a clearly-cut one forces the mental bodies of the audience to try to reproduce it.

Hypnotism provides examples of the objectivity of thought-forms. It is well known that the thought-form of an idea may be projected onto a blank paper, and there become visible to a hypnotised person. Or it may be made so objective that the hypnotised person will see and feel it as though it were an actual physical object.

Many thought-forms exist, more or less permanently, of characters from history, drama, fiction, etc. Thus for example, popular fancy has strongly depicted characters and scenes from the plays of Shakespeare, from Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, from fairy stories such as Cinderella, Aladdin's Lamp, etc. Such thought-forms are collective, having coalesced from the products of the imagination of countless individuals.

Children have vivid and capable imaginations, so books read by them are usually well represented in the world of thought-forms, many excellent and life-like portraits existing of Sherlock Holmes, Captain Kettle, Dr. Nikola, and many others.

On the whole however, the thought-forms evoked from the novels of to-day are by no means as clear as those which our forefathers made of Robinson Crusoe or of the characters of Shakespeare's plays. This of course, is because people

today read more superficially and with less serious attention than was the case formerly.

So much for the genesis of thought-forms. We pass now to consider their effects on their creators and on others.

Each man as he moves through life produces three classes of thought-forms:-

- [1] Those which, being neither centred round the thinker nor specially aimed at any person, are left behind him as a sort of trail which marks his route.
- [2] Those, which being centred round the thinker, hover round him and follow him wherever he goes.
- [3] Those which shoot straight out away from the thinker, aiming at a definite object.

A thought-form of Class I, being neither definitely personal nor specially aimed at someone else, simply floats detached in the atmosphere, all the time radiating vibrations similar to those originally sent forth by its creator. If the form does not come in contact with any other mental body the radiation gradually exhausts its store of energy, and in that case the form falls to pieces.

But if it succeeds in awakening sympathetic vibrations in any mental body near at hand, an attraction is set up and the thought-form is usually absorbed by that mental body.

At the present stage of evolution the majority of the thoughts of men are usually self-centred even when they are not actively selfish. Such self-centred thoughts hang about the thinker. Most men, in fact, surround their mental bodies with a shell of such thoughts. They hover ceaselessly about them and constantly react on them. Their tendency is to reproduce themselves –i.e., to stir up in the man a repetition of the thoughts which he had previously entertained. Many a man feels this pressure upon him from within, this constant suggestion of certain thoughts, especially when he is resting after his labours, and there is no definite thought in his mind. If the thoughts are evil, he frequently thinks of them as tempting demons goading him into sin. Yet they are none the less entirely his own creation; he is his own tempter.

Repeated thoughts of this kind play an important part in working out what is called Prarabda or “ripe” karma. Persistent reiteration of thoughts of the same kind, say of revenge, bring a man at last to a point which may be compared to that of a saturated solution. Just as the addition of further matter of the same kind to the solution will produce the solidification of the whole, so will a slight additional impulse result in the commission of a crime. Similarly, reiterated thoughts of helping others may, when the stimulus of opportunity touches the man, crystallise out as an act of heroism. Under such circumstances, a man may marvel at his own commission of a crime or at his own performance of some heroic act of self-sacrifice, not realising that repeated thought had made the

action inevitable. A consideration of these facts goes far towards explaining the old problem of freewill and necessity or destiny.

Furthermore, a man's thought-forms tend to draw towards the man the thought-forms of others of a similar nature. A man may thus attract to himself large reinforcements of energy from outside; it lies within himself, of course, whether these forces that he draws into himself be of a good or evil kind.

Usually each definite thought creates a new thought-form; but if a thought-form of the same nature is already hovering round the thinker, under certain circumstances a new thought on the same subject, instead of creating a new form, coalesces with and strengthens the old one, so that by long brooding over the same subject a man may sometimes create a thought-form of tremendous power. If the thought be an evil one, such a thought-form may become a veritable malign influence lasting perhaps for many years, and having for a time all the appearance and powers of a real living entity.

A shell of self-centred thought obviously must tend to obscure the mental vision and facilitate the formation of prejudice. Through such a shell the man looks out upon the world, naturally seeing everything tinged with its predominant colours; everything which reaches him from without is thus more or less modified by the character of the shell. Thus, until a man has complete control of thought and feeling he see nothing as it really is, since all his observations must be made through this medium which, like a badly-made glass, distorts and colours everything.

It was for this reason that Aryasangha [now the Master Djwal Kul] said in The Voice of the Silence that the mind was "the great slayer of the real". He was drawing attention to the fact that we do not see any object as it is, but only the images that we are able to make of it, everything being thus necessarily coloured for us by these thought-forms of our own creation.

If a man's thought of another is merely contemplative and involves no feeling [such as affection or dislike], or desire [such as a wish to see the person] the thought does not usually perceptibly affect the man whom he thinks.

If, however, there is feeling, eg., affection, associated with the thought, the thought-form, built out of matter of the thinker's mental body, and this astro-mental form leaps out of the body in which it has been generated, goes straight towards the object of the feeling, and fastens itself upon him.

It may be compared to a Leyden jar; the form of elemental essence corresponds to the Leyden jar, and the thought energy to the charge of electricity.

If the man is at the moment in a passive condition, or if he has within him active vibrations of a character harmonious with those of the thought-form, the thought-form will at once discharge itself upon him, and in the act cease to exist. The effect is to provoke a vibration similar to its own, if none such already exists; or to intensify it if it is already to be found there.

If the man's mind is so strongly occupied along other lines that it is impossible for the vibration to find an entrance, the thought-form hovers about him waiting for an opportunity to discharge itself.

A thought-form sent from one person to another thus involves the actual transference of a certain amount both of force and of matter from the sender to the recipient.

The difference between the effect of a thought-wave and that of a thought-form is that the thought-wave as we saw in Chapter VII, does not produce a definite complete idea, but tends to produce a thought as the same character as itself; a thought-wave is thus much less definite in its action, but reaches a far wider circle.

A thought-form on the other hand, does convey a definite complete idea, transferring the exact nature of the thought to those prepared to receive it, but it can reach only one person at a time.

Thus a thought-wave is eminently adaptable; a wave of devotion, for example, would tend to arouse devotion in the recipient, although the object of the devotion might be quite different in the case of the sender and the receiver. But a thought-form would give rise to a precise image of the being for whom the devotion was originally felt.

If the thought is sufficiently strong, distance makes absolutely no difference to the thought-form, but the thought of an ordinary person is usually weak and diffused, and is, therefore, not effective outside a limited area.

A thought-form, say of love or of desire to protect, directed strongly towards another person, goes to the person thought of, and remains in his aura as a shielding and protecting agent; it will seek all opportunities to serve, and all opportunities to defend, not by a conscious and deliberate action but by a blind following out of impulse impressed upon it, and it will strengthen friendly forces that impinge on the aura and weaken unfriendly ones. Thus are created and maintained veritable guardian angels round those we love. Many a mother's "prayer" for a distant child thus circles round him, acting in the manner described.

A knowledge of these facts should make us conscious of the enormous power placed in our hands. We may repeat here what was said when we were dealing with thought-waves, viz., that there are many cases where we may not be able to do anything for a man on the physical plane. The man's mental [and astral] bodies, however, can be affected, and they are frequently more easily impressible than his physical body. Hence it is always open to us to affect his mental or astral body by helpful thought, affectionate feeling etc. The laws of thought being what they are, it is certain that results must accrue; there is no possibility of failure, even though no obvious consequence may follow on the physical plane.

The student will readily perceive that a thought-form can affect another person only if in the aura of that person there are materials capable of responding sympathetically to the vibration of the thought-form. In cases where the vibrations of the thought-form are outside the limits within which the person's aura is capable of vibrating, the thought-form rebounds from it, and that with a force proportional to the energy with which it impinged upon it.

Hence the saying that a pure mind and heart are the best protection against inimical assaults, for a pure mind and heart will construct mental and astral bodies of fine and subtle materials, and these bodies cannot respond to vibrations that demand coarse and dense matter.

If an evil thought, projected with malefic intent, strikes such a purified body, it will rebound and fly back along the magnetic line of least resistance, returning to and striking its projector. He, having matter in his mental and astral bodies similar to that of the thought-form he generated, is thrown into respondent vibrations, and suffers the destructive effects he had intended to cause another. Thus "curses" "[and blessings] come home to roost." From this arise also the very serious effects of hating or suspecting a good and highly advanced man; the thought-forms sent against him cannot injure him, and they rebound against their projectors, shattering them mentally, morally, or physically.

When as man thinks of himself as in some distant place, or wishes earnestly to be there, the thought-form, which he makes in his own image, appears in that place. Not infrequently such a form has been seen by others, and has sometimes been mistaken for the astral body or apparition of the man himself. To make this possible, either the seer must have sufficient clairvoyance for the time to be able to see the thought-form, or the thought-form must have sufficient strength to materialise itself i.e., to draw round itself temporarily a certain amount of physical matter.

The thought which generates such a form must necessarily be a strong one, and it therefore employs a large proportion of the matter of the mental body, so that though the form is small and compressed when it leaves the thinker, it usually expands to life-size before it appears at its destination. Furthermore, a thought-form such as this, which must essentially be composed of mental matter, in very many cases will also draw round itself a considerable amount of astral matter. In taking on the astral form the mental elemental loses much of its brilliance, though its glowing colour may still be plainly visible inside the shell of lower matter which it assumes. Just as the original thought ensouls the elemental essence of the mental plane, so the same thought, plus its form as a mental elemental, acts as the soul of the astral elemental.

None of the consciousness of the thinker would be included in a thought-form such as that just described. When once sent out from him it would normally be quite a separate entity –not, indeed entirely unconnected with its creator, but practically so as far as the possibility of receiving any impression through it is concerned.

There is, however, a type of clairvoyance rather more advanced than ordinary clairvoyance, necessitating a certain amount of control upon the mental plane. It is necessary to retain so much hold over a newly created thought-form as will render it possible to receive impressions by means of it. Such impressions as were made upon the form would be transmitted to the thinker by sympathetic vibration. In a perfect case of this kind of clairvoyance it is almost as though the seer projected a part of his consciousness into the thought-form, and used it as a kind of outpost from which observation was possible. He is able to see almost as well as he would if he himself stood in the place of his thought-form. The figures at which he is looking will appear to him as of life size and close at hand and he will find it possible to shift his point of view if he wishes to do so.

Everyone who can think at all exercises the power to create thought-forms. Thoughts are things, and very puissant things; everyone of us is generating thought-forms unceasingly night and day. Our thoughts, as many might suppose, are not exclusively our own business. Evil thoughts, in fact, reach much further than evil words, and may affect any other persons who already have germs of evil in them.

As a Master has written:

*“Man is continually peopling his current in space with a world of his own, crowded with the offspring of his fancies, desires, impulses and passions.”*

A Master has also written of the Adept being able: *“To project into and materialise in the visible world the forms that his imagination has constructed out of inert cosmic matter in the invisible world. The adept does not create anything new, but only utilises and manipulates materials which Nature has in store around him, and material which, throughout eternities has passed through all forms. He has but to choose the one he wants and recall it into objective existence.”*

The difference between an undeveloped and a developed man is that the developed man uses thought-power consciously. When such a man can consciously create and direct a thought-form, his powers of usefulness obviously very largely increase; for he can use the thought-form to work in places which, at the moment he cannot conveniently visit in his mental body. He can thus watch and guide his thought-forms and make them the agents of his will.

Perhaps the supreme example of a thought-form is that known in the Christian Church as the Angel of the Presence. This is not a member of the kingdom of the Angels, but a thought-form of the Christ, wearing His likeness and being an extension of the consciousness of the Christ Himself. It is by means of the Angel of the Presence that is made the change in the “elements” known as transubstantiation.

A similar phenomenon occurs, though at a less high level, in Masonic Lodges where a portrait of the H.O.A.T.F. is used. So fully is this thought-form a part of

Himself that the Lodge has the benefit of His presence and His blessing just as though He stood there in physical form.

It is possible, by an exertion of will-power, instantly to dissipate an artificial elemental, or thought-form, just as it is possible on the physical plane to kill a poisonous snake in order that it may do no further harm. Neither course of action, however, would commend itself to an occultist except in very unusual circumstances. In order to make clear the reason of this, some little explanation regarding the elemental essence is necessary.

Elemental essence, out of which a thought-form is constructed is, as we have already seen, evolving on its own account, i.e., it is learning to vibrate at all possible rates. When therefore, a thought holds it for a time vibrating at a certain rate, it is helped to this extent, so that next time a similar vibration strikes it, it will respond more readily than before.

Whether the thought ensouling it is evil or good makes no difference whatever to the essence; all that is required for its development is to be used by thought of some kind. The difference between the good and the evil in the would be shown by the quality of essence which was affected, an evil thought or desire needing for its expression the coarser matter, a higher thought or desire requiring finer matter.

Thus by degrees mental elemental essence is being evolved, through the action on it of the thoughts of men, nature spirits, devas, and even animals so far as they do think.

For this reason, therefore, i.e., lest he should in any way impede its evolution, the occultist avoids when possible the destruction of an artificial elemental, preferring rather to defend himself or others against it by using the protection of a shell.

The student should not, of course, imagine it is his duty to think coarse thoughts in order to help the evolution of the coarser types of essence. There are plenty of undeveloped people always thinking the coarser, lower thoughts; the occultist should strive ever to think high and pure thoughts and thus aid the evolution of the finer elemental matter, thus working in a field where there are as yet few labourers.

Before leaving this subject of thought-forms we should note that every sound makes its impression upon astral and mental matter –not only what we call musical sounds, but every kind of sound Some of these were described in The Astral Body, Chapter VII.

The thought-form edifice built up on the higher planes during the celebration of the Christian Eucharist, differs somewhat from ordinary thought-forms, though it has much in common with forms created by music. It consists of a higher plane structure composed of the materials provided by the priest and his congregation during the earlier part of the service at the etheric, astral and mental levels,

matter of still higher levels being introduced in the later portion of the service, chiefly from the Angelic host.

The thought-edifice may be compared to the condenser in a plant for the distillation of water. The steam is cooled and condensed into water in the cooling chamber. Similarly, the eucharistic edifice provides a vehicle for the collection and condensation of the materials provided by the worshippers, into which an especial outpouring of the divine force from the very highest levels may descend, and which may enable the Angel-helpers to use that force for certain definite purposes in the physical world.

The ceremonies of all great religions aim at producing such results by some sort of common action. The ceremonies of Freemasonry attain a similar object, though in a different way. The thought-form built up by a Masonic ceremony is the real "celestial canopy" which may also be regarded as the aura of a man lying on his back. This symbolism appears elsewhere as, for example, in Joseph's coat of many colours, in the Robe of Glory which the initiate puts on, and also in the Augoeides [see p. 237] of the Greek Philosophers, the glorified body in which the soul of man dwells in the subtle invisible world.

## **CHAPTER IX**

### **THE MECHANISM OF THOUGHT-TRANSFERENCE**

Before proceeding to consider the phenomenon of thought-transference, and its effects on men, it will be convenient first to describe the mechanism by means of which thought is transmitted from one person to another.

The term telepathy means literally "feeling at a distance", and might, therefore, have been appropriately confined to the transmission of feelings and emotions. It is however, now generally used almost synonymously with thought-transference, and may be taken to cover any transfer of an image, thought or feeling from one person to another by non-physical means.

There are three possibilities in telepathy ; there may be direct communication between:

- [1] two etheric brains
- [2] two astral bodies
- [3] two mental bodies

In the first method, which we may call the physical or etheric method, a thought causes vibrations first in the mental body then in the astral body, then in the etheric brain, and finally in the dense molecules of the physical brain. By the brain-vibrations the physical ether is affected and the waves pass outwards till they reach another brain, where they set up vibrations in its etheric and dense particles. These vibrations in the receiving brain are then transmitted to the astral and mental bodies attached to it, and so reach the consciousness.

If a person thinks strongly of a concrete form in the physical brain he makes the form in etheric matter; in the effort of making the image he also sends out etheric waves in every direction. It is not the image itself which is sent out, but a set of vibrations which will reproduce the image. The process is somewhat analogous to the telephone, where the voice itself is not conveyed, but a number of electrical vibrations are set up by the voice, which when they enter the receiver, are converted once more into the sounds of the voice.

The pineal gland is the organ of thought-transference, just as the eye is the organ of vision. The pineal gland in most people is rudimentary, but it is evolving, not retrograding, and it is possible to quicken its evolution so that it can perform its proper function, the function which, in the future, it will discharge in all.

If anyone thinks very intently on a single idea, with concentration and sustained attention, he will become conscious of a slight quiver or creeping feeling –it has been compared to the creeping of an ant –in the pineal gland. The quiver takes place in the ether which permeates the gland and causes a slight magnetic current which gives rise to the creeping feeling in the dense molecules of the gland. If the thought be strong enough to cause the current, then the thinker knows that he has been successful in bringing his thought to a pointedness and a strength which render it capable of being transmitted.

The vibration in the ether of the pineal gland sets up waves in the surrounding ether like waves of light, only much smaller and more rapid. These vibrations pass out in all directions, setting the ether in motion, and these etheric waves in turn produce vibrations in the ether of the pineal gland in another brain, and from that are transmitted to the astral and mental bodies in regular succession, as previously described, thus reaching consciousness. If the second pineal gland cannot reproduce the undulations then the thought will pass unnoticed, making no impression, any more than waves of light make an impression on the eye of a blind man.

In the second, or astral method of thought-transference, the etheric brain does not enter into the process at all, the communication being direct from one astral body to another.

In the third, or mental method, the thinker, having created a thought on the mental plane, does not send it down to the brain but directs it immediately to the mental body of another thinker. The power to do this deliberately implies a far higher mental evolution than does the physical method of thought-transference, for the sender must be self-conscious on the mental plane in order to exercise knowingly this activity. When mankind is more evolved, this will probably be the common method of communication. It is already employed by the Masters in the instruction of Their pupils, and in this way They can convey with ease the most complicated ideas.

## CHAPTER X

## THOUGHT TRANSFERENCE [UNCONSCIOUS]

In Chapters VII and VIII we have dealt with the generation of thought-waves and thought-forms, and, to some extent, with the effect of these on others. The latter aspect of our subject is sufficiently important to necessitate further elaboration. We will deal first with that kind of thought-transference which is either wholly or partially unconscious.

From what has already been said it is clear that every man, wherever he goes, leaves behind him a trail of thoughts. As we walk along the street, for example, we are walking all the time amidst a sea of other men's thoughts; the whole atmosphere is filled with them, vague and indeterminate.

If a man leaves his mind a blank for a time, these residual thoughts, generated by other people, drift through it, making in most cases but little impression upon it but occasionally seriously affecting it. Sometimes one arrives which attracts the man's attention so that his mind seizes upon it and makes it his own for a moment or two, strengthens it by the addition of its force, and then casts it out again to affect someone else.

A man, therefore, is not responsible for a thought which floats into his mind, because it may not be his own, but someone else's. He is responsible, however, if he takes it up, dwells upon it, and then sends it out strengthened.

Such a mixture of thoughts from many sources has no definite coherence, though any one of them may start a line of associated ideas and so set the mind thinking on its own account. Many men, if they were to examine the stream of thoughts which pass through their minds, would probably be surprised to discover how many idle and useless fancies enter and leave their minds in a short period of time. Not one fourth of these are their own thoughts. In most cases they are quite useless and their general tendency is more likely to be evil than good.

Thus men continually affect each other by their thoughts, sent out mostly without definite intent. Public opinion, in fact, is largely created in this way; for the most part public opinion is thought-transference. Most people think along certain lines not because they have carefully thought questions out for themselves, but because large numbers of others are thinking along those lines and carry others with them. The strong thought of a powerful thinker goes out into the mental world and is caught up by receptive and responsive minds. They reproduce his vibrations, strengthen the thought, and thus help to affect others, the thoughts becoming stronger and stronger and eventually influencing large numbers of people.

If we consider these thought-forms in the mass, it is easy to realise the tremendous effect they have in producing national and race feeling, and thus in biasing and prejudicing the mind. We all grow up surrounded by an atmosphere crowded with thought-forms embodying certain ideas; national prejudices,

national ways of looking at things, national types of thoughts and feelings; all these play upon us from our birth, and even before. Everything is seen through this atmosphere, every thought is more or less refracted by it, and our own mental and astral bodies are vibrating in accord with it. Nearly everyone is dominated by the national atmosphere: "public opinion", once formed, sways the minds of the great majority, beating unceasingly upon the brains and awakening in them responsive vibrations. Sleeping and waking these influences play upon us, and our very unconsciousness makes them more effective. Most people being receptive rather than initiative in their nature, they act almost as automatic reproducers of the thought which reach them, and thus the national atmosphere is continually intensified.

An inevitable result of this state of affairs is that nations receiving impressions from other nations modify them by their own vibration rates. Hence people of different nations, seeing the same facts, add to them their own existing prepossessions and quite honestly accuse each other of falsifying the facts and practising unfair methods. If this truth, and its inevitability, were recognised, many international quarrels would be smoothed more easily than now is the case, and many wars even would be avoided. Then each nation would recognise the "personal equation", and instead of blaming the other for difference of opinion, would seek the mean between the two views, neither insisting wholly on its own.

Most men never make any effort at real discrimination on their own account, being unable to shake themselves free from the influence of the great crowd of thought-forms which constitute public opinion. Hence they never really see the truth at all, nor even know of its existence, being satisfied to accept instead this gigantic thought-form. For the occultist, however, the first necessity is to attain a clear and unprejudiced view of everything; to see it as it really is, and not as a number of people suppose it to be.

To secure this clearness of vision unceasing vigilance is necessary. To detect the influence of the great hovering thought-cloud is not the same as the ability to defy its influence. Its pressure is ever present, and quite unconsciously we may find ourselves yielding to it in all sorts of minor matters, even though we keep ourselves clear from it with regard to the greater points. We were born under its pressure just as we were born under the pressure of the atmosphere, and are just as unconscious of one as of the other. The occultist imperatively must learn to free himself entirely from this influence, and to face the truth as it is, and not distorted through the medium of these gigantic, collective thought-forms.

The influence of aggregated thoughts is not confined to that which they exercise on man's subtler vehicles. Thought-forms of a destructive type act as a disruptive energy and may often work havoc on the physical plane; they are the fruitful sources of "accidents", of natural convulsions, storms, cyclones, hurricanes, earthquakes, floods, etc.

They may stir up wars, revolutions, and social disturbances and upheavals of every kind. Epidemics of disease and crime, cycles of accidents, have a similar

explanation. Thought-forms of anger aid in the perpetration of murder. Thus in every direction, in endless fashions, do men's evil thoughts play havoc, reacting on themselves and others.

Turning now to the effects produced, more specifically by thoughts of individuals, the student will recollect that in *The Astral Body* we described the effects produced upon a man's astral body by, eg., a rush of devotional feeling. Such devotional *feeling* is usually accompanied also by *thoughts* of devotion; draw round themselves a large amount of astral matter as well, so that they act in both mental and astral worlds. A developed man, therefore, is a centre of devotional waves, which must inevitably influence other people born both in their thoughts and their feelings. The same of course, is true in the case of affection, anger, depression, and all other feelings.

Another typical example is that of the currents of thought flowing out from a lecturer, and other currents of comprehension and appreciation rising from the audience and joining with those from the speaker.

Often it happens that the play of the lecturer's thoughts awakens sympathetic response in the mental bodies of the audience, so that at the time they are able to understand the speaker; later, however, when the stimulus of the speaker is no longer present, they forget and find they are no longer able to comprehend what at the time seemed clear to them.

Critical thought, on the other hand, sets up a page opposing rate of vibration, breaking up the stream and throwing it into confusion. It is said that anyone who has seen this effect produced is little likely to forget the object lesson.

In reading a book a man's thoughts may attract the attention of the writer of the book, who may be in his astral body, during sleep or after physical death. The writer may thus be drawn to the student, thus causing him to be enveloped in the atmosphere of the writer quite as potently as though he were physically present.

Similarly, also the thought of the student may attract to himself the thoughts of other persons who have studied the same subject.

An excellent example of the effect on the living of the thoughts of a disembodied man occurs where a man has been executed, say, for murder, and where he takes his revenge by instigating other murders. This is, in fact, one explanation of those cycles of murders of the same type which from time to time occur in communities.

The effect of thoughts on children is especially marked. Just as a child's physical body is plastic and easily moulded, so are his astral body and mental body. A child's mental body drinks in thoughts of others as a sponge draws up water, and though it may be too young to reproduce them now, the seed will bear fruit in due season. Hence the immense importance of a child being surrounded with a noble and unselfish atmosphere.

To a clairvoyant it is a terrible sight to see beautiful white child-souls and child-auras in a few years become soiled, smirched and darkened by the selfish, impure and unholy thoughts of the adults around them. Only the clairvoyant knows how enormously and how rapidly child-characters would improve if only adult characters were better.

Whilst it is never right to endeavour to dominate the thought and will of another, even though it may be for what seems to be a good end, it is nevertheless always right to fix the thoughts upon man's good qualities thus tending to strengthen the good characteristics. Conversely, to dwell in thought upon a man's defects or bad qualities is to strengthen the undesirable tendencies or even to produce evil qualities where these previously did not exist, or were merely latent germs.

Thus to take a simple example, suppose that a group of people who indulge in gossip and scandal accuse another of jealousy. If the victim has already a tendency towards jealousy, it is obvious that it will be greatly intensified by such a cataract of thought; whilst even if he is entirely free from jealousy those who think and talk about his imagined fault are doing their best to create in the man the very vice over the imagined presence of which they gloat so cruelly.

The injury done by gossip and scandal is almost immeasurable, and the student will recollect the strong indictment launched against these evil practices in At the Feet of The Master. The form which the criticism of a true occultist will take will be that happy kind which grasps at a pearl as eagerly as much of our modern criticism pounces upon a flaw.

Thus the possibility –or rather the inevitability –of being able to affect others for good or for ill by thought-power places a tremendous instrument in the hands of all who choose to wield it.

Astro-mental images *i.e.*, thought-forms with which emotion of feeling is also associated, play no inconsiderable part in making karmic links with other people. Thus suppose, to take an extreme example, a man by sending out a thought of bitter hatred and revenge has helped to form in another the impulse which results in murder. The creator of that thought is necessarily linked by his karma to the committer of the crime even though he has never seen him on the physical plane. Ignorance, or the absence of memory, does not cause a failure in the working of karmic law, and a man must therefore reap the results of his thoughts and feelings as well as of his physical actions.

In general, the mental images which a man makes, largely influence his future environment. In such fashion are made the ties which draw people together for good or evil in later lives; which surround us with relations, friends and enemies; which bring across our path helpers and hinderers, people who love us without our earning that love in this life, and who hate us, though in this life we have done nothing to deserve that hatred. Hence our thoughts, by their direct action on

ourselves, not only produce our mental and moral character, but they also, by their effects on others, help to determine our human associates in the future.

It is, of course, possible to protect oneself to a great extent from the incursion of thought-forms from outside, by making a wall round oneself of the substance of the aura. Mental matter, as we have seen, responds very readily to the impulse of thought and may easily be moulded into any shape we will. The same things can be done with astral matter, as we saw in *The Astral Body*.

Nevertheless, to use a shell for oneself is to a certain extent a confession of weakness, the best protection of all being a radiant goodwill and purity which will sweep away everything undesirable in a mighty outpouring stream of love.

The occasions on which it may be necessary to make use of a shell for oneself are: [1] when entering a promiscuous crowd; [2] in meditation; [3] when sleep is approaching; [4] under special conditions where without its help lower thoughts would be likely to obtrude themselves. [2] will be dealt with in Chapter XVI; [3] in Chapter XVIII; [4] in Chapter XIII.

A shell has distinct uses when helping other people, and an "invisible helper" will frequently find it invaluable in helping a man who has not yet the strength to protect himself, either against the ever-present swirl of wearisome and wandering thoughts.

There seems no doubt that animals who live in a world of emotion possess a telepathic faculty of sending emotional impulses to others of their kind at a distance. In fact, William J. Long, in his fascinating book *How Animals Talk*, states that he has reason to believe that this method of silent communication is the common language of the whole animal kingdom.

Numerous examples are given by this keen and sympathetic observer of animal life. A setter named Don appeared always to know when his master was returning home, even at unusual and unexpected times.

He knew also when Saturday or holidays came, and when his master intended to take him out into the woods. Another dog named Watch was repeatedly observed to set out to meet his master at times which constantly varied, within a few moments of the time when his master started for home from a place some three or four miles away, driving a trap drawn by a horse between whom and the dog there was a strong friendship.

The way in which fear or nervousness is readily communicated from a rider to his horse is well known to every horseman. If a wolf-cub breaks away from the pack the mother-wolf, instead of chasing the cub, has been observed to remain quiet, lift her head and look steadily in the direction of the cub, whereupon the latter will waver, halt, and speed back to the pack. A vixen appears to have her family under perfect control at every instant without uttering a sound; one steady look at them, and the cubs instantly cease their play, scamper into the burrow, and remain there until mother returns from her hunting. A wounded wolf, after lying up

by itself for a few days, has been known to go straight to the carcass of an animal, eight or ten miles, which the pack had killed in the meantime, there being, of course, no trail to follow.

A Captain Rule has observed that the moment he struck a sperm whale, every other sperm whale within ten miles would turn flukes as if he also had been harpooned. Certain wild birds will make their appearance in the back yard at a moment when a number of other birds are eagerly feeding, and at no other time. The "wing drill" of starlings is a phenomenon which appears explicable only by the **telepathic** hypothesis. A similar remark applies to the movements of flocks of plovers.

Many huntsmen have observed that if they go out without a gun or any intention to kill, they frequently see and approach very near to wild animals in plenty, but when they go out armed, and with a desire to kill, they find the animals restless suspicious, and unapproachable. One hunter, who has learnt that excitement is transmissible from man to animals, suppressed his own physical and mental excitement, and found that he could then approach his quarry much more easily than he had been able to do before he had learnt his lesson, the truth of this being proved by the tiger skins he had obtained.

Our author goes further, and states that he has met many Indians and others possessed of what certain Africans call "chumfo", which acts as though it were a distinct sense, giving warning of approaching danger, etc., often in circumstances which preclude the possibility of any information reaching any of the five normal senses.

Readers who are interested in this subject in particular and animal life in general, are strongly advised to read How **Animals Talk**, and other books by **William J. Long**.

## CHAPTER XI

### THOUGHT – TRANSFERENCE [CONSCIOUS] AND MENTAL HEALING

It is within the power of almost any two persons, provided they care to **devote to the effort sufficient time and perseverance**, and are capable of clear and steady thought, to convince themselves of the possibility of thought-transference, and even to become moderately proficient in the art. There is, of course, quite a considerable literature on the subject, such as the *Transaction of the Psychical Research Society*.

The two experiments should agree on a time mutually convenient, devoting say, ten or **fifteen minutes daily** to the task. Each should then secure himself from interruption of any kind. One should be the thought-projector or transmitter, and the other the receiver; in most cases it is desirable to alternate these roles in

order to avoid the risk of one becoming abnormally passive; moreover, it may be found that one is much better at transmitting, the other at receiving.

The transmitter should select a thought, which may be anything from an abstract idea to a concrete object or a simple geometrical figure, concentrate on it, and will to impress it on his friend. It should scarcely be necessary to insist that the mind should be wholly concentrated, being in the condition graphically described by Patanjali as "one pointed". It is well for the inexperienced not to attempt to concentrate for too long lest the attention waver or wander, and a bad habit thus be set up, or strain develop, leading to fatigue. For many, if not for most, seconds are safer than minutes.

The receiver, making his body as comfortable as possible, least any slight bodily uneasiness serve to distract his attention from the matter in hand, must render his mind a blank –a task by no means easy to the inexperienced, but simple enough once the "knack" of it is acquired –and to note the thoughts that drift into it. These he should write down as they appear, his only care being to remain passive, to reject nothing, to encourage nothing.

The transmitter should of course, also keep a record of the thoughts which he sends, and the two records should at suitable intervals be compared.

Unless the experimenters are abnormally deficient in the use of the will and the control of thought, some power of communication will be established in a few weeks or months at latest. The present writer [A.E.P] has known it happen at the first attempt

The student of "white" occultism, once he has satisfied himself of the possibility of thought-transference, will not be content either with academic experiments such as have been described above, or with merely sending out kind thoughts to his friends, useful as these may be in their own measure. It is possible for him to use his powers of thought to far greater effect.

Thus to take an obvious example, suppose the student wishes to help a man who is under the sway of an injurious habit such as drink. He should first ascertain at what hours the patient's mind is likely to be unemployed –such as his hour for going to bed. If the man should be asleep so much the better.

At such a time he should sit down alone and picture his patient as seated in front of him. Very clear picturing is not essential, but the process is rendered more effective if the image can be pictures vividly, clearly and in detail.

If the patient is asleep he will be drawn to the person thinking of him, and will animate the image of himself that has been formed.

The student should then, with full concentration of mind, fix his attention on the image and address to it the thoughts which he wishes to impress on his patient's

mind. He should present these as clear mental images just as he would do if laying arguments before him or pleading with him in words.

Care must be taken not to attempt to control in any way the patient's will; the effort should be solely to place before his mind the ideas which, appealing to his intelligence and his emotions, may help him to form a right judgement and to make an effort to carry it out in action.

If an attempt is made to impose upon him a particular line of conduct, and the attempt succeed, even then little, if anything has been gained. For, in the first place, the weakening effect of the compulsion on his mind may do him more harm than the wrong-doing from which he has been saved. In the second place the mental tendency towards vicious self-indulgence will not be changed by opposing an obstacle in the way of indulging in a particular form of it. Checked in one direction, it will find another, and a new vice will supplant the old. Thus a man forcibly constrained to be temperate by the domination of his will is no more cured of the vice than if he were locked up in prison.

Apart from this practical consideration, it is entirely wrong in principle, for a man to try to impose his will on another, even in order to make him do it right. True growth is not helped by external coercion ; the intelligence must be convinced, the emotions aroused and purified, before real gain is made.

If the student wishes to give any other kind of help by his thought, he should proceed in a similar way. As we saw in Chapter VIII, a strong wish for a friend's good, sent to him as a general protective agency, will remain about him as a thought-form for a time proportional to the strength of the thought, and will guard him against evil, acting as a barrier against hostile thoughts, and even warding off physical dangers. A thought of peace and consolation similarly sent will soothe and calm the mind, spreading around its object an atmosphere of calm.

It is thus apparent that thought-transference is closely associated with mind-cure, which aims at transferring good, strong thoughts from the operator to the patient. Examples of this are Christian Science, mental science, mind-healing etc.

In those methods where an attempt is made to cure a man simply by believing he is well, a considerable amount of hypnotic influence is frequently exercised. The mental, astral, and etheric bodies of man are so closely connected that if a man mentally believes himself, well, his mind may be able to force his body into harmony with his mental state and thus produce a cure.

H. P. Blavatsky considered it legitimate and even wise to use hypnotism to lift a person out of drunkenness, for example, provided the operator knew enough to be able to break the habit and free the will of the patient so that it might set itself against the vice of drunkenness. The will-power of the patient having become paralysed by his addiction to drinking, the hypnotist uses the force of hypnotism as a temporary expedient to enable the man's will to recover and re-assert itself.

Nervous diseases yield the most readily to the power of the will because the nervous system has been shaped for the expression of spiritual powers on the physical plane. The most rapid results are obtained when the sympathetic system is first worked upon because that system is the most directly related to the aspect of will in the form of desire, the cerebrospinal system being more directly related to the aspect of cognition and of pure will.

Another method of healing requires the healer first to discover accurately what is wrong, to picture to himself the diseased organ, and then to image it as it ought to be. Into the mental thought-form he has thus created he next builds astral matter, and then by the force of magnetism he further densifies it by etheric matter, finally building in the denser materials of gases, liquids and solids, using the materials available in the body and supplying from outside any deficiencies.

It is obvious that this method demands at least some idea of anatomy and physiology; nevertheless, in the case of an advanced stage of evolution, the will of an operator who may be lacking in knowledge in his physical consciousness may be guided from a higher plane.

In cures effected by this method there is not the same danger that accompanies those wrought by the easier, and therefore more common, method of working on the sympathetic system alluded to above.

There is, however, a certain danger in healing by the power of will viz., the danger of driving the disease into a higher vehicle. Disease being often the final working out of evil that existed previously on the higher planes, it is better to let it work itself out than forcibly to check it and throw it back into the subtler vehicle.

If it be the result of evil desire or thought, then physical means of cure are preferable to mental, because the physical means cannot cast the trouble back into the higher plane, as could happen if mental means were employed. Hence mesmerism is a suitable process, this being physical [see The Etheric Double Chapter XVIII].

A true method of healing is to render the astral and mental bodies perfectly harmonious; but this method is far more difficult and not as rapid as the will method. Purity of emotion and mind means physical health, and a person whose mind is perfectly pure and balanced will not generate fresh bodily disease, though he may have some unexhausted karma to work off –or he may even take on himself some of the disharmonies caused by others.

There are, of course, other methods of using the power of thought to heal, for the mind is the one great creative power in the universe, divine in the universe, human in man; and as the mind can create so can it restore; where there is injury the mind can turn its forces to the healing of the injury.

In passing we may note also that the power of "glamour" [vide The Astral Body] is simply that of making a clear strong image and then projecting it into the mind of another.

The aid which is often rendered to another by prayer is largely of the character just described, the frequent effectiveness of prayer compared with that of ordinary good wishes being attributable to the greater concentration and intensity thrown by the pious believer into his prayer. Similar concentration and intensity without the use of prayer would bring about similar results. The student will bear in mind that we are speaking here of the effects of prayer brought about by the power of the thought of the one who prays. There are of course other results of prayer, due to a call on the attention of some evolved human, super-human, or even non-human intelligence, which may result in direct aid being rendered by a power superior to any possessed by the one who offers the prayer. With this type of "answers to prayer", however, we are not here immediately concerned.

All that can be done by thought for the living can be done even more easily for the "dead". As was explained in The Astral Body the tendency of a man after death is to turn his attention inwards, and to live in the feelings and mind rather than in the external world. The re-arrangement of the astral body by the Desire-Elemental further tends to shut in the mental energies and to prevent their outer expression.

But the person thus checked as to his outward-going energies becomes all the more receptive of influences from the mental world, and can, therefore, be helped, cheered, and counseled far more effectively than when he was on earth.

In the world of the after-death life, a loving thought is palpable to the senses as is here a loving word or tender caress. Everyone who passes over should therefore, be followed by thoughts of love and peace, by aspirations for his swift passage onwards. Only too many remain in the intermediate state longer than they otherwise should because they have not friends who know how to help them from this side of death.

The occultists who founded the great religions were not unmindful of the service due from those left on earth to those who had passed onwards. Hence the Hindu has his Shraddha, the Christian his Masses and prayers for the "dead".

Similarly, it is possible for thought-transference to take place in the reverse direction. i.e., from the disembodied to those physically alive. Thus, for example, the strong thought of a lecturer on a particular subject may attract the attention of disembodied entities interested in that subject; an audience, in fact, often contains a greater number of people in astral than in physical bodies.

Sometimes one of these visitors may know more of the subject than the lecturer, in which case he may assist by suggestions or illustrations. If the lecturer is

clairvoyant he may see his assistant and the new ideas will be materialised in subtler matter before him. If he is not clairvoyant, the helper will probably impress the ideas upon the lecturer's brain, and in such a case the lecturer may well suppose them to be his own.

This kind of assistance is often afforded by an "invisible helper" [vide The Astral Body, p.245-6].

The power of the combined thought of a group of people used deliberately to a certain end is well known, both to occultists and to others who know something of the deeper science of the mind. Thus in certain parts of Christendom it is the custom to preface the sending of a mission to evangelise some special district by definite and sustained thinking. In this way a thought-atmosphere is created in the district highly favourable to the spread of the teachings thought about, and receptive brains are prepared for the instruction which is to be offered to them.

The contemplative orders of the Roman Catholic Church do much good and useful work by thought, as do the recluses of the Hindu and Buddhist faiths.

Where in fact, a good and pure intelligence sets itself to work to aid the world by diffusing through it noble and lofty thoughts, there definite service is done to man, and the lonely thinker becomes one of the lifters of the world.

Another example, which we may class as partly conscious and partly unconscious, of the way in which the thought atmosphere of one man can powerfully affect another man, is that of the association of a pupil or disciple with a spiritual teacher or guru.

This is well understood in the East, where it is recognised that the most important and effective part of the training of a disciple is that he shall live constantly in the presence of his teacher and bathe in his aura. The various vehicles of the teacher are all vibrating with a steady and powerful swing at rates both higher and more regular than any which the pupil can maintain, though he may sometimes reach them for a few moments. But the constant pressure of the stronger thought-waves of the teacher gradually raise those of the pupil into the same key. A rough analogy may be taken from musical training. A person who has yet but little musical ear finds it difficult to sing correct intervals alone, but if he joins with another stronger voice which is already perfectly trained his task becomes easier.

The important point is that the dominant note of the teacher is always sounding so that its action is affecting the pupil night and day without the need of any special thought on the part of either of them. Thus it becomes much easier for the growth of the subtle vehicles of the pupils to take place in the right direction.

No ordinary man, acting automatically and without intention, can exercise even one-hundredth part of the carefully directed influence of a spiritual teacher. But numbers may to some extent compensate for lack of individual power, so that the

ceaseless though unnoticed pressure exercised upon us by the opinions and feelings of our associates leads us frequently to absorb, without knowing it, many of their prejudices, as we saw in the preceding chapter, when dealing with racial and national thought-influence.

An "accepted" pupil of a Master is so closely in touch with the Master's thought that he can train himself at any time to see what that thought is upon any given subject; in that way he is often saved from error. The Master can at any time send a thought through the pupil either as a suggestion or a message. If for example, the pupil is writing a letter or giving a lecture, the Master is subconsciously aware of the fact, and may at any moment throw into the mind of the pupil a sentence to be included in the letter or used in the lecture. In earlier stages the pupil is often unaware of this, and supposes the ideas to have arisen spontaneously in his own mind, but he very soon learns to recognise the thought of the Master. In fact, it is most desirable that he should learn to recognise it because there are many entities on the mental and astral planes who, with the best intentions and in the most friendly way, are very ready to make similar suggestions, and it is clearly necessary that the pupil should learn to distinguish from whom they come.

## CHAPTER XIII

### THOUGHT CENTRES

There are in the mental world certain definitely localised thought-centres, actual places in space, to which thoughts of the same type are drawn by the similitude of their vibrations, just as men who speak the same language are drawn together. Thoughts on a given subject gravitate to one of these centres, which absorbs any number of ideas, coherent or incoherent, right or wrong, the centre being a kind of focus for all the converging lines of thought about that subject, these again, being linked by millions of lines with all sorts of other subjects.

Philosophical thought, for example, has a distinct realm of its own with subdivisions corresponding to the chief philosophical ideas; all sorts of curious inter-relations exist between these various centres, exhibiting the way in which different systems of philosophy have linked themselves together. Such collections of ideas represent all that has been thought upon that subject.

Anyone who thinks deeply, say on philosophy, brings himself in touch with this group of vortices. If he is in his mental body, whether he be asleep or "dead", he is drawn spatially to the appropriate part of the mental plane. If the physical body to which he may be attached prevents this, he will rise into a condition of sympathetic vibration with one or other of these vortices, and will receive from them whatever he is capable of assimilating; but this process will be some-what less free than would be the case if he had actually drifted into it.

There is not precisely a thought-centre for drama and fiction, but there is a region for what may be called romantic thought –a vast, but rather ill-defined group of

forms, including on one side a host of vague but brilliant combinations connected with the relation of the sexes, on another the emotions characteristic of mediaeval chivalry, and on yet another masses of fairy stories.

The influence of thought-centres on people is one of the reasons why people think in droves like sheep; for it is much easier for a man of lazy mentality to accept a ready-made thought from someone else than to go through the mental labour of considering a subject and arriving at a decision for himself.

The corresponding phenomenon in the astral world works in a slightly different manner. Emotion-forms do not all fly up to one world-centre, but they do coalesce with other forms of the same nature in their own neighbourhood, so that enormous and very powerful "blocks" of feeling are floating about almost everywhere, and a man may very readily come into contact with them and be influenced by them. Examples of such influence occur in cases of panic, maniacal fury, melancholia, etc. Such undesirable currents of emotion reach a man through the umbilical chakram. In a similar manner a man may be beneficially affected by noble emotions operating through the heart chakram.

It is difficult to describe the appearance of these reservoirs of thought; each thought appears to make a track, burrowing a way for itself through the matter of the plane. That way, once established, remains open, or rather may readily be re-opened, and its particles re-vivified by any fresh effort. If this effort be at all in the general direction of the first line of thought it is far easier for it to adapt itself sufficiently to pass along that line that it is for it to hew out for itself a slightly different line, however closely parallel that may be to the one which already exists.

The content of these thought-centres is, of course, far more than enough for any ordinary thinker to draw upon. For those who are sufficiently strong and persevering there are yet other possibilities connected with these centres.

First: It is possible through these thought-centres to reach the minds of those who generated their force. Hence one who is strong, eager, reverent, and teachable, may actually sit at the feet of great thinkers of the past and learn from them of the problems of life . A man is thus able to psychometrise the different thought-forms in a thought-centre, follow them to their thinkers, with whom they are connected by vibration, and acquire other information from them.

Second : There is such a thing as the Truth in itself, or, if that idea is too abstract to be grasped, we may say it is the conception of that Truth in the mind of our Solar Logos. That thought can be contacted by one who has attained conscious union with the deity, but by no one below that level. Nevertheless, reflections of it are to be seen, cast from plane to plane, growing ever dimmer as they descend. Some at least of these reflections are within reach of a man whose thought can soar up to meet them.

From the existence of these thought-centres follows another point of considerable interest. It is obvious that many thinkers may be drawn simultaneously to the same mental region, and may gather there exactly the same ideas. When that happens it is possible also that their expression of those ideas in the physical world may coincide; then they may be accused by the ignorant of plagiarism. That this does not happen more frequently than actually is the case is due to the density of men's brains, which comparatively rarely bring anything learned on higher planes.

This phenomena happens not only in the field of literature, but also in that of inventions, for it is well known in Patent Offices that practically identical inventions often arrive simultaneously.

Other ideas may be obtained by writers from the akashic records; but this aspect of our subject will be dealt with in a later chapter.

## CHAPTER XIII

### PHYSICAL OR "WAKING" CONSCIOUSNESS

In this chapter we shall consider the mental body as it exists and is used during ordinary "waking" consciousness, i.e., in ordinary physical life.

It will be convenient to deal seriatim with the three factors which determine the nature and functioning of the mental body in physical life, viz.:-

[1] The Physical Life: [2] The Emotional Life: [3] The Mental Life

#### [1] The Physical Life

In the Astral Body, Chapter VIII, the factors in the physical life which affect the astral body were enumerated and described. Most of what was written there applies, mutatis mutandis, to the mental body. We shall here, therefore not deal again at any length with those factors, but merely briefly recapitulate them, with a minimum of comment where necessary.

As every part of the physical body has its corresponding astral and mental counterparts, it follows that a coarse and impure physical body will tend to make the mental body also coarse and impure.

In view of the fact that the seven grades of mental matter correspond respectively to the seven grades of physical [as well, of course, as to those of astral] matter, it would seem that the mental body would be more especially affected by the physical solids, liquids, gases, and ethers, i.e., by the four orders of physical matter.

It will, of course be clear to the student that a mental body composed of the coarse varieties of mental matter will respond to the coarser types of thought more readily than to the finer varieties.

Coarse food and drink tend to produce a coarse mental body. Flesh foods, alcohol, tobacco are harmful to the physical, astral and mental bodies. The same applies to nearly all drugs. Where a drug, such as opium, is taken in order to relieve great pain, it should be taken as sparingly as possible. One who knows how to do it can remove the evil effect of opium from the mental and astral bodies after it has done its work upon the physical.

Furthermore, a body fed on flesh and alcohol is especially liable to be thrown out of health by the opening up of the higher consciousness; nervous diseases, in fact partly due to the fact that the higher consciousness is trying to express itself through bodies clogged with flesh products and poisoned by alcohol.

Dirt of all kinds is often objectionable in the higher worlds than in the physical. Thus for example, the mental and astral counterparts of the waste matter which is constantly being thrown off by the physical body as invisible perspiration are of the most undesirable character.

Loud, sharp or sudden noises should, as far as possible, be avoided by anyone who wishes to keep his astral and mental bodies in order. This is one of the reasons why the life of a busy city is one to be avoided by an occult student, as well as by children upon whose plastic astral and mental bodies the effects of ceaseless noise are disastrous. The cumulative effect of noise on the mental body is a feeling of fatigue and inability to think clearly.

A man's mental body is affected by almost everything in his environment. Thus for example, the pictures which hang on the walls of his rooms influence him, not only because they keep before his eyes the expression of certain ideas, but also because the artist puts a great deal of himself, of his inmost thought and feeling, into his work. This we term the unseen counterparts of the picture, clearly expressed in mental and astral matter, and these radiate from the picture just as surely as scent inheres in and radiates from a flower.

Books are specially strong centres of thought-forms, and their unnoticed influence in a man's life is often a powerful one. It is, therefore, unwise to keep on one's bookshelves books of an unpleasant or undesirable character.

Talismans or amulets affect a man's life to some extent. They have already been described in The Etheric Double and The Astral Body. Briefly, they operate in two ways: [1] they radiate waves of their own which are intrinsically helpful; [2] the knowledge of the presence and purpose of the talisman awakens the faith and courage of the wearer and thus calls up the reserve strength of his own will.

If a talisman is "linked" with its maker, and the wearer calls upon the maker mentally, the ego will respond and reinforce the vibrations of the talisman by a strong wave of his own more powerful thought.

A talisman strongly charged with magnetism may thus be an invaluable help; the physical nature, as well as the emotions and the mind, have to be mastered, and the physical is, without doubt, the most difficult to deal with. Some people scorn such things as talismans; others have found the path to occultism so arduous that they are glad to avail themselves of any assistance that may be offered to them.

The strongest talisman on this planet is probably the Rod of Power which is kept at Shamballa and used in Initiations and at other times.

A man is affected also by the colours of objects which surround him. For just as a feeling or thought produces in subtler matter a certain colour, so, conversely the presence of a given colour even in physical objects exerts a steady pressure, tending to arouse the feeling or thought appropriate to that colour. Hence the rationale, for example, of the use of certain selected colours by the Christian Church in altar frontals, vestments etc., in the endeavour to superinduce the condition of mind and feeling especially appropriate to the occasion.

A man is affected by the walls and furniture of his rooms because, by his thoughts and feelings he unconsciously magnetises physical objects near him, so that they possess the power of suggesting thoughts and feelings of the same type, either to himself or to any person who puts himself in the way of their influence. Striking instances of this phenomena occur, as is well known, in the case of prison cells and other similar places.

Hence, also, the value of "holy places", where the atmosphere is literally vibrating at a high rate. A room set apart for meditation and high thought soon gains an atmosphere purer and subtler than that of the surrounding world, and the wise student will take due advantage of this fact both for his own sake and for the helping of those around him.

As an example of this kind of thought-force, we may cite the case of certain ships or engines which have the reputation of being "unlucky". Instances have unquestionably occurred where accident after accident occurs in connection with them without apparent reason.

The effect could have been brought about in some such way as the following. Feelings of intense hatred may have been entertained against the builder of the ship or against her first captain. These feelings of themselves would probably not be sufficient actually to cause serious misfortune.

But in the life of every ship there are many occasions on which an accident is

only just averted by vigilance and promptitude, in which a single moment's delay or slackness would be sufficient to precipitate a catastrophe.

Such a mass of thought – forms as those described would be amply sufficient to cause that momentary lack of vigilance or momentary hesitation; and that would be the easiest line along which the malignity could work.

It is clear that the reverse is also true, and that a "lucky" atmosphere can be built up about material objects, etc., by the optimistic and cheerful thoughts of those who use the objects.

Similarly with regards to relics. Any article highly charged with personal magnetism may continue to radiate its influence for centuries with practically undiminished force. Even if the relic be not genuine, the force poured into it by centuries of devotional feeling will magnetise it strongly and make it a force for good.

There is thus occult wisdom in the following advice, quaint as it is in expression: "Knead love into the bread you bake; wrap strength and courage in the parcel you tie for the woman with the weary face; hand trust and candour with the coin you pay to the man with the suspicious eyes." The student of the Good Law has abundant opportunities of distributing blessings all about him unobtrusively, although the recipients may be quite unconscious of the source of that which comes to them.

As mentioned in Chapter XI, when dealing with Thought-Transference, physical association with a more highly evolved person may be of considerable help in the development and training of the mental body. Just as the heat radiations from a fire, warm articles placed near the fire, so may the thought-radiations of a thinker stronger than ourselves cause our mental bodies to vibrate sympathetically with him, and for the time being we feel our mental power increased.

An example of this effect often occurs at eg., a lecture; a person in the audience appears whilst he is listening to the speaker to understand fully what is being said, but later the conception seems to grow dim and maybe completely elude the mind when an attempt is made to reproduce it. The explanation is that, the masterful vibrations of the stronger thinker have at the time shaped the forms taken by the mental body of the listener, but afterwards that mental body is unable of its own power to resume those shapes.

A true teacher will thus aid his disciples far more by keeping him near than by any spoken words.

Unseen entities associated with ocean, mountain, forest, waterfalls, etc., radiate vibrations which awaken unaccustomed portions of mental, astral and etheric bodies, and hence, from this point of view, travel may be beneficial to all three bodies.

In general, it may be said that everything which promotes health and well-being of the physical body reacts favourably also upon the higher vehicles.

The converse of course, is also true, the emotional and mental life having profound effects upon the physical body. For, while it is true that the mental and physical bodies are obviously, in the very nature of things, more amenable to the power of thought than is the physical body, yet the matter of even the physical body may be moulded by the power of emotion and thought. Thus for example, it is well known that any habitual line of thought, virtue or vice, makes its impress on the physical features, a phenomenon so common that its full significance has not perhaps been adequately realised by most people. Another example is that of the "stigmata", appearing on the bodies of saints, many instances of which are on record. Innumerable other examples may be furnished from the literature of modern psychoanalysis and other sources.

In the highly evolved Fifth Race man of today, in fact, the physical body is largely ruled by mental conditions; hence anxiety, mental suffering and worry, producing nervous tension, readily disturb organic processes and bring about weakness and disease. Right thought and feeling react upon the physical body and increase its power to assimilate prana or vitality.

Mental strength and serenity thus directly promote physical health, for the evolved Fifth Race man lives his physical life literally in his nervous system.

## [2] THE EMOTIONAL LIFE

The mental and astral bodies are so closely linked together as to produce profound effects upon one another.

The intimate association between kama [desire] and manas [mind], and their actions and re-actions on each other, have already been dealt with in Chapter VI on Kama-Manas. In this chapter we will deal merely with a few further incidental effects of the astral on the mental body, and also with the effect of the mental body on the astral body.

A flood of emotion sweeping over the astral body does not itself greatly affect the mental body, although for the time it may render it almost impossible for any activity from that mental body to come through into the physical brain. That is not because the mental body itself is affected, but because the astral body, which acts as a bridge between the mental body and the brain, is vibrating so entirely at one rate as to be incapable of conveying any undulation which is not in harmony with that one rate.

A typical example of the effect of powerful emotion on mental activity is afforded by a man "in love"; while in this state the yellow of intellect entirely vanishes from his aura.

Coarse sensuality in the astral body, which is represented by a peculiarly unpleasant hue, is quite incapable of reproducing itself in the mental body. This is an example of the principle that the matter of the various planes, as it becomes finer, gradually loses the power of expressing the lower qualities.

Thus a man may form a mental image which evokes sensual feeling in him, but the thought and the image will express themselves in astral matter, and not in mental. It will leave a very definite impression of its peculiar hue upon the astral body, but in the mental body it will intensify the colours which represent its concomitant evils of selfishness, conceit and deception.

It sometimes happens that certain groups of feeling and thought, some desirable, some undesirable, are closely linked together. Thus for example, it is well known that deep devotion and a certain form of sensuality are frequently almost inextricably mingled.

A man who finds himself troubled by this unpleasant conjunction may reap the benefit of the devotion, without suffering from the ill-effects of the sensuality, by surrounding his mental body with a rigid shell so far as its lower sub-divisions are concerned. In this way he will effectually shut out the lower influences while still allowing the higher to play upon him unhindered.

This is but one example of a phenomenon of which there are many varieties in the mental world.

The effect of the mental body on the astral body is, of course, considerable, and the student should pay close attention to this fact. He will recollect that each body is controlled ultimately by the body next above it. Thus the physical body cannot rule itself, but the passions and desires of the astral body can direct and control it.

The astral body, in its turn, must be trained and brought under control by the mental body, for it is by thought that we can change desire and begin to transmute it into will, which is the higher aspect of desire. Only by the Self as Thought can be mastered the Self as Desire.

The very sense of freedom in choosing between desires indicates that something higher than desire is operative, and that something higher is manas, in which resides freewill, so far as anything lower than itself is concerned.

The student will recollect also that the chakrams or force-centres of the astral body are built and controlled from the mental plane, just as the physical brain centres were built from the astral plane.

Every impulse sent by the mental body to the physical brain has to pass through the astral body, and as astral matter is far more responsive to thought vibrations

than is physical matter, the effect on the astral body is proportionately greater. This process was dealt with in *The Astral Body*, p. 78, to which book the student is referred.

Hence as the vibrations of mental matter excite also those of astral matter, a man's thoughts tend to stir his emotions. Thus –as is well known –a man will sometimes, by thinking over what he considers his wrongs, easily make himself angry. The converse is equally true, though it is often forgotten. By thinking calmly and reasonably a man can prevent or dismiss anger or other undesirable emotions.

An example of the effect of a scientific and orderly habit of mind on the astral body is illustrated in *Man Visible and Invisible* on Plate XX, which portrays the astral body of a scientific type of man. The astral colours tend to fall into regular bands, and the lines of demarcation between them become clear and definite. In extreme cases the intellectual development leads to the entire elimination of devotional feeling, and considerably reduces sensuality.

The acquirement of concentration and, in general, the development of the mental body, also affects the dream life, and tends to make the dreams become vivid, well-sustained, rational, even instructive.

The astral body, in fact, ought to be, and in a developed man is, merely a reflection of the colours of the mental body, indicating that the man allows himself to feel only what his reason dictates.

Conversely, no emotion under any circumstances ought to affect the mental body in the least, for the mental body is the home, not of passions or emotions, but of thought.

### [3] THE MENTAL LIFE

Although some little work in the building and evolution of a man's mind may be done from outside, yet most must result from the activity of his own consciousness. If, therefore a man would have a mental body strong, well-vitalised, active, able to grasp loftier thoughts presented to him, he must work steadily at right thinking.

Each man is the person who most constantly affects his own mental body. Others, such as speakers and writers, affect it occasionally, but he always. His own influence over the composition of his mental body is far stronger than that of anyone else, and he himself fixes the normal vibratory rate of his mind. Thoughts which do not harmonise with that rate will be flung aside when they touch his mind. if he thinks truth, a lie cannot make a lodgment in his mind; if he thinks love, hate cannot disturb him; if he thinks wisdom, ignorance cannot paralyse him.

The mind must not be allowed to lie as it were fallow, for then any thought-seed may take root in it and grow; it must not be allowed to vibrate as it pleases, for that means it will answer to any passing vibration.

A man's mind is his own, and he should allow entrance only to such thoughts as he, the ego, chooses.

The majority of men do not know how to think at all, and even those who are a little more advanced rarely think definitely and strongly, except during the moments when they are actually engaged in some piece of work which demands their whole attention. Consequently large numbers of minds are always lying fallow, ready to receive what ever seed may be sown in them.

The vast majority of people, if they will watch their thoughts closely, will find that they are very largely made up of a casual stream of thoughts which are not their own thoughts at all, but simply the cast-off fragments of other people's. The ordinary man hardly ever knows exactly of what he is thinking at any particular moment, or why he is thinking of it. Instead of directing his mind to some definite point he allows it to run riot, or lets it lie fallow, so that any causal seed cast into it may germinate and come to fruition there.

A student who is earnestly trying to raise himself somewhat above the thought of the average man should bear in mind that a very large proportion of the insurgent thought which is so constantly pressing upon him is at a lower level than his own and, therefore, he needs to guard himself against its influence. There is a vast ocean of thought upon all sorts of utterly unimportant subjects that it is necessary to strive rigidly to exclude it. This is one reason why to "Tyle the Lodge" is the "constant care" of every Freemason.

If a man will take the trouble to form the habit of sustained and concentrated thought, he will find that his brain, trained to listen only to the promptings of the ego –the real Thinker –will remain quiescent when not in use, and will decline to receive and respond to casual currents from the surrounding ocean of thought, so that it will no longer be impervious to influences from the higher planes, where insight is keener and judgement truer than it ever can be down here.

It is only when the man can hold his mind steady, can reduce it to quietude, and keep it in that condition without thinking, that the higher consciousness can assert itself. Then is the man ready to enter on the practice of meditation and Yoga, as we shall see in due course.

That is the practical lesson in training the mental body. The man who practices it will discover that by thinking life can be made nobler and happier, and that it is true that by wisdom an end can be put to pain.

The wise man will watch his thought with the greatest care, realising that in it he

possesses a powerful instrument, for the right use of which he is responsible. It is his duty to govern his thought lest it should run riot and do evil to himself and others. It is his duty to develop his thought-power because by means of it a vast amount of good can be done.

Reading does not build the mental body; thought alone builds it. Reading is valuable only as it furnishes materials for thought, and a man's mental growth will be in proportion to the amount of thought he expends in his reading. With regular and persistent—but not excessive—exercise, the power of thinking will grow just as muscle-power grows by exercise. Without such thinking the mental body remains loosely formed and unorganised; without gaining concentration—the power of fixing the thought on a definite point—thought-power cannot be exercised at all.

The law of life, that growth results from exercise, thus applies to the mental body just as it does to the physical body. When the mental body is exercised and made to vibrate under the action of thought, fresh matter is drawn in from the mental atmosphere and is built into the body, which thus increases in size as well as in complexity of structure. The amount of the thought determines the growth of the body, the quality of the thought determines the kind of matter employed in that growth.

We may profitably consider the method of reading a little more in detail. In a book that is carefully written, each sentence or paragraph contains a clear statement of a definite idea, the idea being represented by the author's thought-form. That thought-form is usually surrounded with various subsidiary forms which are the expressions of corollaries of necessary deductions from the main idea.

In the mind of the reader there should be built up an exact duplicate of the author's thought-form, perhaps immediately, perhaps by degrees. Whether the forms indicating corollaries also appear depends on the nature of the reader's mind, i.e., whether he is quick to see in a moment all that follows from a certain statement.

A mentally undeveloped person cannot make a clear reflection at all, but builds up a sort of amorphous incorrect mass, instead of a geometrical form. Others may make a recognisable form, but with blunted edges and angles, or with one part out of proportion to the rest.

Others may make a kind of skeleton of it, showing that they have grasped the outline of the idea, but not in any living way and without any details. Yet others may touch one side of the idea and not the other, thus building half the form; or seize upon one point and neglect the rest.

A good student will reproduce the image of the central idea accurately and at once, and the surrounding ideas will come into being one by one as he revolves

the central idea in his mind.

One of the principal reasons for imperfect images is lack of attention. A clairvoyant can often see a reader's mind occupied with half-a-dozen subjects simultaneously. In his brain are seething household cares, business worries, memory and anticipation of pleasures, weariness at having to study, and so forth, these occupying nine-tenths of his mental body, leaving the remaining one-tenth to make a despairing effort to grasp the thought-form he is supposed to be assimilating from the book.

The result of such fragmentary and desultory reading is to fill the mental body with a mass of little, unconnected thought-forms like pebbles, instead of building up in it an orderly edifice.

It is clear, therefore, that in order to be able to use the mind and the mental body effectively, training in paying attention and concentration are essential, and the man must learn to clear his mind of all extraneous and irrelevant thoughts whilst he is studying.

A trained student may, through the thought-form of the author, get into touch with the mind of the author, and obtain from him additional information or light on difficult points, though, unless the student is highly developed he will imagine that the new thoughts which come to him are his own instead of those of the author.

Remembering that all mental work done on the physical plane must be done through the physical brain in order to succeed, the physical brain must be trained and ordered so that the mental body can work readily through it.

It is well known that certain parts of the brain are connected with certain qualities in the man, and with his power to think along certain lines: all these must be brought into order and duly correlated with the zones in the mental body.

A student of occultism of course trains himself deliberately in the art of thinking; consequently his thought is much more powerful than that of the untrained man, and is likely to influence a wider circle and to produce a much greater effect. This happens quite outside his own consciousness without his making any specific effort in the matter.

But because the occultist has learned the tremendous power of thought, his responsibility in the right use of it is proportionately the greater, and he will take pains to utilise it for the helping of others.

A warning may not be out of place to those who have a tendency to be argumentative. Those who are easily provoked to argument should recollect that when they rush out eagerly to verbal battle they throw open the doors of their mental fortress, leaving it undefended. At such times any thought-forces which may happen to be in their neighbourhood can enter and possess their mental

bodies. While strength is being wasted over points which are often of no importance, the whole tone of their mental bodies is being steadily deteriorated by the influences which are flowing into it. The occult student should exercise great care in permitting himself to enter into arguments. It is a common experience that argument seldom tends to alter the opinion of either side; in most cases it confirms the opinions already held.

Every hour of life gives opportunity for consciousness to build up the mental vehicle. Waking or sleeping we are ever building our mental bodies. Every quiver of consciousness, though it be due only to a passing thought, draws into the mental body some particles of mental matter and shakes out other particles from it. If the mental body is made to vibrate by pure and lofty thoughts, the rapidity of the vibrations causes particles of the coarser matter to be shaken out and their place is taken by finer particles. In this way the mental body can be made steadily finer and purer. A mental body thus composed of finer materials, will give no response to coarse and evil thoughts; a mental body built of gross materials will be affected by evil passers-by and will remain unresponsive to and unbefited by the good.

The above applies more specifically to the "form-side" of the mental body. Turning to the "life-side", the student should also bear in mind that the very essence of consciousness is constantly to identify itself with the Not-Self, and as constantly to re-assert itself by rejecting the Not-Self. Consciousness, in fact, consists of this alternating assertion and negation – "I am this" – "I am not this". Hence consciousness is, and causes in matter, the attracting and repelling that we call vibration. Thus the quality of the vibrations set up by the consciousness determines the fineness or coarseness of the matter which is drawn into the mental body.

As we saw in Chapter XI, the thought-vibrations of another, whose thoughts are lofty, playing on us tend to arouse vibrations in our mental bodies of such matter as is capable of responding, and these vibrations disturb and even shake out some of that which is too coarse to vibrate at his high rate of activity. Hence the benefit we receive from another is largely dependent upon our own past thinking because, to be beneficially affected, we must first have in our mental bodies some of the higher types of matter which his thought can affect.

The mental body is subject to the laws of habit just as are the other vehicles. Hence, if we accustom our mental bodies to a certain type of vibration, they learn to reproduce it easily and readily. Thus for example, if a man allows himself to think evil of others it soon becomes easier habitually to think evil of them than good. In such ways often arise prejudices which blind a man to the good points of others, and enormously magnify the evil in them.

Many persons, through ignorance, fall into habits of evil thought; it is, of course, equally possible to form habits of good thoughts. It is not a difficult matter to train oneself to look for the desirable rather than the undesirable qualities in the

people whom we meet.

Hence will arise the habit of liking, rather than disliking people. By such practices, our minds begin to work more easily along the grooves of admiration and appreciation instead of along those of suspicion and disparagement. A systematic use of thought-power will thus be make life easier and pleasanter, and also build the right kind of matter into our mental bodies.

Many people do not exercise their mental abilities as much as they should do; their minds are receptacles rather than creators, constantly accepting other people's thoughts instead of forming their own from within.

A realisation of this fact should induce man to change the attitude of his consciousness in daily life and to watch the working of his mind. At first considerable distress may be felt when a man perceives that much of his own thinking is not his own at all; that thoughts come to him he knows not whence, and take themselves off again he knows not whither; that his mind is little more than a place through which thoughts are passing.

Having reached this preliminary stage of mental self-consciousness, a man should next observe what difference there is between the condition of thoughts when they come into his mind and when they go out of it –i.e.,, what it is that he himself has added to them during their stay with him. In this way his mind will rapidly become really active and develop its creative powers.

Next the man should choose with the utmost deliberation what he will allow to remain in his mind. When he finds there a thought that is good he will dwell upon it and strengthen it, and send it out again as a beneficent agent. When he finds in his mind a thought that is evil he will promptly eject it.

The careless play of thought on undesirable ideas and qualities is an active danger, creating a tendency towards such undesirable things, and leading to actions embodying them. A man who dallies in thought with the idea of an evil action may find himself performing it before he realises what he is doing. When the gate of opportunity swings open the mental action rushes out and precipitates action. For all action springs from thought; even when action is performed –as we say –without thought, it is nevertheless the instinctive expression of the thoughts, desires and feelings which the man has allowed to grow within himself in earlier days.

After pursuing steadily for some time this practice of choosing what thoughts he will harbour, the man will find that fewer and fewer evil thoughts flow into his mind; that such thoughts, in fact, will be thrown back by the automatic action of the mind itself. His mind also will begin to act as a magnet for all the similar thoughts that are around him. Thus the man will gather into his mental body a mass of good material and his mental body will grow richer in its content every year.

Thus we see that the great danger to be avoided is that of allowing the creation of thought-images to be incited from without, of allowing stimuli from the outer world to call up images in the mental body, to throw the creative mental matter into thought-forms, charged with energy, which will necessarily seek to discharge and thus realise themselves. In this ungoverned activity of the mental body lies the source of practically all our inner struggle and spiritual difficulties. It is ignorance which permits this undisciplined functioning of the mental body; that ignorance should be replaced by knowledge, and we should learn to control our mental bodies, so that they are not roused from without to making images, but are ours to use as we will.

An immense amount of suffering is caused by undisciplined imagination. The failure to control the lower passions [especially sex-desire] is the result of an undisciplined imagination, not of a weak will. Even though strong desire is felt, it is creative thought which brings about action. There is no danger in merely seeing or thinking about the object of desire, but when a man imagines himself as giving way to his desires, and allows the desires to strengthen the image he has made, then his danger begins. It is important to realise that there is no power in objects of desire as such, unless and until we indulge in imaginations which are creative. Once having done this, struggle is certain to ensue.

In this struggle we may call upon what we think is our will, and try to escape from the results of our own imaginings by frantic resistance. Few have learnt that anxious resistance inspired by fear are very different from will. The will should rather be employed to control the imagination in the first instance, thus eradicating the cause of our troubles at its source and origin.

As we shall see in a later chapter, the materials which we gather during the present life are, in the after-death life, worked up into mental powers and faculties which will find further expression in our future lives. The mental body of the next incarnation depends on the work we are doing in our present mental body. Karma brings the harvest according to our sowing; we cannot isolate one life from another, nor miraculously create something out of nothing.

As it is written in the Chandogyopanishat, "Man is a creature of reflection; that which he reflects on in this life he becomes the same hereafter."

To combat and change habits of thought, a process which involves ejecting from the mental body one set of mental particles and replacing them by others of a higher type, is naturally difficult at first, just as it is usually difficult at first to break physical habits. But it can be done and, as the old form changes, right thinking becomes increasingly easy, and finally spontaneous.

There is hardly any limit to the degree to which a man may re-create himself by concentrated mental activity. As we have seen, schools of healing –such as Christian Science, Mental Science, and others –utilise this powerful agency in obtaining their results, and their utility largely depends upon the knowledge of the

practitioner as to the forces which he is employing. Innumerable successes prove the existence of the force; failures show that the manipulation of it was not skilful or could not evoke sufficient for the task in hand.

Expressed in general terms, thought is the manifestation of Creativeness, the Third Aspect of the human triplicity. In Christian terminology will is the manifestation of God the Father; love of God the Son; and thought, or creative activity, of God the Holy Ghost. For it is thought in us which acts, which creates, and carries out the decrees of the will. If the will is the King, thought is the Prime Minister.

The occultist applies this creative power to quicken human evolution. Eastern Yoga is the application of the general laws of the evolution of mind to this quickening of the evolution of a particular consciousness. It has been proved, and can ever be re-proved, that thought, concentrating itself attentively on any idea, builds that idea into the character of the thinker, and a man may thus create in himself any desired quality by sustained and attentive thinking –by meditation.

Knowing this law, a man can build his own mental body as he wishes it to be as certainly as a bricklayer can build a wall. The process of building character is as scientific as that of developing muscular power.

Even death does not stop the work, as we shall see in later chapters.

In this work prayer may be used with great effect, perhaps the most striking instance being found in the life of the Brahman. The whole of that life is practically one continuous prayer. Though much more elaborate and detailed, it is somewhat similar to the form used in some Catholic convents where the novice is instructed to pray every time that he eats, that his soul may be nourished by the bread of life; every time he washes that his soul may be kept pure and clean; every time he enters a church, that his life may be one long service; and so on. The life of the Brahman is similar, except that his devotion is on a larger scale and is carried into much greater detail. No one can doubt that he who really and honestly obeys all these directions must be deeply and constantly affected by such action.

As we saw in Chapter IV, the mental body has this peculiarity, that it increases in size as well, of course, as in activity, as the man himself grows and develops. The physical body, as we know, has remained substantially the same size for long ages; the astral body grows to some extent; but the mental body [as well as the causal body] expands enormously in the later stages of evolution, manifesting the most gorgeous radiance of many-coloured lights glowing with intense splendour when at rest, and sending forth dazzling coruscations when in high activity.

In a very undeveloped person the mental body is even difficult to distinguish; it is so little evolved that some care is needed to see it at all. Large numbers of people are as yet incapable of clear thought, especially in the West with regard to

religious matters. Everything is vague and nebulous. For occult development, vagueness and nebulosity will not do. Our conceptions must be clear-cut and our thought-images definite. These apart from other characteristics, are essentials in the life of the occultist.

The student should realise also that each man necessarily views the external world through the medium of his own mind. The result may be aptly compared to looking at a landscape through coloured glass. A man who has never seen except through red or blue glasses would be unconscious of the changes which these made on the true colours of the landscape. Similarly, a man is usually entirely unconscious of the distorting effect due to his seeing everything through the medium of his own mind. It is in this somewhat obvious sense that the mind has been called the "creator of illusion." The student of occultism clearly has the duty of so purifying and developing his mental body, eliminating "warts" [see p.31] and prejudices, so that his mental body reflects the truth with a minimum of distortion due to the defects of the mental body.

The effect of a man on animals is a matter which we should deal briefly in order to make complete our study of the mental body, its actions and reactions.

If a man turns affectionate thought upon an animal, or makes a distinct effort to teach him something, there is a direct and intentional action passing from the astral or mental body of the man to the corresponding vehicle of the animal. This is comparatively rare, the greater portion of the work done being without any direct volition on either side, simply by the incessant and inevitable action due to the proximity of the two entities concerned.

The character and type of the man will have a great influence on the destiny of the animal. If the interaction between them is mainly emotional, the probability is that the animal will develop mainly through his astral body, and that the final breaking of the link with the group-soul will be due to a sudden rush of affection which will reach the buddhic aspect of the monad floating above it, and thus cause the formation of the ego.

If the interaction is mainly mental, the nascent mental body of the animal will be stimulated, and the animal will probably individualise through the mind.

If a man is intensely spiritual or of strong will, the animal will probably individualise through the stimulation of his will.

Individualisation through affection, intellect, and will are the three normal methods. It is also possible to individualise by less desirable means, eg., through pride, fear, hate, or lust for power.

Thus for example, a group of about two million egos individualised in the Seventh Round of the Moon Chain entirely through pride, possessing but little of any quality other than a certain cleverness, their causal bodies consequently showing

almost no colour but orange.

The arrogance and unruliness of this group caused all through history constant trouble to themselves and to others. Some of them became the "Lords of the Dark Face" in Atlantis, others became world-devastating conquerors or unscrupulous millionaires, well called "Napoleons of finance".

Some of those who individualised through fear, engendered by cruelty, became the inquisitors of the —[page 110]—Middle Ages, and those who torture children at the present day.

Further details on the mechanisms of individualisation will be found in *A Study of Consciousness*, by Dr. Besant, pp. 172-3. It will also be dealt with in The Causal Body.

## CHAPTER XIV

### FACULTIES

The mental body, like the astral body, can in process of time be aroused into activity, and will learn to respond to the vibrations of the matter of its own plane, thus opening up before the ego an entirely new and far wider world of knowledge and power.

The full development of consciousness in the mental body must not however, be confounded with merely learning to use the mental body to some extent. A man uses his mental body whenever he thinks, but that is very far from being able to utilise it as an independent vehicle through which consciousness can be fully expressed.

As we saw before [p. 20], the mental body of the average man is much less evolved than is his astral body. In the majority of men the higher portions of the mental body are as yet quite dormant, even when the lower portions are in vigorous activity. The mental body of an average man, in fact, is not yet in any true sense a vehicle at all, for the man cannot travel about in it nor can he employ its senses for the reception of impressions in the ordinary way.

Among the scientific men of our time, although the mental body will be very highly developed, yet this will be chiefly for use in the waking consciousness and very imperfectly as yet for direct reception on the higher planes.

Very few, apart from those who have been definitely trained by teachers belonging to the Great Brotherhood of Initiates, consciously work in the mental body; to be able to do so means years of practice in meditation and special effort.

Up to the time of the First Initiation, a man works at night in his astral body, but

as soon as it is perfectly under control and he is able to use it fully, work in the mental world is begun. When the mental body is completely organised, it is a far more flexible vehicle than the astral body, and much that is impossible on the astral plane can be accomplished therein.

The power to function freely in the mental world must be acquired by the candidate for the Second Initiation because that Initiation takes place on the lower mental plane.

Just as the vision of the astral plane is different from that of physical plane, so is the vision of the mental plane totally different from either. In the case of mental vision, we can no longer speak of separate senses such as sight and hearing, but rather have to postulate one general sense which responds so fully to the vibrations reaching it that when any object comes within its cognition it at once comprehends it fully, and, as it were, sees it, hears it, feels it, and knows all there is to know about it, its cause, its effects, its possibilities, so far at least as the mental and lower planes are concerned, by the one instantaneous operation. There is never any doubt, hesitation, or delay about this direct action of the higher sense.

If he thinks of a place he is there; if of a friend, that friend is before him. No longer can misunderstandings arise, no longer can he be deceived or misled by any outward appearances, for every thought and feeling of his friend lies open as a book before him on that plane.

If the man is with a friend whose higher sense is also opened their intercourse is perfect beyond all earthly conception. For them distance and separation do not exist; their feelings are no longer hidden, or at best but half expressed by clumsy words; question and answer are unnecessary, for the thought-pictures are read as they are formed, and the interchange of ideas is as rapid as is their flashing into existence in the mind.

Yet even this wonderful faculty differs in degree only and not in kind from those which are at our command at the present time. For on the mental plane, just as – [page 113]—on the physical, impressions are still conveyed by means of vibrations travelling from the object seen to the seer. This condition does not apply on the buddhic plane; but with that we are not concerned in this book.

There is not very much that can or should be said regarding mental clairvoyance, because it is highly improbable that any example of it will be met with except among pupils properly trained in some of the highest schools of occultism. For them it opens up a new world in which all that we can imagine of utmost glory and splendour is the commonplace of existence.

All that it has to give –all of it at least that he can assimilate –is within the reach of the trained pupil, but for the untrained clairvoyant to touch it is hardly more than a bare possibility. Probably not one in a thousand among ordinary

clairvoyants ever reach it at all. It has been reached in mesmeric trance when the subject has slipped from the control of the operator, but the occurrence is exceedingly rare, as it needs almost superhuman qualifications in the way of lofty spiritual aspiration and absolute purity of thought and intention upon the part both of the subject and the operator. Even in such cases the subject has rarely brought back more than a faint recollection of an intense but indescribable bliss, generally deeply coloured by his personal religious convictions.

Not only is all knowledge –all, that is, which does not transcend the mental plane –available to those functioning on the mental plane, but the past of the world is as open to them as the present, for they have access to the indelible memory of nature [see Chapter XXVIII].

Thus for example, for one who can function freely in the mental body there are methods of getting at the meaning of a book quite apart from the process of reading it. The simplest is to read from the mind of one who has studied it; but this, of course, is open to the objection that one reaches only the student's conception of the book.

A second plan is to examine the aura of the book. Each book is surrounded by a thought – aura built up by the thoughts of all who have read and studied it. Thus the psychometrisation of a book generally yields a fairly full comprehension of its contents; though of course, there may be a considerable fringe of opinions held by the various readers but not expressed in the book itself.

As mentioned in Chapter VIII, in view of the fact that few readers at the present day seem to study so thoughtfully and thoroughly as did the men of old, the thought-forms connected with a modern book are rarely so precise and clear-cut as those which surround the manuscripts of the past.

A third plan is to go behind the book or manuscript altogether and touch the mind of the author, as described in Chapter X.

Yet a fourth method, requiring higher powers, is to psychometrise the subject of the book and visit mentally the thought-centre of that subject where all the streams of thought about the subject converge. This matter has been dealt with in Chapter XII on Thought-Centres.

In order to be able to make observations on the mental plane, it is necessary for a man very carefully to suspend his thought for a time, so that its creations may not influence the readily impressible matter around him, and thus alter entirely the conditions so far as he is concerned.

This holding the mind in suspense must not be confounded with the blankness of mind, towards the attainment of which so many Hatha Yoga practices are

directed. In the latter case the mind is dulled down into absolute passivity, the condition closely approaching mediumship. In the former the mind is keenly alert and positive as it can be, holding its thought in suspense for the moment merely to prevent the intrusion of a personal equation into the observation which it wishes to make.

Chakrams, or Force-Centres, exist in the mental body just as they do in all the other vehicles. They are points of connection at which force flows from one vehicle to another. The chakrams in the etheric body have been described in the Etheric Body, p. 22, etc., and those in the astral body in The Astral Body, p. 31, etc. At present there is very little information available regarding the chakrams in the mental body.

One item of information is the following: In one type of person the chakram at the top of the head is bent or slanted until its vortex coincides with the atrophied organ known as the pineal gland, which is by people of this type vivified and made into a line of communication directly with the lower mental, without apparently passing through the intermediate astral plane in the ordinary way. It was for this type that Madame Blavatsky was writing when she laid such emphasis upon the awakening of that organ.

Another fact is that the faculty of magnification, called by the Hindus anima, belongs to the chakram between the eyebrows. From the centre portion of that chakram is projected what we may call a tiny microscope, having for its lens only one atom, thus providing an organ commensurate in size with the minute objects to be observed.

The atom employed may be either physical, astral or mental, but whichever it is it needs a special preparation. All its spirillae must be opened up and brought into full working order so that it is just as it will be in the seventh round of our chain.

The power belongs to the causal body, so if an atom of lower level be used as an eye-piece, a system of reflecting counterparts must be introduced. The atom can be adjusted to any sub-plane, so that any required degree of magnification can be applied in order to suit the object which is being examined.

A further extension of the power enables the operator to focus his consciousness in the lens, and then to project it to distant points.

The same power also, by a different arrangement, can be used for diminishing purposes when one wishes to view as a whole something far too large to be taken in at once by ordinary vision. This is known to the Hindus as Mahima.

There is no spatial limit to mental clairvoyance beyond that of the mental plane itself, which, as we shall see in Chapter XXVII, does not extend to the mental

planes of other planets. Nevertheless, it is possible by mental clairvoyance to obtain a good deal of information about other planets.

By passing outside of the constant disturbances of the earth's atmosphere, it is possible to make sight enormously clearer. It is also not difficult to learn how to put on an exceedingly high magnifying power, by means of which very interesting astronomical information may be gained.

Prana or Vitality exists on the mental plane, as it does on all planes of which we know anything. The same is true with regard to Kundalini or the Serpent-Fire, and also with regard to Fohat or electricity, and to the life-force referred to as The Etheric Double as the Primary Force.

Of Prana and Kundalini on the mental plane scarcely anything appears at present to be known. We know, however, that Kundalini vivifies all the various vehicles.

The Primary Force, mentioned above, is one of the expressions of the Second Outpouring from the Second Aspect of the Logos. On the Buddhic level it manifests itself as the Christ-principle in man; in the mental and astral bodies it vivifies various layers of matter, appearing in the higher part of the astral as a noble emotion, and in the lower part as a mere rush of life-force energising the matter of that body. In its lowest embodiment it is clothed in etheric matter, and rushes from the astral body into the chakrams in the surface of the etheric body, where it meets the kundalini which wells up from the interior of the human body.

The student will recollect [vide The Etheric Double p.44] that the stream of violet prana stimulates thought and emotion of a high spiritual type, ordinary thought being stimulated by the action of the blue stream mingled with part of the yellow; also that in some kinds of idiocy the flow of vitality to the brain, both yellow and blue-violet, is almost entirely inhibited.

Since The Etheric Double was published, C.W.Leadbeater's book The Chakras has appeared, containing some new and valuable information regarding the chakras, and particularly regarding the connection between the various centres or chakrams and the planes. The student therefore, may find the following tables useful:-

TABLE OF CHAKRAMS						
No.	English Name	Sanskrit	Situation	Spokes	Group	Forces with which associated
1	Roof or Basic	Mûlâdhâra	Base of Spine	4	-I- Physiological	Kundalini
2	Spleen or -----	-----	Over	6		Prâna

	<b>Splenic</b>		<b>Spleen</b>			
3	<b>Naval or Umbilical</b>	<b>Manipûra</b>	<b>Navel, over Solar Plexus</b>	10	<b>-II- Personal</b>	<b>Lower Astral</b>
4	<b>Heart or Cardiac</b>	<b>Anahata</b>	<b>Over Heart</b>	12		<b>High Astral</b>
5	<b>Throat or Laryngeal</b>	<b>Visuddha</b>	<b>Front of Throat</b>	16		<b>Lower Mental</b>
6	<b>Brow or Frontal</b>	<b>Âjnâ</b>	<b>Between Eyebrows</b>	96	<b>-III- Spiritual</b>	<b>Higher forces through pituitary body</b>
7	<b>Crown or Coronal</b>	<b>Sahasrâra</b>	<b>Top of Head</b>	12 960		<b>Higher forces through pineal gland</b>

From the above it appears that the Primary Force, Prana and Kundalini, are not directly connected with man's mental and emotional life, but only with his bodily well being. There are, however, also other forces entering the chakrams which may be described as psychic and spiritual. The basal and splenic chakrams exhibit none of these, but the navel and higher chakrams are ports of entry for forces which affect human consciousness.

There seems to be a certain correspondence between the colours of the streams of prana which flow to the several chakrams and the colours assigned by H.P. Blavatsky to the principles of man in the diagram in The Secret Doctrine, Vol. III, p. 452, as shown in the following table.

<b>Colours of Prâna</b>	<b>Chakrams entered</b>	<b>Colours given in Secret Doctrine</b>	<b>Principles represented</b>
<b>Light Blue</b>	<b>Throat</b>	<b>Blue</b>	<b>Âtmâ (auric)</b>

			<b>envelope)</b>
<b>Yellow</b>	<b>Heart</b>	<b>Yellow</b>	<b>Buddhi</b>
<b>Dark Blue</b>	<b>Brow</b>	<b>Indigo or dark blue</b>	<b>Higher Manas</b>
<b>Green</b>	<b>Navel</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>Kâma-Manas: lower mind</b>
<b>Rose</b>	<b>Spleen</b>	<b>Red</b>	<b>Kâma-Rûpa</b>
<b>Violet</b>	<b>Crown</b>	<b>Violet</b>	<b>Etheric Double</b>
<b>Violet - red (with another violet)</b>	<b>Root (afterwards to crown)</b>	----	----

Kundalini belongs to the First Outpouring, coming from the Third Aspect. In the centre of the earth it operates in a vast globe, only the outer layers of which can be approached; these are in sympathetic relationship with the layers of Kundalini in the human body. Thus the Kundalini in the human body comes from what has been called the "laboratory of the Holy Ghost" deep down in the earth. It belongs to the fire of prana and vitality. Prana belongs to air and light and open spaces; the fire from below is much more material, like the fire in a red-hot iron. There is a rather terrible side to this tremendous force; it gives the impression of descending deeper and deeper into matter, of moving slowly but irresistibly onwards, with relentless certainty.

It should be noted that Kundalini is the power of the First Outpouring on its path of return and it works in intimate contact with the Primary Force already mentioned, and the two together bringing an evolving creature to the point where it can receive the Outpouring of the First Logos and become a human ego.

The premature unfoldment of Kundalini has many unpleasant possibilities. It intensifies everything in the man's nature, and it reaches the lower and evil qualities more readily than the good. In the mental body, for example, ambition is very readily aroused, and soon swells to an incredibly inordinate degree. It would be likely to bring with it a great intensification of the power of intellect, but at the same time it would produce abnormal and satanic pride, such as is quite inconceivable to the ordinary man. No uninstructed man should ever try to arouse it, and if such an one finds that it has been aroused by accident, he should at once consult someone who fully understands these matters. It has been said in the Hathayogapradipika [III. 107] : "It gives liberation to Yogis, and bondage to fools".

The conquest of Kundalini has to be repeated in each incarnation, since the vehicles are new each time, but after it has been thoroughly achieved its repetition will be an easy matter. It must be remembered that its action varies with different types of people; some for example, would see the higher self rather than hear its voice. Again, this connection with the higher has many stages; for the personality it means the influence of the ego, but for the ego it means the power of the monad, and for the monad in turn it means to become a conscious expression of the Logos.

In order to use the faculties of the mental body it is necessary, furthermore, to focus the consciousness in that body. The consciousness of man can be focussed only in one vehicle at a time, though he may be conscious through the others in a vague way. Thus, if a man possessed of astral and mental sight focuses his consciousness in the physical brain, he will see perfectly the physical bodies of his friends, but will at the same time see their astral and mental bodies somewhat dimly. In far less than a moment he can change that focus so that he will see the astral quite fully and perfectly; in that case he will still see the mental and physical bodies, but not in full detail. The same thing is true of the mental sight and of the sight of the higher planes.

In bringing down to the physical brain what has been seen on the mental plane, there has to be performed the difficult operation of a double transference from the higher to the lower, since the memory has to be brought through the intervening astral plane.

Even when the mental faculties can be used whilst awake in the physical body, the investigator is still hampered by the absolute incapacity of physical language to express what he sees.

In order to bring the consciousness of the mental body into the physical brain the links between the different bodies must be developed. These links exist at first without coming into the consciousness of the man and they are not actively vivified, being like what are called in the physical body rudimentary organs that are waiting to be developed by use. Such links connect the dense and etheric bodies with the astral, the astral with the mental body, the mental with the causal body. The action of the will begins to vivify them, and as they commence to function the man uses them for the passing of his consciousness from vehicle to vehicle. The use of the will vivifying the links sets free Kundalini the Serpent-Fire.

The link between the physical and the astral body is the pituitary body; that between the physical and the mental body is the pineal gland. As was mentioned before, some people develop the pituitary body first, some the pineal gland – each must follow the method prescribed by his own guru, or spiritual teacher.

When a man has learnt to leave the physical body in waking consciousness, having developed the links between his vehicles, he has, of course, bridged the gulf between physical life and sleep-life. The bridging of the gulf is facilitated by

training the brain to respond to vibrations from the mental body; the brain then becomes more and more the obedient instrument of the man, carrying on its activities under impulses from the will and answering to the lightest touch.

The main preparations to be made for receiving in the physical vehicle the vibrations of the higher consciousness may usefully be summarised as follows: purification of the lower bodies by pure food and pure life; entire subjugation of the passions; the cultivation of an even, balanced temper and mind, unaffected by the turmoil and vicissitudes of external life; the habit of quiet meditation [see Chapters XV to XVII] on lofty topics; the cessation of hurry, especially of that restless, excitable hurry of the mind, which keeps the brain continually at work flying from one thing to another; the genuine love for things of the higher world, so that the mind rests contentedly in their companionship, as in that of a well-loved friend.

When a man is able to use the mental faculties in ordinary waking consciousness he is, of course, able to receive impressions of every kind from the mental world, so that all the workings of others are sensed by him just as he sees their bodily movements. In learning to use the powers of the mental body, a man does not lose those of the lower, for they are included in the higher.

At this stage a man can also increase his powers of usefulness very largely by consciously creating and directing a thought-form, which he can use to do work in places to which, at the moment, it may not be convenient to travel in his mental body. These thought-forms he controls from a distance, watching and guiding them as they work, and making them the agents of his will.

When a man begins to develop along occult lines, the whole of the mental body, as said, must be purified and brought into thorough working order. It is eminently necessary that he should be able to make strong and clear thought-forms; in addition, it is a great help and comfort to him if he is able to visualise them clearly.

The two acts must not be confused. The formation of a thought is a direct action of the will, working through the mental body; visualisation is simply the power to see clairvoyantly the thought-form he has made. If a man thinks strongly of any object, the image of it is in his mental body just as much, whether he can visualise it or not.

The student must also continuously strive to maintain of moral purity and mental balance without which clairvoyance is a curse and not a blessing to its possessor.

Development of mental-body consciousness would make a man's life and memory continuous during the whole of each descent into incarnation.

When a man can thus function consciously in his mental body, experiencing its

powers and its limitations, of necessity he also learns to distinguish between the vehicle he is using and himself. The next stage will be for him to perceive the illusory character of the personal "I", the "I" of the mental body, and to identify himself with the real man, the individuality or ego, living in the causal body.

This further step of raising the consciousness to the level of the ego on the higher mental plane, would confer on the man memory of all his past lives.

But before a man can hope to break the barrier between the mental and astral plane, so that he can have the pleasure of continuous recollection, he must have been for a long time thoroughly practised in the use of the mental body as a vehicle. [Analogy leads us to see that the ego must have been fully conscious and active on his own plane for a long time before any knowledge of that existence can come through to the physical consciousness].

The mental body, as such, is incapable of fatigue; there is no such thing as fatigue of the mind. What we call by that name is only fatigue of the physical brain through which the mind has to express itself.

Nevertheless, purely physical fatigue can produce an effect upon the mental body. Thus a man who is utterly exhausted has to a large extent lost the power of co-ordination. Every physical cell is complaining, and the effect upon all vehicles –etheric, astral, and mental –is that a vast number of small, separate vortices are set up, each quivering at its own rate, so that all the bodies lose their cohesion and their power to do their work.

At the present state of our knowledge, the exact method by which ordinary memory works is not known, the subject not having been investigated. It is clear, however, that a vibration in the mental body is part of what occurs, and that the causal body is not in any way involved.

Many thousands of years ago, there appears to have been a certain ceremony, aimed at opening the faculties of the higher bodies. The officiant, in a dark room, uttered the word "Om", which brought all those present into close harmony with him, and with the feelings which filled his mind. At the utterance of the word "Bhur", the room was filled, to their senses, with ordinary light. On the sound of another word, astral sight was temporarily opened to them; another word similarly opened their mental sight. Such effects were temporary only, but on a future occasion it would, of course, be easier to produce the same result on those people.

It is important that the student should learn to distinguish between impulse and intuition. As both come to the brain from within, they seem at first exactly alike, and therefore, great care is necessary. It is wise, where circumstances permit, to wait awhile, because impulses usually grow weaker, while intuitions remain unaffected by the passage of time. An impulse is usually accompanied by

excitement, and there is something personal about it; a true intuition, though decided, is surrounded by a sense of calm strength. The impulse is a surging of the astral body; an intuition is a scrap of knowledge from the ego impressed upon the personality, coming thus from the higher mental plane, or sometimes even from the buddhic.

To distinguish between the impulse and intuition, until the nature is thoroughly balanced, calm consideration is necessary and delay, as said above, is essential. An impulse dies away under such conditions, whilst an intuition grows clearer and stronger. Calmness and serenity enable the lower mind more clearly to hear the intuition and to feel its power. Intuition thus loses nothing, but rather gains from calm delay.

Furthermore, intuition is always connected with something unselfish. If there is any touch of selfishness, shown in some impulse coming from a higher plane, we may be sure that it is an astral impulse and not a true buddhic intuition.

Intuition, somewhat analogous to the direct vision of the physical plane, eventually takes the place of reason, which may be compared to the physical plane sense of touch. Intuition develops out of reasoning in the same sequential manner, and without change of essential nature, just as the eye develops out of the sense of touch.

But the intuition of the unintelligent is impulse, born of desire, and is lower, not higher, than reasoning.

## CHAPTER XV

### CONCENTRATION

From what we have already seen regarding the mechanism and the power of thought, it is abundantly clear that the control of the mind is of far greater importance than is ordinarily supposed, both for a man's own sake and also for its influence on the work he is able to do for others.

Thought-control, in fact, is an essential pre-requisite for the development of the powers of the soul.

In The Voice of The Silence it is stated: "The mind is the slayer of the real; let the disciple slay the slayer"" This does not, of course, mean that the mind must be destroyed, for one cannot get along without it, but that it must be dominated and mastered; it is not the man himself, but an instrument for him to train and use.

Obviously the student must exercise the greatest care as to the thoughts and emotions he permits himself to entertain. The ordinary man rarely thinks of attempting to check an emotion –except, perhaps, in its external manifestation;

when he feels it surging within him, he yields himself to it, and considers it natural to do so. The occult student, however, must adopt quite a different attitude: instead of allowing his emotions to run away with him, he must take them absolutely under control; and this must be done by developing and controlling his mental body. One of the first steps towards this is the realisation that the mind is not himself, but an instrument which he must learn to use.

The student must thus set himself the task of mastering both his emotions and his mind; he must know exactly what he is thinking about, and why, so that he can use his mind, and turn it, or hold it still just as a practised swordsman turns his weapon where he will, in this direction or that, and is able to hold it as firmly as he wishes. In other words, he must acquire the power of concentration, which is a necessary preliminary to all mental work.

He must learn to think steadily and consecutively, not allowing the mind to run suddenly from one thing to another, nor to fritter away its energies over a large number of insignificant thoughts.

Most men find that all sorts of stray thoughts rush into their consciousness unbidden, and since they are quite unused to controlling the mind they are powerless to stem the torrent. Such people do not know what real concentrated thought is; and it is this utter lack of concentration, this feebleness of mind and will, that makes the early stages of occult development so difficult to the average man. Furthermore, since in the present state of the world there are likely to be more evil thoughts than good ones floating about, this weakness lays a man open to all sorts of temptations which a little care and effort might have avoided altogether.

On the form-side, to concentrate is to keep the mental body shaped in one steady image; on the life-side it is to direct the attention steadily to this form so as to reproduce it within oneself. It is the force of the will which compels the mind to remain in one form, shaped to one image, completely disregarding all other impressions thrown upon it.

More briefly, concentration consists in focussing the mind on one idea and holding it there.

Still more simply, concentration is paying attention. If a man pays attention to what he is doing, then his mind is concentrated.

The throat centre, or chakram, while associated with the higher forms of hearing, is also closely associated with the power of paying attention, to which great importance is always attached in all occult systems. Hence, in the school of Pythagoras, for example, the pupils were kept for several years in the order called Akoustikoi or Hearers, and were strictly forbidden to launch out upon the perilous waters of originality until they were thoroughly grounded in the established principles of philosophy. For similar reasons, in the mysteries of

Mithra the lowest order was that of the Ravens, signifying that they were allowed to repeat only that which they had heard, precisely as a raven or parrot does. The Freemason will recognise the correspondence of these orders with the degree of E.A. in his system.

The s ... of the E.A., which incidentally calls to the assistance of the man who uses it a particular class of non-human intelligences of the subtle world, needs to be made correctly and at the proper place; if made carelessly and without thinking what is being done, a man may open himself to influences of which he is unaware, and for which he is unprepared. In using all such forms of "magic", a man should be on is guard lest he carelessly open himself to unpleasant influences which might otherwise have passed him by.

The student will also do well to remember that the natural effect of concentrating the mind is to produce tension in the muscles of the body as, for example, in the knitting of the brows. Such tension not only tires the body but also acts as an obstacle to the inflow of spiritual forces. The student should, therefore, periodically in his meditation, and also in his daily life, turn his attention to his body and deliberately "relax". Experience will demonstrate the immense relief to the whole system which follows even a moment of complete relaxation.

People of strong and intense natures should pay special attention to relaxation, and may find it necessary to practise definite exercises with this end in view. Many books on the subject exist; Power Through Repose, by Annie Payson Call, can be confidently recommended as one of the best.

Concentration is not a matter of physical effort; the moment the mind turns to a thought it is concentrated on it. Concentration is less a matter of holding --page 128]—the mind by force on a certain thought than of letting the mind continue to rest on that thought in perfect stillness and quietude. The student must bear in mind that the seat of thought is not in the brain but in the mental body; hence concentration concerns the mental body more than the physical brain.

Concentration is thus obviously not a state of passivity, but, on the contrary, one of intense and regulated activity. It resembles, in the mental world, the gathering up of the muscles for a spring in the physical world, or their stiffening to meet a prolonged strain.

The man who is beginning real concentration of thought should not at first exceed five or ten minutes at a stretch, otherwise he is apt to overtax the brain. Very gradually the time may be lengthened to fifteen, twenty or thirty minutes.

The student should never practise concentration or meditation to the point of making a feeling of dullness and heaviness in the brain, for dullness and pain are danger signals, indicating that the effort is being made to change the matter of the bodies more rapidly than is consistent with health.

Most people appear to find it more difficult to bridle thought than emotion, probably because they have been brought up to consider it unseemly to allow emotion to disport itself unchecked, whereas they have usually allowed their thoughts to roam as fancy dictated.

When a man begins to attempt to control his mind, he thus finds himself in conflict with the past habits of his mental body. Just as the collective consciousness of his astral body forms what is termed the Desire-Elemental [see Astral Body, p. 77], so is there a Mental Elemental in his mental body. This Mental Elemental has thus become accustomed to have things all his own way, and to drift from subject to subject at his own sweet will.

The struggle with the mental Elemental is in some ways different from that which has been waged against the Desire-Elemental. The mental Elemental, being a whole stage earlier in evolution than the desire-Elemental, is less used to material confinement; consequently he is more active than the Desire-Elemental –more restless, but less powerful and determined.

In the nature of things, he is thus easier to manage, but less used to management; so that it takes far less actual exertion of strength to control a thought than a desire, but it needs a more persistent application of that strength.

It must also be remembered that on the mental plane mind is on its own ground, and is dealing with its own matter, so that it is only a question of practice for it to learn to manage the Mental Elemental perfectly; whereas, when we endeavour to rule the Desire-Elemental we are bringing down the mind into a world which is foreign to it, and imposing an alien ascendancy from without.

So important are the last few facts stated that it may be useful to recapitulate them briefly. Control of mind is in itself far easier than control of the emotions; but we have had a certain amount of practice in emotional control, and as a rule almost no practice in mind control. Hence the mental exercise seems so difficult to us. Both of them together constitute a far easier task than the perfect mastery of the physical body; but this latter we have to some extent been practising during a number of previous lives, though our achievements along that line are even yet notably imperfect. A thorough comprehension of this matter should be distinctly encouraging to the student. One result of such comprehension should be vividly to impress upon him the truth of the remark in *The Voice of The Silence* that this earth is the only true hell which is known to the occultist.

Lest the above statements may seem untrue or exaggerated, let the student consider the difficulty of banishing, by thought-power, say, a raging toothache [though even this can be done under certain conditions]; it is clearly much easier by thought-power to banish depression, anger, jealousy, or any other unpleasant emotion, and still easier to deflect the thought from an unpleasant or profitless

subject to one more pleasing or useful, or even to stop the mind working altogether.

It will now be useful to consider more in detail the obstacles to concentration; these, as we shall see, divide themselves naturally into two main groups. The first has to do with Kama, or desire; the second with the very nature of mental matter itself.

The difficulty in the control of mind was well expressed 5,000 years ago by Arjuna in the immortal dialogue between him and Shri Krishna [see Bhagavad Gita VI, 34, 35]: -"This Yoga which Thou hast declared to be by equanimity, O slayer of Madhu, I see no stable foundation for it, owing to restlessness; for the mind is verily restless, O Krishna! It is impetuous, strong, and difficult to bend ; I deem it as hard to curb as the wind".

And still is true the answer, the answer pointing out the only way to success:- "Without doubt, O mighty-armed, the mind is hard to curb; but it may be curbed by constant practice [abhyasa] and by indifference [vairagya] ".

We will take the two obstacles, the remedies for which are italicised above, in the reverse order.

[1] INDIFFERENCE –This reference is clearly to the power of kama, or desire, to attract, sway, and hold the mind. In Chapter VI we studied in detail the relation between Kama and Manas, and saw the manner in which desire continually impels the mind and constantly makes it serve as a minister of pleasure.

Thus is the mind induced to seek that which pleases as well as to avoid that which gives pain. Hence it is only by curbing and mastering the emotions that they can be dominated and prevented from dragging the mind away from the task it has set itself to perform.

It is well that the student should remind himself that a chaos of petty emotions is unworthy of a rational being, and it is to the last degree undignified that man, who is a spark of the Divine, should allow himself to fall under the sway of his Desire-Elemental –a thing that is not even a mineral yet.

There would appear to be two principal ways in which this indifference can be attained and utilised as a means to concentration. These we may term [a] the Philosophical, and [b] the Devotional method.

[a] The Philosophical Method .This consists in so modifying and strengthening one's attitude towards everything that normally attracts and binds men that Kama or desire is brought completely under control; the man thus becomes indifferent to all objects, whether external, or as presented to the mind from within. This method, as observed by the present writer, seems to be difficult to most people of Western temperament, and often tends to create more perplexities than it solves' yet to people of Eastern temperament [to use a rough but useful distinction], it does not appear to present much difficulty.

To expound the method fully would necessitate a treatise on philosophy, which of course, is far beyond the cope of the present book. Let a few words suffice to give a general idea of the method. The philosophy of the system described in Discourses 5 and 6 of the Bhagavad Gita, which are called respectively the Yoga of Renunciation of Action and the Yoga of Self-Subdual.

Under this system the man "neither hateth nor desireth"; ...he is free from the pairs of opposites; ..he perceives that the senses move among the objects of sense...he places all actions in the Eternal, abandoning attachment; ...he mentally renounces all actions;...he looks equally on a Brahmana adorned with learning and humility, a cow, an elephant and even a dog and out-caste;...he neither rejoiceth on obtaining what is pleasant, nor sorroweth on obtaining what is unpleasant;...he is unattached to external contacts and findeth joy in the Self;.....he is able to endure...the force born from desire and passion...harmonised....happy...intent on the welfare of all beings...disjoined from desire and passion.

"He performeth such action as is duty, independently of the fruit of action...with the formative will renounced...controlled and peaceful,...uniform in cold and heat, pleasure and pain, as well as honour and dishonour; ...he regards impartially lovers, friends and foes, strangers, neutrals, foreigners and relatives, also the righteous and unrighteous;...he is free from hope and greed; ...he is free from longing for all desirable things;...he is as a lamp in a windless place; ...he is not shaken even by heavy sorrow;...he abandons without reserve all desire born of the imagination;...little by little he gains tranquility...having made the mind abide in the SELF;...he seeth the SELF abiding in all beings, all beings in the Self; ...and he is...completely harmonised.

The above constitutes but a bare outline of what we have termed the philosophical method. The method may, in fact should be, modified and adapted, within very wide limits, to suit the particular individual and the peculiarities of his temperament.

The philosophical method, however, as already said, is for many a hard and perplexing path; as, therefore, "the dharma of another is full of danger", let such follow the second method, less drastic, now to be described.

[b] The Devotional Method: In this method, instead of attempting to eliminate Kama, i.e., desire or attachment, the student uses the very force of Kama to fix the mind. This is, par excellence, the method of the devotee, who cultivates Kama, in its highest form, to such a degree of intensity that all other attachments become relatively insignificant, and therefore powerless to disturb or distract his attention.

One who is of a devotional temperament may achieve his end by fixing his mind

on a beloved object, or image, the very pleasure which he experiences from a contemplation of that image serving to hold the mind fixed upon it; even if the mind be forcibly dragged away from it, it will return to it again and again. In this way a devotee attains to a considerable degree of concentration.

Whilst the devotee thus utilises the element of attraction to a person, a more philosophically –minded person may take for his attractive image some profound idea, or even problem; thus, for him, the intellectual interest, the deep desire for knowledge, provides the binding power of attraction, and so fixes the mind immovably.

A useful definition of concentration, from this point of view, is as follows: the mental practice of concentration is control of mind, domination of mind by a mood, stamped upon it by the will, so that all the thinking will be bent on the purpose chosen.

For those who are not definitely devotional, the above method may be considerably modified; this modified method, in fact, is perhaps for most people the easiest of all, being, in fact, what one does in ordinary daily life. It consists in becoming so interested and absorbed in the subject selected that all other thoughts are ipso facto excluded from the mind. The mind should become so engrossed as to induce a state of more or less wrapt concentration. The student must learn to accomplish this at will, and will best succeed by cultivating the power and habit of observing and paying attention to outer objects.

An object should be taken, examined and studied minutely in many aspects. No object in nature is in reality dull or uninteresting; if anything seems so, it is rather the failure to appreciate the wonder and beauty of its manifestation lies in our inattentiveness and lack of perception.

Some degree of mastery of the above relatively elementary exercise is necessary to successful visualisation –that is the power of mentally reproducing an object in accurate detail without it being visible to the eyes, and accurate visualisation is a necessary faculty in certain forms of occult work, such, for example, as ceremonial.

If instead, of a concrete object, an idea be chosen eg., a virtue, it should arouse the enthusiasm and devotion of the student, the concentration in this case being chiefly that of the feelings and less conspicuously that of the mind. It is easier to be one-pointed in feeling than in thought, for thought is more subtle and active; but if concentration of feeling can be induced the mind will to a certain extent follow suit.

In the practice of concentration, as well as of meditation, the beginner is apt to find that many little unsatisfied desires and un-thought-out problems, present hungry mouths ever calling aside the attention. To clear away these obstructions it is little use trying to repress or suppress them. A better plan is to give them

their due, appoint them a time, and think them out. A mind cannot overcome such vacillation as leaves its problems perpetually unsettled cannot succeed in concentration, let alone meditation.

The student must decide to arbitrate his problems, abide by his own decisions, and then refuse to think the same matter over and over again. The ability to do this grows with practice and with the habit of putting decisions into action.

[2] CONSTANT PRACTICE : -The reference here seems to be the quality of restlessness, which is more or less inherent in mental matter, and in mental elemental essence. The elemental essence, in fact, is largely responsible for our wandering thoughts, as it darts constantly from one thing to another.

But as mental matter is subject to the laws of habit just as is all matter, it is possible to train it, by constant practice, until it becomes habitual for it to be the reverse of restless, and thus to fashion it into the willing and obedient servant of the real man, the Thinker.

The quickest and best way to overcome the wanderings of the mind is, of course, to use the will. Whatever method, in fact, be chosen, the will must be used to some extent. There are some people who rely solely on the force of the will [and there is no limit to the degree to which will may be developed], whilst others prefer to assist and supplement their will-power by philosophy, devotion, or by any other devices that they may be able to discover for themselves.

It is, of course, possible to make a shell around oneself, and thus exclude thoughts from outside; but this method is not recommended as a permanent plan, for shells after all are but crutches.

If, however, such a shell be employed, it must be recognised that it cannot prevent wandering thoughts from arising within the man's own mind; but it can prevent the intrusion from without of casual floating thoughts which have been left about by other people.

It is advisable that only the lower mental matter be employed in the making of such a shell, as otherwise helpful thought may be kept out, or the man's own thought might be hampered as he poured it forth towards his Master.

In Freemasonry, the corresponding process is that of Tying the Lodge, which is done of course, on the plane appropriate to the Degree which is being worked.

The power of concentration can, and should be, acquired in ordinary daily life. Whatever we are doing we should focus our whole attention upon it, do it with all our might, and as well as it can be done. A letter, for example, should be well and accurately written, no carelessness in detail being allowed to delay it or mar its effects. A book should be read with full attention, and effort to grasp the author's

meaning. No day should pass without some definite exercise of the mind. For it is only by exercise that strength comes; disuse means always weakness and atrophy.

The mechanism of worry and the method of eliminating it should be grasped by the student. Work, unless excessive, does not injure the thought-apparatus, but, on the contrary, strengthens it. But the mental process of worry definitely injures it, and after a time produces nervous exhaustion and irritability, which render steady mental work impossible.

Worry is the process of repeating the same train of thought over and over again with small alterations, coming to no result, and often not even aiming at a result. It is the continued reproduction of thought-forms initiated by the mental body and the brain, not by the consciousness, and imposed by them on the consciousness.

The Thinker, having failed to solve his problem, remains unsatisfied; fear of anticipated trouble keeps him in an anxious and restless condition. Under this impulse, which is undirected by the Thinker, the mental body and brain continue to throw up images which have already been shaped and rejected. In worry, the Thinker is the slave instead of the master of his bodies.

Worry being largely due to automatism, the same property of matter can be utilised to overcome it. Perhaps the best way to get rid of a "worry channel" is to dig another of an exactly opposite character. This may be done by dwelling in meditation on such a thought as "The Self is Peace; that Self am I. The Self is Strength; that Self am I". As he thus broods, the Peace he is contemplating will enfold him, and he will be filled with the Strength he has pictured to himself in thought. The precise formulation of ideas for the meditation can of course, be suited to the particular individual.

The student must learn not only to think, but also to cease thinking at will. When the work of thought is over it should be dropped completely and not allowed to drift on vaguely, touching the mind and leaving it, like a boat knocking itself against a rock. A man does not keep a machine running when it is not turning out work, needlessly wearing the machinery. Similarly, the priceless machinery of the mind should not be permitted to turn and turn aimlessly, wearing itself out without useful result. Just as tired limbs luxuriate in complete repose, so may the mind find comfort in complete rest.

When the student has finished his thought-work, he should drop the thought, and then as other thoughts appear in the mind, turn his attention away from them.

Another method, which the present writer employs with success, is not so much to turn the attention away [this itself being a positive act], as to take no interest in thoughts that arise. Let them come as they will, but be entirely indifferent to them. After a short time, no fresh life being infused into them, they cease to appear,

and a complete stillness, entirely free from thought of any kind, is experienced, which is exceedingly restful, both to the astral and the mental bodies. [ This plan may be used also to cure sleeplessness; the present writer has found it invaluable in many instances].

Cessation of thought is a necessary preliminary to work on the higher planes. When the brain has learned to be quiescent, then there opens the possibility of withdrawing the consciousness from its physical vesture.

The student will now be in a position to understand the full force of the aphorism of Patanjali that, for the practice of Yoga, the man must stop "the modifications of the thinking principle". The task to be achieved is to acquire such perfect control over the mental body, or "thinking principle", that it can be modified only with consent, deliberately given, of the man himself, the Thinker.

The term used by Patanjali in defining Yoga is –chitta-vritti-nirodha, which means restraint [nirodha], of the whirlpools [vritti] of the mind [chitta].

A man must be able to take up and lay down the mind as one does a tool; when that stage is reached, then the possibility arises for the man to withdraw altogether from the mental body.

Yoga is thus the inhibition of all vibrations and changes in the mental body. Hence, in the mental body of a Master there is no change of colour save as initiated from within.

The colour of His mental body is as "moonlight on a rippling ocean". Within that whiteness lie all possibilities of colour, but nothing in the outer world can make the faintest change of hue sweep over its steady radiance. His mental body is merely an outer sheath that He uses when He needs to communicate with the lower world.

A result of concentration is that as the Knower, with concentrated mind, steadily contemplates the one image, he obtains a fuller knowledge of the object than he could obtain by means of any verbal description of it. The rough outline produced by the word-description of an object is filled in more and more detail as the picture is shaped in the mental body, and the consciousness comes more and more into touch with the things described.

For further details of the theory and practice of concentration and thought-power, the student is referred to Thought-Power, Its Control and Culture, by Annie Besant; and for a practical manual on concentration, to Mr Ernest Wood's admirable book Concentration.

## CHAPTER XVI

## MEDITATION

Concentration is, of course, not an end in itself, but a means to an end. Concentration fashions the mind into an instrument which can be used at the will of the owner. When a concentrated mind is steadily directed to any object, with a view to piercing the veil and reaching the life, and drawing that life into union with the life to which the mind belongs –then meditation is performed. Concentration is thus the shaping of the organ; meditation is its exercise.

As we have seen, concentration means the firm fixing of the mind on one single point without wandering, and without yielding to any distractions caused by external objects, by the activity of the senses or by that of the mind itself. It must be braced up to an unswerving steadiness and fixity, until gradually it will learn so to withdraw its attention from the outer world and from the body that the senses will remain quiet and still, while the mind is intensely alive and all its energies drawn inwards, to be launched at a single point of thought, the highest to which it can attain. When it is able to hold itself thus with comparative ease it is ready for a further step, and by a strong but calm effort of the will it can throw itself beyond the highest thought it can reach, while working in the physical brain, and in that effort will rise to, and unite itself with, the higher consciousness, and find itself free of the body.

Thus anyone who is able to pay attention, to think steadily on one subject for a little time without letting the mind wander, is ready to begin meditation.

We may define meditation as the sustained attention of the concentrated mind in face of an object of devotion of a problem that needs illumination to be intelligible, of anything, in fact, whereof the life is to be realised and absorbed, rather than the form. It is the art of considering a subject or turning it over in the mind in its various bearings and relationships.

Another definition of meditation is that it consists of the endeavour to bring into the waking consciousness, that is, into the mind in its normal state of activity, some realisation of the super-consciousness, to create by the power of aspiration a channel through which the influence of the divine or spiritual principle –the real man –may irradiate the lower personality. It is the reaching out of the mind and feelings towards and ideal, and the opening of the doors of the imprisoned lower consciousness to the influence of the ideal. "Meditation", said H.P.Bлаватский, "is the inexpressible longing of the inner man for the Infinite". St. Alphonus de Liguori spoke of meditation as :"the blessed furnace in which souls are inflamed with Divine Love."

The ideal chosen may be abstract, such as a virtue; it may be the Divinity in man; it may be personified as a Master of Divine teacher. But in all cases it is essentially an uplifting of the soul towards its divine source, the desire of the

individual self to become one with the Universal Self.

What food is to the physical life, so is meditation to the spiritual life. The man of meditation is ever the most effective man of the world. Lord Rosebery, speaking of Cromwell, described him as a "practical mystic", and declared that a practical mystic is the greatest force in the world. The concentrated intellect, the power of withdrawing outside the turmoil, means immensely increased energy in work, more steadiness, self-control, serenity. The man of meditation is the man who wastes not time, scatters no energy, misses no opportunity. Such a man governs events, because within him is the power whereof events are only the outer expression; he shares the divine life, and therefore shares the divine power.

As was said before, when the mind is kept shaped to one image, and the Knower steadily contemplates it, he obtains a far fuller knowledge of the object than he could obtain by means of any verbal description of it. As concentration is performed, the picture is shaped in the mental body, and concentration on rough out-line, derived from, say, a verbal description, fills in more and more detail, as the consciousness comes more closely in touch with the things described.

All religions recommend meditation, and its desirability has been recognised by every school of philosophy. Just as a man who wishes to be strong uses prescribed exercises to develop his muscles, so the student of occultism uses definite and prescribed exercises to develop his astral and mental bodies.

There are, of course, many kinds of meditation, just as there are many types of men: it is clearly not possible that one method of meditation which is most suited to him.

Meditation has many objects, of which the principal ones are as follows:

[1] It ensures that at least once a day a man shall think of high and holy things, his thoughts being taken away from the petty round of daily life, from its frivolities and its troubles.

[2] It accustoms the man to think of such matter, so that after a time they form a background to his daily life, to which his mind returns with pleasure when it is released from the immediate demands of his business.

[3] It serves as a kind of astral and mental gymnastics, to preserve these higher bodies in health and to keep the stream of divine life flowing through them. For these purposes it should be remembered that the regularity of the exercises is of the first importance.

[4] It may be used to develop character, to build into it various qualities and virtues.

[5] It raises the consciousness to higher levels, so as to include the higher and subtler things; through it a man may rise to the presence of the Divine.

[6] It opens the nature and calls down blessings from higher planes.

[7] It is the way, even though it be only the first halting step upon the way, which leads to higher development and wider knowledge, to the attainment of

clairvoyance, and eventually to the higher life beyond this physical world altogether.

Meditation is the readiest and safest method of developing the higher consciousness. It is unquestionably possible for any man in process of time, by meditation, say, upon the Logos or the Master, to raise himself first to the astral and then to the mental levels; but of course, none can say how long it will take, as that depends entirely upon the past of the student and the efforts he makes.

A man occupied in the earnest study of higher things is for the time lifted entirely out of himself, and generates a powerful thought-form in the mental world, which is immediately employed as a channel by the force hovering in the world next above.

When a body of men join together in thought of this nature, the channel which they make is out of all proportion larger in its capacity than the sum of their separate channels. Such a body of men is, therefore, an inestimable blessing to the community amidst which it works.

In their intellectual studies they may be the cause of an outpouring into the lower mental world of force which is normally peculiar to the higher mental.

If their thought deals with ethics and soul-development in its higher aspects, they may make a channel of more elevated thought through which the force of the buddhic world may descend into the mental.

They are thus able to cause influence to be radiated out upon many a person who would not be in the least open to the action of that force if it had remained on its original level.

This, in fact, is the real and greatest function of, for example, a Lodge of the Theosophical Society –to furnish a channel for the distribution of the Divine Life. For every Lodge of the Theosophical Society is a centre of interest to the Masters of the Wisdom and Their pupils; consequently the thoughts of the members of the Lodge, when engaged in study, discussion, etc., may attract the attention of the Masters, a force being then poured out far more exalted than anything deriving from the members themselves.

Members of the Theosophical Society may be reminded that it has been stated by Dr. Besant that a Master has said that when a person joins the Society he is connected with Them by a tiny thread of life. This thread is the line of magnetic rapport with the Master, and the student may by arduous effort, by devotion and unselfish service, strengthen and enlarge the thread until it becomes a line of living light.

It is possible to call down a blessing from a still higher source. The Life and Light of the Deity flood the whole of His system, the force at each level or plane being

normally strictly limited to it. If, however, a special channel be prepared for it, it can descend to, and illuminate a lower level.

Such a channel is always provided whenever any thought or feeling has an entirely unselfish aspect. Selfish feeling moves in a closed curve, and so brings its own response on its own level. An utterly unselfish emotion is an outrush of energy which does not return, but in its upward movement provides a channel for a downpouring of divine Power from the level next above. This is the reality lying at the back of an idea of the answer to prayer.

To a clairvoyant this channel is visible as a great vortex, a kind of gigantic cylinder or funnel. This is the nearest explanation that can be given in the physical world, but it is inadequate, because as the force flows down through the channel it somehow makes itself one with the vortex, and issues from it coloured by it and bearing with it, distinctive characteristics which show through what channel it has come.

By meditation a man's astral and mental bodies gradually come out of chaos into order, slowly expand and gradually learn to respond to higher and higher vibrations. Each effort helps to thin the veil that divides him from the higher world and direct knowledge. His thought-forms grow day by day more definite, so that the life poured into them from above becomes fuller and fuller.

Meditation thus helps to build into the bodies the higher types of matter. It often leads to lofty emotions being experienced, these coming from the buddhic level and being reflected in the astral body. In addition, there is needed also development of the mental and causal bodies, in order to give steadiness and balance; otherwise fine emotions which sway the man in the right direction may very readily become a little twisted and sway him along other and less desirable lines. With feeling alone perfect balance or steadiness can never be obtained. The directing power of mind and will is needed as well as the motive force of emotion.

In practising meditation the student may find useful a knowledge of the five stages of mind as expounded by Patanjali. He should recollect, however, that these stages are not confined to the mental plane, but exist, in appropriate form, on every plane. They are:-

[1] Kshipta: the butterfly mind, which darts constantly from one object to another. It corresponds to activity on the physical plane.

[2] Mudha: the confused stage in which the man is swayed and bewildered by emotions; it corresponds to activity in the astral world.

[3] Vikshipta: the state of pre-occupation of infatuation by an idea; the man is possessed, we might say obsessed, by an idea. This corresponds to activity in the lower mental world. The man should learn Viveka [see p. 294], which has to

do with the Cognitional aspect of consciousness.

[4] Ekagrata: one-pointedness; the state of possessing an idea, instead of being possessed by it. This corresponds to activity on the higher mental plane. The man should here learn Vairagya [see p. 295], which has to do with the Activity aspect of consciousness.

[5] Niruddha: self-control; rising above all ideas, the man chooses as he wills according to his illumined Will. This corresponds to activity on the buddhic plane. The man should here learn Shatsampatti [see p. 294], which has to do with the Will aspect of consciousness.

When complete control has been acquired, so that the man can inhibit all motions of the mind, then he is ready for Samadhi, corresponding to Contemplation, with which we shall deal more fully in our next chapter. Meanwhile, for the sake of completeness, it is desirable to give here a preliminary idea of Samadhi.

Etymologically Samadhi means "fully placing together", and may therefore be rendered into English as "com-posing the mind", i.e., collecting it all together, checking all distractions. "Yoga", says Vyasa, "is the composed mind". This is the original meaning of Samadhi, though it is more often used to denote the trance state, which is the natural result of perfect composure.

Samadhi is of two kinds: [1] Samprajnata Samadhi, i.e., Samadhi with consciousness, with consciousness turned outwards towards objects; [2] Asamprajnata Samadhi, i.e., Samadhi without consciousness, with consciousness turned inwards, withdrawn into itself so that it passes into the next higher vehicle.

For convenience of reference these facts are set out in tabular form on page 146.

The student may also like to have a brief enumeration of the Four States of Mind spoken of in Yoga. They are:

- [1] Jagrat : waking consciousness
- [2] Svapna : dream consciousness; consciousness working in the astral body and able to impress its experiences upon the brain.
- [3] Sushupti : deep-sleep consciousness, working in the mental body, and not able to impress its experiences on the physical brain.
- [4] Turiya : trance consciousness, so far separated from the brain that it cannot readily be recalled by outer means.

No.	Stages of Mind		Quality to be acquired	Aspect of Consciousness
	Sanskrit	English		

<b>1</b>	<b>Kshipta</b>	<b>Butterfly-mindedness</b>	-----	-----
<b>2</b>	<b>Mûdha</b>	<b>Confusion</b>		
<b>3</b>	<b>Vikshipta</b>	<b>Infatuation</b>	<b>Viveka (discrimination)</b>	<b>Cognition</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Ekâgrata</b>	<b>One-pointedness</b>	<b>Vairâgya (dispassion)</b>	<b>Activity</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Niruddha</b>	<b>Self-control</b>	<b>Shatsampatti (6-fold mental qualifications)</b>	<b>Will</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Samâdhi</b>	<b>Composure of mind, leading to trance</b>	-----	-----

It is important to note, however, that these four states of consciousness exist on every plane. The following gives examples of the four states in physical consciousness, and is arranged in tabular form for the sake of compactness and clarity:

<b>THE FOUR STATES OF CONSCIOUSNESS</b>			
<b>SANSKRIT</b>	<b>ENGLISH</b>	<b>Examples in physical consciousness</b>	
Jâgrat	Waking	To read a book	To look at a watch
Svapna	Dream	To perceive the meaning of the words	To imagine the watch
Sushupti	Deep Sleep	To touch the mind of the writer	To conceive the ideal watch
Turlya	Trance	To enter the mind of the writer	To pass to the idea of time in the abstract

It should also be noted that the terms are relative; thus, for most people, Jagrat, or waking consciousness, is that part of the total consciousness which is

functioning in the brain and nervous system, and which is definitely self-conscious. We may think of consciousness as a great egg of light, of which one end only is inserted into the brain; that end is the waking consciousness.

But, as self-consciousness is developed in the astral world, and the brain develops sufficiently to answer to its vibrations, astral consciousness becomes a part of the waking consciousness; the mental consciousness would then be the svapna, or dream-consciousness.

Similarly, when mental self-consciousness is developed, and the brain answers to it, the waking consciousness includes the mental. And so on, until all the consciousness on the five planes is included in the waking consciousness.

This enlarging of waking-consciousness involves development in the atoms of the brain as well as the development of certain organs in the brain, and of the connections between the cells.

For the inclusion of astral self-consciousness the pituitary body must be developed, and the fourth set of spirillae in the atoms must be perfected.

For the inclusion of mental self-consciousness the pineal gland must be active, and the fifth set of spirillae in thorough working order.

If these physical developments are not achieved, then the astral and mental consciousness remain super-consciousness, and are not expressed through the brain.

Again, if a man possesses no physical body, then his jagrat or waking consciousness is his astral consciousness. Thus a wider definition of jagrat would be that it is that part of the total consciousness which is working through its outermost vehicle.

We may also reconsider, from the point of view of the above analysis, Samadhi. Samadhi is a state of consciousness in which the body is insensible, but the mind is fully self-conscious, and from which the mind returns to the physical brain with the memory of its super-physical experiences.

If a man throws himself into a trance, and is active on the astral plane, then his Samadhi is on the astral. If he functions on the mental plane, then his Samadhi is on that plane.

The man who can practise Samadhi can thus withdraw from the physical body so as to leave it insensitive while his mind is fully conscious.

Samadhi is therefore a relative term. Thus a master begins His Samadhi on the plane of atma, and rises thence to the higher cosmic planes.

The word Samadhi is also sometimes used to denote the condition just beyond the level where a man can retain consciousness. Thus, for a savage whose consciousness is clear only on the physical plane, the astral plane would be Samadhi. It means that when the man comes back to his lower vehicles he would bring with him no definite additional knowledge and no new power of doing anything of use. This kind of Samadhi, is not encouraged in the highest schools of occultism.

Going to sleep and going into Samadhi are largely the same process ; but while one is due to ordinary conditions and has no significance, the other is due to the action of the trained will and is a priceless power.

Physical means of inducing trance, such as hypnotism, drugs, staring at a black spot on a white ground, or at the point of the nose, and other similar practices, belong to the method of Hatha Yoga, and are never employed in Raja Yoga.

To a clairvoyant, the difference between a mesmerised subject and the self-induced trance of a Yogi is at once apparent. In the mesmerised or hypnotised subject all the "principles" are present, the higher manas paralysed, buddhi severed from it through that paralysis, and the astral body entirely subjected to lower manas and kama.

In the yogi on the other hand, the "principles" of the lower quaternary disappear entirely, except for hardly perceptible vibrations of the golden-hued prana and a violet flame streaked with gold rushing upwards from the head and culminating in a point.

The mesmerised or hypnotised person recollects in his brain nothing of his experiences; the yogi remembers everything that has happened to him.

A few practical examples will perhaps best illustrate some of the methods employed in meditation.

The student will do well to commence by cultivating the thought, until it becomes habitual, that the physical body is an instrument of the spirit. He should think of the physical body, how it is possible to control and direct it, and then should separate himself in thought from it, repudiate it, in fact.

Next, perceiving that he can control his emotions and desires, he should repudiate the astral body, with its desires and emotions; then, picturing himself as in the mental body, and again reflecting that he can control and direct his thoughts, he should repudiate his mind, and should then let himself soar into the free atmosphere of the spirit where is eternal peace; resting there for a moment, let him strive with great intensity to realise that That is the real Self.

Descending again in consciousness, he should endeavour to carry with him the peace of the spirit into his different bodies.

Another exercise would be to direct the meditation to character-building, selecting for the purpose a virtue, let us say harmlessness. The attention having been concentrated, the subject is thought about in its many aspect; eg., harmlessness is act, in speech, in thought, in desire; how harmlessness would be expressed in the life of the ideal man; how it would affect his daily life; how he would treat people if he had fully acquired the virtue, and so forth.

Having thus meditated upon harmlessness, he would carry with him into the daily life a state of mind that would soon express itself in all his action and thoughts. Other qualities could, of course, be similarly treated. A few months of earnest effort along these lines would produce wonderful changes in a man's life, as described in the memorable words of Plotinus. "Withdraw into yourself and look. And if you do not find yourself beautiful as yet, do as does the creator of a statue that is to be made beautiful; he cuts away here, he smoothes there, he makes the line lighter, this other purer, until he has shown a beautiful face upon the statue. So do you also; cut away all that is excessive, straighten all that is crooked, bring light to all that is shadowed, labour to make all glow with beauty, and do not cease chiseling your statue until there shall shine out on you the godlike splendour of virtue, until you shall see the final goodness surely established in the stainless shrine". [Plotinus on the Beautiful, translated by Stephen Mackenna].

Meditation upon a virtue thus causes a man gradually to grow into the possession of that virtue ; as finely said in the Hindu Scriptures : "What a man thinks on, that he becomes; therefore think on the Eternal". And again : "Man is the creation of thought".

An excellent example of what may be done in this manner by meditation is that of a certain man who for forty years meditated daily upon truth; the effect was that he so tuned himself to the mode of truth that he always knew when a man was lying by the jar that he felt in himself. It so happened that the man was a judge, so that his faculty must have stood him in good stead.

In this work a man is employing his imagination – the great tool used in Yoga. If a man imagines in his thought that he has a certain quality, he is half way to possessing that quality; if he imagines himself free from a certain failing, he is half way to being free from that failing. So powerful a weapon is a trained imagination that a man may by its use rid himself of half his troubles and his faults.

It is not wise to brood over faults, as it tends to encourage morbidness and depression which act as a wall, shutting out spiritual influences. In practice it is better to ignore faults of disposition so far as may be done, and to concentrate on building the opposite virtues. Success in the spiritual life is gained less by fierce wrestling with the lower nature than by growing into the knowledge and appreciation of higher things. For once we have sufficiently experienced the bliss and joyousness of the higher life, by contrast the lower desires pale and lose

their attractiveness. It was said by a great Teacher that the best form of repentance for a transgression was to look ahead with hopeful courage, coupled with the firm resolve not to commit the transgression again.

Next, suppose the purpose of the meditation is to be intellectual understanding of an object, and the relation of it to other objects.

It is important for the student to recollect that the first work of the Knower is to observe –accurately, for on the accuracy of the observation depends the thought; if the observation is inaccurate, then out of that initial error will spring a number of consequent errors that nothing can put right save going back to the very beginning.

The object having thus been carefully observed, the stream of thought is played upon it so as to grasp it in all its natural, super-physical and metaphysical aspects, an effort being made to make quite clear and definite that level of the consciousness which is still nebular.

Let the subject be, for example, harmony. Consider it in relation to the various senses; consider it in music, in colour, in phenomena of many different kinds; seek to discover the principal features of harmony, and how it differs from other similar and contrasting ideas; what part it plays in the succession of events; what is its use; what results from its absence. Having answered all these, and many other questions, an endeavour should be made to drop all concrete images or thoughts, and to hold in thought the abstract idea of harmony.

The student must bear in mind that mental sight is quite as real and satisfying as is physical sight. Thus it is possible to train the mind to see, say, the idea of harmony, or the square root of two, as clearly and as certainly as one sees a tree or a table with physical vision.

For our third example let us take a devotional meditation. Think of the ideal man, the Master, or, if preferred, the deity, or any manifestation of the deity. Allow the thought to play upon the subject from different aspects, so that it constantly awakens admiration, gratitude, reverence, worship. Ponder upon all the qualities manifested in the subject and take each quality in all its aspects and relationships.

From a general standpoint, an abstract ideal and a personality are equally good for purposes of meditation. A person of intellectual temperament will usually find the abstract ideal the more satisfactory; one of the emotional temperament will demand a concrete embodiment of his thought. The disadvantage of the abstract ideal is that it is apt to fail in compelling aspiration; the disadvantage of the concrete embodiment is that the embodiment is apt to fall below the ideal.

We may here take especial notice of the result of meditating on the Master, this makes a definite link with the Master ,which shows itself to the clairvoyant vision

as a kind of line of light. The Master always subconsciously feels the impinging of such a line and sends out along it in response a steady stream of magnetism which continues to play long after the meditation is over.

If a picture is used for purposes of meditation, it may often be observed to change in expression. This is because the will can be trained to act directly upon physical matter, the actual physical particles being unquestionably affected by the power of strong sustained thought.

One other form of meditation may be given, viz., that of mantric meditation.

A mantram is a definite succession of sounds arranged by an occultist in order to bring about certain definite results. Those sounds, repeated rhythmically over and over again in succession, synchronise the vibrations of the vehicles into unity with themselves. A mantram is thus a mechanical way of checking vibrations, or inducing the vibrations that are desired. Its efficacy depends upon what is known as sympathetic vibration [vide *The Astral Body*, pp. 157-8].

The more a mantram is repeated, the more powerful the result. Hence the value of repetition in Church formulae, and of the rosary, which enables the consciousness to be fully concentrated on what is being said and thought, undistracted by the task of keeping count.

In this method of meditation, practised largely in India, the devotee directs his mind, say, to Shri Krishna, the incarnate God, the Spirit of Love and Knowledge in the world. A sentence is taken and chanted over and over again as a mantram, while its deep and varied meaning is intently pondered upon. Thus the devotee brings himself in touch with the Great Lord Himself.

The above constitutes the briefest outline of certain forms of meditation. For further description and detail the student is referred to that excellent manual *Concentration* by Ernest Wood, to Meditation For Beginners by J.I. Wedgwood, and to the admirable chapters on Thought-Control and on Building of Character in *The Outer Court*, by Dr. Besant.

An excellent "Ego Meditation" is given in *Gods In Exile*, by J.J. van der Leeuw, LL.D., in the Afterword at the end of that admirable little book.

Many people meditate daily alone, with success; but there are even greater possibilities when a group of people concentrate their minds on the one thing. That sets up a strain in the physical ether as well as in the astral and mental worlds, and it is a twist in the direction which we desire. Thus, instead of having to fight against our surroundings, as is usually the case, we find them actually helpful, provided of course, that all present succeed in holding their minds from wandering. A wandering mind in such a group constitutes a break in the current, so that instead of there being a huge mass of thought moving in one mighty flood, there would be eddies in it, like rocks which deflect the water in a river.

A striking example of the tremendous power of collective meditation and thought was that of the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria. C.W.Leadbeater describes that occasion as one of the most wonderful manifestations of occult force that he ever saw. The crowd became so exalted that people were lifted right out of themselves by their emotions, thus experiencing a tremendous uplift of soul. A similar effect, on a small scale, can be produced by group meditation.

We will now consider the physical adjuncts of meditation. In meditation, posture is not unimportant. The body should be put into a comfortable position, and then forgotten. If it is uncomfortable, it cannot be forgotten, as it would constantly call attention to itself.

Furthermore, just as certain thoughts and emotions tend to express themselves in characteristic movements and gestures of the body, so, by a reversal of the process, positions of the body may tend to induce states of mind and feeling, and so assist the student in dwelling on them.

The majority of Western people will find it most comfortable to sit in an armchair, the back of which does not slope unduly; the hands may be clasped and rest on the legs, or be laid lightly on the knees. The feet may be placed together or crossed with the right over the left. This locking of the extremities of the body helps to prevent the outflow of magnetism from the finger-tips, feet, etc.

The position should be easy and relaxed, the head not sunken upon the chest but lightly balanced; the eyes and mouth closed, the spinal column [along which there is much magnetic flow] erect.

Eastern people usually sit cross-legged on the floor or a low stool, a position which is said to be slightly more effectual since any magnetism liberated tends to rise around the body in a protective shell.

Another factor to be considered in determining the posture for meditation is the possibility of losing physical consciousness. The Indian who is sitting on the floor simply falls backwards without hurting the body; those who meditate in a chair will do well to make use of an armchair so that, in the event of the body losing consciousness, they may not fall out of it.

Except in very rare cases the lying-down position should not be adopted, on account of its natural tendency towards sleep.

A cold bath or a brisk walk beforehand is useful in order to overcome any tendency to sluggish circulation of the blood, which is obviously detrimental to brain activity.

There is an intimate connection between profound meditation and breathing. It is found in practice that as the body becomes harmonised in meditation the breathing grows deeper, regular and rhythmic, until by degrees it becomes so

slow and quiet as to be almost imperceptible. Hatha Yoga reverses the process, and by deliberate regulation of the breathing seeks to harmonise the functions of the body, and finally, the workings of the mind.

The student, however, should be warned against the indiscriminate practice of breathing exercises; he will be far better advised to learn to control of thought along the lines of Raja Yoga , leaving his efforts at meditation to work their natural effect on the physical body.

Whilst some breathing exercises are exceedingly dangerous, there is no objection to simple, deep breathing provided undue strain is not placed upon the heart and lungs, and no attempt is made to concentrate the thought on the various centres, or chakrams, of the body.

Good incense is also helpful, as it tends to purify the "atmosphere" from the occult standpoint. The student may also gain assistance from beautiful colours, flowers and pictures in his surroundings, and other means of uplifting the mind and feelings.

He will also find it useful to observe certain dietetic restrictions [vide The Astral Body. p. 65] and, if it can be done without detriment to health, to abstain from flesh-food and alcohol.

If alcohol is taken, meditation is apt to set up inflammatory symptoms in the brain affecting particularly the pituitary body [vide The Astral Body, p. 66].

Early morning is probably the most suitable time for meditation because desires and emotions are usually more tranquil after sleep and before the man plunges into the bustle of the world. But whatever time is chosen it should be when there is assurance of being undisturbed. Moreover, as already pointed out, it should always be at the same time, for regularity is of the essence of the prescription.

The times selected by ancient devotees were sunrise, noon and sunset, these being magnetically the most suitable. It is well to cultivate the habit of turning the mind for a moment at the stroke of every hour during the day to the realisation of oneself as the Spiritual Man. This practice leads to what Christian Mystics called "self-recollectedness", and helps the student to train his mind to revert automatically to spiritual thoughts.

It is not well to meditate immediately after a meal, for the obvious reason that it tends to draw blood away from the digestive organs; neither is meditation at night good, because the bodies are tired and the etheric double is more readily displaceable; in addition, the negative influence of the moon is then operative, so that undesirable results are more liable to occur.

Sometimes meditation may be less successful than usual because of unfavourable astral or mental influences.

It is stated also by some people that at certain times the planetary influences are more favourable than at others. Thus an astrologer has said that when Jupiter had certain relations with the moon this had the effect of expanding the etheric atmosphere and making meditation appear more successful. Certain aspects with Saturn, on the other hand, were said to congest the etheric atmosphere, making meditation difficult.

The system of meditation briefly outlined above has as its object spiritual, mental and ethical development, and control of the mind and feelings. It does not aim at developing psychic faculties "from below upwards"; but its natural result may be to open up a form of intuitive psychism in persons of sufficiently sensitive organisation, which will show itself in increasing sensitiveness to the influence of people and places, in the recalling of fragmentary memories of astral plane experiences in sleep, in greater susceptibility to direct guidance from the ego, in the power to recognise the influence of the Masters and spiritually developed people, and so forth.

Meditation may result in illumination, which may be one of three quite different things:

- [1] By intense and careful thinking over a subject a man may himself arrive at some conclusion with respect to it;
- [2] he may obtain illumination from his higher self, discovering what his ego really thinks on his own plane about the question;
- [3] he may, if highly developed, come into touch with Masters or devas. It is in [1] only that his conclusions would be likely to be vitiated by his own thought-forms; the higher self would be able to transcend these, and so would a Master or a deva.

What we can do in meditation depends upon what we are doing all day long. If we have prejudices, for example, in ordinary life, we cannot escape from them in meditation.

Physical meditation is, of course, for the training of the lower vehicles, not for the ego. During meditation the ego regards the personality much as at any other time—he is usually slightly contemptuous.

If the ego is at all developed he will meditate upon his own level, but that meditation need not, of course, synchronise with that of the personality.

Meditation is one means of acquiring the art of leaving the body in full consciousness. The consciousness being braced up to an unswerving steadiness and fixity, the attention is gradually withdrawn from the outer world and the body, the senses remaining quiet —[page 158]—while the mind is intensely alive, but with all its energies drawn inwards ready to be launched at a single point of thought, the highest to which it can attain. When it is able to hold

itself thus with comparative ease by a strong but calm effort of will, it can throw itself beyond the highest thought it can reach while working in the physical brain, and in that effort will rise to, and unite itself with, the higher consciousness and find itself free from the body. When this is done there is no sense of sleep or dream nor any loss of consciousness; the man finds himself outside his body, as though he had slipped off a weighty encumbrance, not as though he had lost any part of himself.

There are other ways of obtaining freedom from the body; for example, by the rapt intensity of devotion, or by special methods that may be imparted by a great teacher to his pupil.

The man can return to his body and re-enter it at will; also, under these circumstances he can impress on the brain, and thus retain while in the physical body, the memory of the experiences he has undergone.

Real meditation means a strenuous effort, not the sensation of happiness which arises from a state of semi-somnolence and bodily luxury. It has, therefore, nothing to do with, and, in fact, is quite different from, the kind of passive mediumship developed in spiritualism.

The student need not be puzzled by the injunction that he should open himself to spiritual influences and at the same time be positive. Positive effort is needed as a preliminary; this uplifts the consciousness the higher levels so that the higher influences can play down; then, and only then, is it safe to relax the upward striving in the realisation of the peace thus attained. The phrase "opening oneself to spiritual influences" may be taken to mean maintaining an attitude of intense stillness at a high spiritual level, much as a bird, though seemingly passive and immobile, poises itself against the gale by a powerful effort continuously maintained in wing and pinion.

## **CHAPTER XVII**

### **CONTEMPLATION**

CONTEMPLATION is the third of the three stages, of which we have already considered two. The three are :

- [1] Concentration –The riveting of the attention on an object.
- [2] Meditation –The stirring of the consciousness into activity with reference to that object alone; looking at the object in every possible light, and trying to penetrate its meaning, to reach a new and deep thought or receive some intuitional light upon it.
- [3] Contemplation –The active centring of the consciousness on the object, while

the lower activities of the consciousness are successfully repressed; the fixation of the attention for a time on the light received. It has been defined as concentration at the top of the line of thought or meditation.

In the Hindu terminology the stages are amplified and named as follows:

[1] Prâtyâhara : the preliminary stage, embracing entire control of the senses.

[2] Dhâranâ : concentration.

[3] Dhyâna : meditation.

[4] Samadhi : contemplation.

Dhâranâ, Dhyâna and Samadhi are known collectively as Sannyama.

In meditation we discover what the object is as compared with other things, and in relation to them. We go on with this process of reasoning and argument until we can reason and argue no more about a object: then we suppress the process, stopping all comparing and arguing, with the attention fixed actively upon the object, trying to penetrate the indefiniteness which for us appears to surround it. That is contemplation.

The beginner should bear in mind that meditation is a science of a lifetime, so that he should not expect to attain to the stage of pure contemplation in his earlier efforts.

Contemplation may be described also as keeping the consciousness on one thing and drawing it into oneself so that the thinker and it become one.

When a well-trained mind can maintain its one-pointedness or concentration for some time, and can then drop the object, maintaining the fixed attention, but without the attention being directed to anything, then the stage of contemplation is reached.

In this stage the mental body shows no image; its own materials are held steady and firm, receiving no impressions, perfectly calm, like still water. This state cannot last for more than a very brief period, being like the "critical" state of the chemist, the point between two states of matter.

Expressed in another way, as the mental body is stilled, the consciousness escapes from it and passes into and out of the "laya centre", the neutral points of contact between the mental and the causal body.

This passage is accompanied by a momentary swoon, or loss of consciousness, the inevitable result of the disappearance of objects of consciousness, followed by consciousness in the higher body. The dropping out of objects of

consciousness belonging to the lower worlds is thus followed by the appearance of objects of consciousness in the higher world.

Then the ego can shape the mental body according to his own lofty thoughts, and permeate it with his own vibrations. He can mould it after the visions he has obtained of planes even higher than his own, and can thus convey to the lower consciousness ideas to which the mental body would otherwise be unable to respond.

These are the inspirations of genius, that flash down into the mind with dazzling light and illuminate a world. The very man himself who gives them to the world can scarcely tell, in his ordinary mental state, how they have reached him ; but he knows that in some strange way-----

*"the power within me pealing  
Lives on my lip and beckons with my hand "*.

Of this nature also are the ecstasy and visions of Saints, of all creeds and in all ages; in these cases, prolonged and absorbing prayer, or contemplation, has produced the necessary brain-condition. The avenues of the senses have become closed by the intensity of the inner concentration, and the same state is reached, spasmodically and involuntarily, which the Raja Yogi seeks deliberately to attain.

The transition from meditation to contemplation has been described as passing from meditation "with seed" to meditation "without seed". Having steadied the mind, it is held poised on the highest point of the reasoning, the last link in the chain of argument, or on the central thought or figure of the whole process; that is meditation with seed.

Then the student should let everything go, but still keeping the mind in the position gained, the highest point reached, vigorous and alert. That is meditation without seed. Remaining poised, waiting in the silence and the void, the man is in the "cloud". Then suddenly there will be a change, a change unmistakable, stupendous, incredible. This is contemplation leading to illumination.

Thus, for example, practising contemplation on the ideal man, on a Master, having formed an image of the Master, the student contemplates it with ecstasy, filling himself with its glory and its beauty, and then straining upwards towards Him, he endeavours to raise his consciousness to the ideal, to merge himself in it, to become one with it.

The momentary swoon mentioned above is called in Sanskrit the Dharma-Megha, the cloud of righteousness ; Western mystics speak of it as the "Cloud on the Mount", the "Cloud on the Sanctuary", the "Cloud on the Mercy-Seat". The man feels as though surrounded by a dense mist, conscious that he is not alone, but unable to see. Presently the cloud thins, and the consciousness of the higher

plane dawns. But before it does so it seems to the man that his very life is draining away, that he is hanging in the void of great darkness unspeakably lonely. But "Be still, and know that I am God". In that silence and stillness the Voice of the Self shall be heard, the glory of the Self shall be seen. The cloud vanishes and the Self is made manifest.

Before it is possible to pass from meditation to contemplation, wishing and hoping must be entirely given up, at least during the period of practice : in other words, Kâma must be perfectly under control. The mind can never be single while wishes occupy it; every wish is a seed from which may spring anger, untruthfulness, impurity, resentment, greed, carelessness, discontent, sloth, ignorance etc. While one wish of hope remains, these violations of the law are possible.

So long as there are wishes, non-satisfactions, they will call one aside ; the stream of thought is ever seeking to flow aside into little gullies and channels left open by unsatisfied desires and indecisive thought.

Every unsatisfied desire, every un-thought-out problem, will present a hungry mouth ever calling aside the attention ; when the train of thought meets a difficulty it will swing aside to attend to these calls. Tracing out interrupted chains of thought, it will be found that they have their source in unsatisfied desires and unsettled problems.

The process of contemplation commences when the conscious activity begins to run, as it were, at right angles to the usual activity, which endeavours to understand a thing in reference to other things of its own nature and plane ; such movement cuts across the planes of its existence and penetrates into its subtler inner nature. When the attention is no longer divided into parts by the activities of comparing, the mind will move as a whole, and will seem quite still, just as a spinning top may appear to stand still when it is in most rapid motion.

In contemplation one no longer thinks about the object, it is better even not to start with any idea of the self and the object as two different things in relation to one another, because to do so will tend to colour the idea with feeling. The endeavour should be made to reach such a point of self-detachment that the contemplation can start from inside the object itself, the mental enthusiasm and energy being at the same time kept up all along the line of thought. The consciousness is to be held, poised like a bird on the wing, looking forward and never thinking of turning back.

In contemplation the thought is carried inwards until it can go no further ; it is held in that position without going back or turning aside, knowing that there is something there, although it is unable to grasp clearly what it is. In this contemplation there is, of course nothing in the nature of sleep or mental activity, but an intense search, a prolonged effort to see in the indefiniteness something definite, without descending to the ordinary lower regions of conscious activity in

which the vision is normally clear and precise.

A devotee would practise contemplation in a similar manner, but in his case the activity would be mainly feeling rather than thought.

In contemplation on his own nature, the student repudiates his identity with the outer bodies and with the mind. In this process he is not divesting himself of attributes, but of limitations. The mind is swifter and freer than the body, and beyond the mind is spirit, which is freer and swifter still. Love is more possible in the quietude of the heart than in any outer expression, but in the spirit beyond the mind it is divinely certain. Reason and judgement ever correct the halting evidence of the senses ; the vision of the spirit discerns the truth without organs and without mind.

The key to success at every step of these practices may be stated thus: obstruct the lower activities, while maintaining the full flow of conscious energy. First, the lower mind must be made vigorous and alert; then its activity must be obstructed while the impetus gained is used to exercise and develop the higher faculties within.

An ancient science of Yoga teaches, when the processes of the thinking mind are repressed by the active will, the man finds himself in a new state of consciousness which transcends the ordinary thinking and governs it, just as thought transcends and selects among desires, and just as desires prompt to particular actions and efforts. Such a superior state of consciousness cannot be described in terms of the lower mind, but its attainment means that the man is conscious that he is something above mind and thought even though mental activity may be going on, just as all cultured people recognise that they are not the physical body, even when that body may be acting.

There is thus another state of existence, or rather another living conception of life, beyond the mind with its laboured processes of discernment, of comparisons and causal relations between things. That higher state is to be realised only when the activities of consciousness are carried, in all their earthly fervour and vigour, beyond the groping cave-life in which they normally dwell. That higher consciousness will come to all men sooner or later; and when it comes all life will suddenly appear changed.

As the student by his meditation grows richer in spiritual experience, he will thus find new phases of consciousness gradually opening up within him. Fixed in aspiration upon his ideal, he will presently become aware of the influence of that ideal raying down upon him, and as he makes a desperate effort to reach the object of his devotion, for a brief moment the floodgates of heaven itself will be opened and he will find himself made one with his ideal and suffused with the glory of its realisation. Having transcended the more formal figures of the mind, an intense effort is made to reach upwards. Then will come the attainment of that state of ecstasy of spirit, when the limits of the personality have fallen away and

all shadow of separateness has vanished in the perfect union of object and seeker.

As said in The Voice of The Silence : "Thou canst not travel on the Path before thou hast become that Path itself...Behold ! thou hast become the light, thou hast become the sound, thou art thy Master and thy God. Thou art thyself the object of thy search; the voice unbroken, that resounds throughout eternities, exempt from change, from sin exempt, the seven sounds in one."

It were idle to attempt further description of such experiences, for they are beyond the reach of formulated utterance. Words serve but as signposts pointing out the way to that which is ineffably glorious, so that the pilgrim may know whither to direct his steps.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### SLEEP-LIFE

Many people find themselves troubled with streams of wandering thought when they are trying to fall asleep. In such cases a mental shell will deliver them from such of these thoughts as come from without. Such a shell need only be temporary, since all that is required is peace for an interval sufficient to allow the man to fall asleep.

The man will carry away with him this mental shell when he leaves his physical body, but its work will then be accomplished, its sole object being to enable him to leave his body.

Whilst he was in the physical body, the mental action on the brain particles may easily have prevented him quitting the body; but when once he is away from the body the same worry or wandering thought will not bring him back to it.

When the shell breaks up, the stream of idle thoughts or mental worry will probably re-assert itself, but as the man will be away from his physical brain this will not interfere with the repose of the body.

It is an extremely rare occurrence for either an ordinary person during sleep, or a psychically developed person in trance condition, to penetrate to the mental plane. Purity of life and purpose would be an absolute pre-requisite, and even when the mental plane was reached there would be nothing that could be called real consciousness, but simply a capacity for receiving impressions.

An example showing the possibility of entering the mental plane during sleep may be given. A person of pure mind and considerable though untrained psychic capacity was approached during sleep, and a thought-picture was presented to her mind. So intense was the feeling of reverent joy, so lofty and so spiritual were the thoughts evoked by the contemplation of the glorious scene that the consciousness of the sleeper passed into the mental body, i.e., "she rose" to the

mental plane. Although she was floating in the sea of light and colour, nevertheless she was entirely absorbed in her own thought, and conscious of nothing beyond it. She remained in that condition for several hours, though apparently unconscious of the passage of time. It is clear in this case, that although the sleeper was conscious on the mental plane, yet she was by no means conscious of it.

It seems probable that a result such as this would be possible only in the case of a person having already some amount of psychic development; the same condition is even more definitely necessary in order that a mesmerised subject could touch the mental plane in trance.

The reason for this, as previously stated, is that in the average man the mental body is not sufficiently developed to be employed as a separate vehicle of consciousness. It can, in fact, be employed as a vehicle only by those who have been specially trained in its use by teachers belonging to the Great Brotherhood of Initiates.

We may repeat here what was said in Chapter XVI, viz., that up to the time of the First Initiation, a man works at night in his astral body; but as soon as it is perfectly under control, and he is able to use it fully, work in the mental body is begun. When this body in turn is completely organised, it is a far more flexible vehicle than the astral body, and much that is impossible on the astral plane can be accomplished therein.

Although a man after death may live in the heaven world, i.e., on the mental plane [as we shall see in later chapters], yet he is shut up in a shell of his own thoughts; this cannot be called functioning on the mental plane, for that involves the ability to move about freely on that plane, and to observe what exists there.

A man who is able to function freely in the mental body has the capacity of entering upon all the glory and beauty of the mental plane, and possesses, even when working on the astral plane, the far more comprehensive mental sense, which opens up to him such marvellous vistas of knowledge, and practically renders error all but impossible.

When functioning in the mental body, a man leaves his astral body behind him along with the physical body; if he wishes to show himself upon the astral plane for any reason, he does not send for his own astral vehicle, but by a single action of his will materialises one for his temporary need. Such an astral materialisation is called a *mâyâvirûpa*, and to form it for the first time usually needs the assistance of a qualified master. [This subject will be dealt with in our next chapter].

There is another way in which the sleep-life can be usefully employed, viz., for solving problems. The method is, of course, practised by many people, though for the most part unconsciously; it is expressed in the proverb that "The night

brings counsel". The problem to be solved should be quietly held in the mind when going to sleep; it should not be debated or argued, or sleep may be prevented; it should be merely stated to the mind and left. Then, when during sleep the Thinker is freed from the physical body and brain, he will take up the problem and deal with it. Usually the thinker will impress the solution on the brain so that it will be in the consciousness on awakening. It is a good plan to keep paper and pencil by the bed in order to note down the solution immediately on waking, because a thought thus obtained is very readily erased by the thronging stimuli from the physical world, and is not easily recovered.

## CHAPTER XIX

### THE MÂYÂVIRÛPA

MÂYÂVIRÛPA means literally "body of illusion". It is a temporary astral body made by one who is able to function in the mental body. It may, or may not, resemble the physical body, the form given to it being suitable to the purpose for which it is projected. It may be made, at will, visible or invisible on the physical plane; it can be made indistinguishable from a physical body, warm and firm to the touch, as well as visible, able to carry on a conversation, at all points like a physical being.

The advantage of using the MÂYÂVIRÛPA is that it is not subject to glamour on the astral plane, as is the astral body; no astral glamour can overpower the MÂYÂVIRÛPA, or astral illusion deceive it.

With the power to form the mayavirupa, a man is able to pass instantly from the mental plane to the astral and back, and to use at all times the greater power and keener sense on the mental plane; it is necessary to form the astral materialisation only when the man wishes to become visible to people in the astral world. When he has finished his work on the astral plane he withdraws to the mental plane again, and the mayavirupa vanishes, its materials returning to the general circulation of astral matter, whence they had been drawn by the pupil's will.

When in the MÂYÂVIRÛPA, a man may use the mental plane method of thought-transference so far as understanding another man is concerned; but, of course, the power of conveying the thought in that way to another is limited by the degree of development of that other man's astral body.

It is necessary that the Master shall first show His pupil how to make the MÂYÂVIRÛPA, after which, although it is not at first an easy matter, he can do it for himself.

After the Second Initiation, rapid progress is made with the development of the mental body, and it is at or near this point that the pupil learns to use the MÂYÂVIRÛPA.

## CHAPTER XX

### DEVACHAN : PRINCIPLES

The first portion of the life after death, spent on the astral plane, has already been fully described in *The Astral Body*. We therefore now take up our study from the moment when the astral body is left behind on its own plane, and the man withdraws his consciousness into the mental body, ie., "rises" to the mental plane, and in so doing enters what is known as the heaven-world. This is usually called by Theosophists Devachan, which means literally the Shining Land; it is also termed in Sanskrit *Devasthân*, the land of the Gods; it is the *Svarga* of the Hindus, the *Sukhavati* of the Buddhists, the Heaven of the Zoroastrian, Christian and Mohammedan; it has been called also the "Nirvana" of the common people." The basic principle of devachan is that it is a world of thought.

A man in devachan is described as a devachanî.

[The word Devachan is etymologically inaccurate, and therefore misleading. It has, however, become so firmly embedded in the Theosophical terminology that the present compiler has retained it throughout this volume. At least it has the merit of being less clumsy than "heaven-world" —A. E. Powell.]

In the older books devachan is described as a specially guarded part of the mental plane, where all sorrow and evil are excluded by the action of the great spiritual Intelligences who superintend human evolution. It is the blissful resting-place of man where he peacefully assimilates the fruits of his physical life.

In reality, however, devachan is not a reserved part of the mental plane. It is rather that each man, as we shall see presently, shuts himself up in his own shell, and therefore takes no part in the life of the mental plane at all; he does not move about freely and deal with people as he does on the astral plane.

Another way of regarding what has been called the artificial guardianship of devachan, the gulf that surrounds each individual there, arises from the fact that the whole of the kâmic, or astral, matter has, of course been swept away, and is no longer there. The man therefore has no vehicle, no medium of communication which can respond to anything in the lower worlds. For practical purposes these are in consequence non-existent for him.

The final separation of the mental body from the astral does not involve any pain or suffering; in fact, it is impossible that the ordinary man should in any way realise its nature; he would simply feel himself sinking gently into a delightful repose.

There is however, usually a period of blank unconsciousness, analogous to that which usually follows physical death; the period may vary within wide limits, and from it the man awakens gradually.

It appears that this period of unconsciousness is one of gestation, corresponding to the pre-natal physical life, and being necessary for the building up of the devachanic ego for the life in devachan. Part of it appears to be occupied in the absorption by the astral permanent atom of everything that has to be carried forward for the future, and part of it in vivifying the matter of the mental body for its coming separate independent life.

When the man awakens again, after the second death, his first sense is one of indescribable bliss and vitality, a feeling of such other joy in living that he needs for the time nothing but just to live. Such bliss is of the essence of life in all the higher worlds of the system. Even astral life has possibilities of happiness far greater than anything that we can know in the physical life, but the heaven-life is out of all proportion more blissful than the astral. In each higher world the same experience is repeated, each far surpassing the preceding one. This is true not only of the feeling of bliss, but also of wisdom and breadth of view. The heaven life is so much fuller and wider than the astral that no comparison between them is possible.

As the sleeper awakens in devachan the most delicate hues greet his opening eyes, the very air seems music and colour, the whole being is suffused with light and harmony. Then through the golden haze appear the faces of those he has loved on earth, etherealised into the beauty which expresses their noblest, loveliest emotions, unmarred by the troubles and the passions of the lower worlds. No man may describe adequately the bliss of the awakening into the heaven-world.

This intensity of bliss is the main characteristic of the heaven-life. It is not merely that evil and sorrow are in the nature of things impossible in that world, or even that every creature is happy there. It is a world in which every being must, from the very fact of his presence there, be enjoying the highest spiritual bliss of which he is capable, a world where power of response to his aspirations is limited only by his capacity to aspire.

This sense of the overwhelming presence of universal joy never leaves a man in devachan; nothing on earth is like it, nothing can image it; the tremendous spiritual vitality of this celestial world is indescribable.

Various attempts have been made to describe the heaven-world, but all of them fail because it is by its nature indescribable in physical language. Thus Buddhist and Hindu seers speak of trees of gold and silver with jewelled fruits; the Jewish scribe, having lived in a great and magnificent city, spoke of the streets of gold and silver; more modern Theosophical writers draw their similes from the colours of the sunset and the glories of the sea and sky. Each alike tries to paint the truth, too grand for words, by employing such similes as are familiar to his mind.

The man's position in the mental world differs widely from that in the astral. In the astral he was using a body to which he was thoroughly accustomed, having been in the habit of using it during sleep. The mental vehicle however, he has never

used before, and it is far from being fully developed. It thus shuts him out to a great extent from the world about him, instead of enabling him to see it.

During his purgatorial life on the astral plane the lower part of his nature burnt itself away; now there remain to him only his higher and more refined thoughts, the noble and unselfish aspirations which he entertained during his earth-life.

In the astral world he may have a comparatively pleasant life, though distinctly limited; on the other hand, he may suffer considerably in that purgatorial existence. But in devachan he reaps the results only of such of his thoughts and feelings as have been entirely unselfish; hence the devachanic life cannot be other than blissful.

As a Master has said, devachan "*is the land where there are no tears, no sighs, where there is neither marrying nor giving in marriage, and where the just realise their full perfection.*"

The thoughts which cluster round the devachani make a sort of shell, through the medium of which he is able to respond to certain types of vibration in this refined matter. These thoughts are the powers by which he draws on the infinite wealth of the heaven-world. They serve as windows through which he can look out upon the glory and beauty of the heaven-world, and through which also response may come to him from forces without.

Every man who is above the lowest savage must have had some touch of pure unselfish feeling, even if it were but once in all his life; and that will be a window for him now.

It would be an error to regard this shell of thought as a limitation. Its function is not to shut a man off from the vibrations of the plane, but rather to enable him to respond to such influences as are within his capacity to cognise. The mental plane [as we shall see in Chapter XXVII] is a reflection of the Divine Mind, a storehouse of infinite extent, from which the person enjoying heaven is able to draw just according to the power of his own thoughts and aspirations generated during his physical and astral life.

In the heaven-world these limitations –if we may call them that for the moment – no longer exist; but with that higher world we are not concerned in this volume.

Each man is able to draw upon the heaven-world, and to cognise only so much of it as he has by previous effort prepared himself to take. As the Eastern simile has it, each man brings his own cup; some of the cups are large, and some are small. But, large or small, every cup is filled to its uttermost capacity; the sea of bliss is far more than enough for all.

The ordinary man is not capable of any great activity in this mental world; his condition is chiefly receptive, and his vision of anything outside his own shell of

thought is of the most limited character. His thoughts and aspirations being only along certain lines, he cannot suddenly form new ones; hence he perforce can profit little from the living forces which surround him, or from the mighty angelic inhabitants of the mental world, even though many of these readily respond to certain of man's aspirations.

Thus a man who, during earth-life, has chiefly regarded physical things, has made for himself but few windows through which he may contact the world in which he finds himself. A man, however, whose interests lay in art, music or philosophy will find measureless enjoyment and unlimited instruction awaiting him, the extent to which he can benefit depending solely upon his own power of perception.

There is a large number of people whose only higher thoughts are those connected with affection and devotion. A man who loves another deeply, or feels strong devotion to a personal deity, makes a strong mental image of that friend, or of the deity, and inevitably takes that mental image with him into the mental world, because it is to that level of matter that it naturally belongs.

Now follows an important and interesting result. The love which forms and retains the image is a very powerful force, strong enough in fact to reach and to act upon the ego of the friend, which exists on the higher mental plane; for it is of course, the ego that is the real man loved, not the physical body which is so partial a representation of him. The ego of the friend, feeling the vibration, at once and eagerly responds to it, and pours himself into the thought-form which has been made for him. The man's friend is therefore truly present with him more vividly than ever before.

It makes no difference whatever whether the friend is what we call living or dead; this is because the appeal is made, not to the fragment of the friend which is sometimes imprisoned in a physical body, but to the man himself on his own true level. The ego always responds; so that one who has a hundred friends can simultaneously and fully respond to the affection of every one of them, for no number of representations of a lower level can exhaust the infinity of the ego. Hence a man can express himself in the "heavens" of an indefinite number of people.

Each man in his heaven-life thus has around him the vivified thought-forms of all the friends for whose company he wishes. Moreover, they are for him always their best, because he has himself made the thought-images through which they manifest.

In the limited physical world we are accustomed to thinking of our friend as only the limited manifestation which we know on the physical plane. In the heaven world, on the other hand, we are clearly much nearer to the reality in our friends than we ever were on earth, as we are two stages, or planes, nearer the home of the ego himself.

There is an important difference between life after death on the mental plane and life on the astral plane. For on the astral plane we meet our friends [during sleep of their physical bodies] in their astral bodies; i.e., we are still dealing with their *personalities*. On the mental plane, however, we do not meet our friends in the mental bodies which they use on earth. On the contrary, their egos build for themselves entirely new and separate mental vehicles and, instead of the consciousness of the personalities, the consciousness of the egos work through the mental vehicles. The mental plane activities of our friends are thus entirely separate in every way from the personalities of their physical lives.

Hence any sorrow or trouble which may fall upon the *personality* of the living man cannot in the least affect the thought-form of him which his ego is using as an additional mental body. If in that manifestation he did know of the sorrow or trouble of the personality, it would not be a trouble to him, because he would regard it from the point of view of the ego in the causal body, viz., as a lesson to be learned, or some karma to be worked out. In this view of his there is no delusion; on the contrary, it is the view of the lower personality which is the deluded one; for what the personality sees as troubles or sorrows are to the real man in the causal body merely steps on the upward path of evolution.

We also see that a man in devachan is *not* conscious of the personal lives of his friends on the physical plane. What we may call the mechanical reason for this has already been fully explained. There are also other reasons, equally cogent, for this arrangement. For it would obviously be impossible for a man in devachan to be happy if he looked back and saw those whom he loved in sorrow and suffering, or in the commission of sin.

In devachan there is thus no separation due to space or time; nor can any misunderstanding of word or thought arise; on the contrary, there is a far closer communion, soul with soul, than ever was the case in earth-life. On the mental plane there is no barrier between soul and soul; exactly in proportion to the reality of soul-life in us is the reality of soul-communion in devachan. The soul of our friend lives in the form of him which we have created just to the extent that his soul and ours can throb in sympathetic vibration.

We can have no touch with those with whom on earth the ties were only of the physical and astral bodies, or if they and we were discordant in the inner life. Hence, in devachan no enemy can enter, for only sympathetic accord of mind and heart can draw men together in the heaven-world.

With those who are beyond us in evolution, we come into contact just so far as we can respond to them; with those who are less advanced than we are, we commune to the limit of *their* capacity.

The student will recollect that the Desire-Elemental re-arranges the astral body after death in concentric layers of matter, the densest outermost, thus confining the man to that sub-plane of the astral world to which belongs the matter in the

outermost layer of his astral body. On the mental plane there is nothing to correspond to this, the mental elemental not acting in the manner adopted by the Desire-Elemental.

There is also another important difference between the astral and mental life. On the mental plane the man does not pass through the various levels in turn, but is drawn *direct* to the level which best corresponds to his degree of development. On that level he spends the whole of his life in the mental body. The varieties of that life are infinite, as each man makes his own for himself.

In devachan, the heaven world, all that was valuable in the moral and mental experiences of the Thinker during the life just ended is worked out, meditated over, and gradually transmuted into definite moral and mental faculty, into powers which he will take with him to his next incarnation. He does not work into the mental body, the actual memory of the past, for the mental body will, as we shall see in due course, disintegrate. The memory of the past abides only in the Thinker himself, who has lived through it and who endures. But the facts of past experience are worked into capacity, so that, if a man has studied deeply, the effects of that study will be the creation of a special faculty to acquire and master that subject when it is first presented to him in another incarnation. He will be born with a special aptitude for that line of study, and will absorb it with great facility.

Everything thought upon earth is thus utilised in devachan; every aspiration is worked up into power; all frustrated efforts become faculties and abilities; struggles and defeats re-appear as materials to be wrought into instruments of victory; sorrows and errors shine luminous as precious metals to be worked up into wise and well-directed volitions. Schemes of beneficence, for which power and skill to accomplish were lacking in the past, are in devachan worked out in thought, acted out, as it were, stage by stage, and the necessary power and skill are developed as faculties of mind to be put into use in a future life on earth.

In devachan, as a Master has said, the ego collects "*only the nectar of moral qualities and consciousness from every terrestrial personality*".

During the devachanic period the ego reviews his store of experiences, the harvest of the earth-life just closed, separating and classifying them, assimilating what is capable of assimilation, rejecting what is effete and useless. The ego can no more be always busied in the whirl of earth-life than a workman can always be gathering store of materials, and never fabricating from them goods; or than a man can always be eating food and never digesting and assimilating it to build up the tissues of his body. Thus devachan, except for the very few, as we shall see later, is an absolute necessity in the scheme of things.

An imperfect understanding of the true nature of devachan has sometimes led people to think that the life of the ordinary person in the lower heaven-world is nothing but a dream and an illusion; that when he imagines himself happy amidst

his family and friends, or carrying out his plans with such fullness of joy and success, he is really only a victim of a cruel delusion.

This idea results from misconception of what constitutes reality [so far as we can ever know it], and from a faulty point of view. The student should recollect that most people realise so little of their mental life, even as led in the body, that when they are presented with a picture of mental life out of the body, they lose all sense of reality, and feel as though they had passed into a world of dream. The truth is, however, that physical life compares unfavourably, as regards reality, with life in the mental world.

During ordinary earth-life it is obvious that that average person's conception of everything around him is imperfect and inaccurate in very many ways. He knows, for example, nothing of the etheric, astral and mental forces which lie behind everything he sees, and form in fact by far the most important part of it. His whole outlook is limited to that small portion of things which his senses, his intellect, his education, his experience, enable him to take in. Thus he lives in a world very largely of his own creation. He does not realise that this is so, because he knows no better. Thus, from this point of view, ordinary physical life is at least as illusory as is life in devachan, and careful thought will show that it is really far more so.

For, when a man in devachan takes his thoughts to be real things, he is perfectly right; they are *real* things on the mental plane, because in that world nothing but thought can be real. The difference is that on the mental plane we recognise this great fact in nature, whereas on the physical plane we do not. Hence we are justified in saying that, of the two, the delusion is greater on the physical plane. Mental life, in fact, is far more intense, vivid, and nearer to reality than the life of the senses.

Hence, in the words of a Master: "we call the posthumous life the only reality, and the terrestrial one, including the personality itself, only imaginary." "To call the devachan existence a 'dream' in any other sense than that of a conventional term, is to renounce for ever the knowledge of the Esoteric Doctrine, the sole custodian of truth".

One reason for the feeling of reality in earth-life, and of unreality when we hear of devachan, is that we look at earth-life from *within*, under the full sway of its illusions, while we contemplate devachan from *outside* free for the time from its particular grade of *mâyâ* or illusion.

In devachan itself the process is reversed; for its inhabitants feel their own life to be the real one, and look on earth-life as full of the most patent illusions and misconceptions. On the whole, those in devachan are nearer the truth than their physical critics in earth-life, but of course the illusions of earth, though lessened, are not wholly escaped from in the lower heavens, in spite of the fact that contact there is more real and more immediate.

In more general terms, the truth is that the higher we rise through the planes of being, the nearer we draw to reality; for spiritual things are relatively real and enduring, material things illusory and transitory.

The student may usefully pursue this thought a little further, and regard the life in devachan as the natural and inevitable result of the earlier life spent on the physical and astral planes. Our highest ideals and aspirations are never realised on the physical plane, nor can they ever be realised there, because of the narrowness of its possibilities and the comparative grossness of its matter.

But by the law of karma [of which that known as the conservation of energy is another expression] no force can ever be lost or robbed of its due effect; it *must* produce its due and full effect, and until its opportunity arises it remains as so much stored-up energy. In other words, much of the higher spiritual energy of man cannot bring about its due result in earth-life, because his higher principles cannot respond to such fine and subtle vibrations until the man is free from the incubus of the flesh. In the heaven-life, for the first time, all this hindrance is removed, and the accumulated energy pours forth in the inevitable reaction which the law of karma demands. "On the earth the broken arcs", says Browning, "in the heaven a perfect round". So perfect justice is done, and nothing is ever lost, even though in the physical world it may seem that much has missed its aim and come to nothing.

Devachan is thus by no means a dream, or lotus-land of purposeless idling. On the contrary, it is a land, or better, a condition of existence, where the mind and heart develop, unhindered by gross matter or by trivial cares, where weapons are forged for the struggles of earth-life, and where, in fact, the progress of the future is secured.

The student may perceive also that the system upon which nature has arranged the life after death is the only conceivable one which could fulfil its object of making everyone happy to the fullest extent of his capacity for happiness. If the joy of heaven were of one particular type only [as it is according to certain orthodox theories] some would weary of it, some would not be able to participate in it, either from want of taste in that particular direction, or from want of the necessary education. In *Captain Stormfield's Visit to Heaven*, Mark Twain has made of the old-fashioned idea of heaven such a *reductio ad absurdum* as to make it [one would think] forever untenable, thereby incidentally affording a classic example of the uses of humorous analysis even in matters of profound religion and philosophy.

Returning to our main theme, what other arrangement with regard to relatives and friends could be equally satisfactory? If the departed were permitted to follow the fluctuating fortunes of their friends on earth, happiness would be impossible for them. If, without knowing what was happening to them, they had to wait until the death of those friends before meeting them, there would be a painful period

of suspense, often extending over many years, while in many cases friends would arrive so changed as to be no longer sympathetic.

Nature has avoided all these difficulties. Each man decides for himself, both the length and character of his heaven-life, by the causes which he has himself generated during his earth-life; therefore he cannot but have exactly the amount which he has deserved, and exactly that quality of joy which is best suited to his idiosyncrasies. Those whom he loves he has ever with him, and always at their noblest and best; no shadow of discord or change can ever come between them, since he receives from them all the time exactly what he wishes. In fact, nature's method is infinitely superior to anything which the wit or imagination of man has ever been able to offer in its place.

It is, perhaps, difficult on the physical plane to realise the creative nature of the powers exercised by the Thinker, clad in his mental body, and untrammelled by the physical vehicle. On earth, an artist may create visions of exquisite beauty, but when he seeks to embody them in the materials of earth he finds they fall short of his mental conceptions. In devachan, however, all that a man thinks is at once reproduced in form, out of the rare and subtle matter of mind-stuff itself, the medium in which the mind normally works when free from passion, and which responds to every mental impulse. Thus the beauty of man's surroundings in devachan is indefinitely increased to the wealth and energy of his mind.

The student should strive to realise that the mental plane is a vast and splendid world of vivid life in which we are living *now*, as well as in the periods between physical incarnations. It is only our lack of development, the limitations imposed by the physical body, that prevent us from fully realising that all the glory of the highest heaven is about us here and now, and that influences flowing from that world are ever playing upon us, if we will only understand and receive them. As the Buddhist teacher said: "the light is all about you, if you will only cast the bandage from your eyes and look. It is so wonderful, so beautiful, so far beyond what any man has dreamt of or prayed for, and it is forever and ever.". [The Soul of a People, p.163.]

In other words, devachan is a state of consciousness, and may be entered at any time by one who has learned to withdraw his soul from his senses. We may consider that what devachan is to each earth-life, so is Nirvana to the finished cycle of reincarnation.

## CHAPTER XXI

### DEVACHAN : LENGTH AND INTENSITY

In view of the fact that man makes for himself his own purgatory and his own heaven, it is clear that neither of these states of consciousness can ever be eternal, for a finite cause cannot produce an infinite result.

The apportionment of time that a man spends in the physical, astral and mental worlds varies considerably as he evolves. The primitive man lives almost exclusively in the physical world, spending only a few years on the astral plane after death. As he develops, his astral life becomes longer, and as his intellect unfolds he begins to spend a little time on the mental plane as well.

The ordinary man of civilised races remains longer in the mental world than in the physical and astral. In fact, the more a man evolves, the shorter becomes his astral, and the longer his mental life.

Hence we see that, except in the very earliest stages of his evolution, a man spends by far the greater part of his time on the mental plane. As we shall see presently in detail, except in the case of the very undeveloped, the proportion of the physical life to the mental life is rarely more than 1 in 20, and in the case of fairly well-developed people it would sometimes fall as low as 1 in 30. The student must ever bear in mind that the true home of the real man, the ego, is the mental plane; each descent into incarnation is merely a short, though important, episode in his career.

The tables on pp. 186-187, give an idea of the approximate average intervals between lives, according to the class of man concerned, together with the average portion spent on the astral, mental and causal levels.

The student is asked not to attach too literal or too rigid an interpretation to this classification by social rank, which is in some ways objectionable. At best the grouping should be taken as a rough and ready approximation. For it is obvious, for example that there may be specimens of the "drunkard and unemployable" class at any social level; or a person who is by his social position belongs to the "country gentlemen" class may truly be nothing higher than an unskilled labourer —though he may omit the labour! It would have been better if, instead of social grade, some method of classification by moral and mental development could have been devised; but even this method might have proved just as difficult as that which has been adopted.

Individualised in Moon-Chain Round No.	Moon-Men: First Order					
	Present Type	Average length in years				
		Total interval between lives	Astral Life	Heaven-Life		
				Lower Mental	Causal	
5	Advanced egos on the Path (many of these are taking continuous incarnations,	1,500- 2,000 or more	5 (an ego may even pass through rapidly and unconsciously)	1,350- 1,800 mostly on the highest level	150-200	

	<p>so that for them the question of intervals between lives does not arise) Egos approaching the Path: -</p> <p>(a) Individualised through Intellect</p> <p>(b) Individualised through Emotion or Will</p> <p>Men distinguished in art, science or religion</p>	<p>1,200 700</p> <p>About same as preceding class</p>	5 5		1,150 650	50 50
				Tendency to longer astral and shorter causal life, especially for the religious and the artistic		
6	Country gentlemen and professional men	600-1,000	20-25		600-1,000	Touch of consciousness
7	Upper Middle Class	500	25		475	Nil

It must be understood that the above figures are *only* averages, a wide range on each side of them being possible.

Class of Ego	Present Type	Average length in years				
		Total interval between lives	Astral Life	Heave-Life		Causal
				Lower Mental	Causal	
Moon-Men: Second Order	Bourgeoisie	200-300	40	160-260 on lower levels	Nil	
Moon Animal-Men	Skilled Workers	100-200	40	60-160 on lower levels	Nil	
Moon-	Unskilled	600-100	40-50	20-50	Nil	

<b>Animals: First Class</b>	<b>Labourers</b>			<b>on lowest level</b>	
<b>Moon- Animals: Second Class</b>	<b>Drunkards and Unemployables</b>	<b>40-50</b>	<b>40-50</b>	<b>Nil</b>	<b>Nil</b>
<b>Moon- Animals: Third Class</b>	<b>Lower of humanity</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Nil</b>	<b>Nil</b>

A certain difference is produced by the mode of the individualisation, but this difference is much less, in proportion, in the lower classes. Those individualised through intellect tend to take the longer of the two intervals mentioned, whereas those individualised in other ways tend to take the shorter interval. We shall return to this point and explain it in fuller detail presently.

Generally speaking, a man who dies young tends to have a shorter interval than one who dies in old age, but is likely to have a greater proportion of astral life, because most of the strong emotions which work themselves out in the astral life are generated in the earlier part of physical life, whereas the more spiritual energy, which finds its result in the heaven-life, is likely to continue until the end or near the end of the earth-life.

Thus, as we have seen, the total time spent in devachan depends upon the materials which the man has brought with him from earth-life; that is to say, everything which is capable of being worked up into mental and moral faculty –all the pure thoughts and emotions generated during earth-life, all the intellectual and moral efforts and aspirations, all the memories of useful work, and plans for human service. Not one is lost, however feeble or fleeting; but selfish animal passions *cannot enter*, there being no material in which they can be expressed.

Nor does evil in the past life, though it may largely preponderate over the good, prevent the full reaping of whatever scant harvest of good there may be; the devachanic life may be very brief, but the most depraved, if he has any faint longings after the right, any stirrings of tenderness, must have a period of devachanic life, in which the seed of good may put forth its tender shoots, in which the spark of good may be fanned into a tiny flame.

In the past, when men lived with their hearts fixed on heaven, and directed their lives with a view to enjoying its bliss, the period spent in devachan was very long, lasting sometimes for many thousands of years. At the present time, however, men's minds being so much more centred on earth, and so few of their thoughts being directed towards the higher life, their devachanic periods are correspondingly shortened.

Similarly, the time spent in the lower mental and the causal heaven-worlds are proportional to the amount of thought generated severally in the mental and the causal bodies. All that belongs to the *personal self*, with its ambitions, interests, loves, hopes and fears, have their fruition in the lower mental world, the world of *form*; those belonging to the higher mind, to the regions of abstract, impersonal thinking, have to be worked out on the causal levels, the *formless* world. As the above tables show, the majority of people only just enter the causal heaven-world, and pass out swiftly again; some spend a large portion of their devachanic life there; a few spend there almost the whole.

Thus, just as a man makes for himself his astral or purgatorial existence, so he decides for himself both the length and character of his heaven-life, by the causes which he generates during his earth-life. Hence he cannot but have both the amount which he has deserved, and also exactly the *quality* of joy which is best suited to his idiosyncrasies.

Another factor of great importance and interest, is that of the *intensity* of the devachanic life, which varies with the different classes of egos, and which of course produces a considerable effect upon the length of the heaven-life.

In the table on p. 186, within the same group of egos, two types are shown which, though equal in development, differ greatly in their intervals between lives, one of them taking about 1,200, and the other about 700 years between lives. Now the amount of spiritual force generated is roughly equal in the two cases, but those who take the shorter interval compress a double amount of bliss into their heaven-lives, working as it were, at high pressure, concentrating their experience, and so getting through nearly twice as much in any given period as the members of the other class.

This difference, as was briefly mentioned a few pages back, is due to the way in which individualisation was attained. Without entering into the details of individualisation [which would be beyond the scope of the present volume], it may be explained that those who individualise gradually by intellectual development, generate a different *kind* of spiritual force, which gives them a longer devachanic life, than those who individualise through an instantaneous uprush of affection or devotion, and who take their bliss in a much more concentrated or intense form. If there be any difference in the *amount* of force generated, it appears to be slightly more in the case of those who take the shorter interval.

Investigations have shown that there is great flexibility regarding intervals between lives, resulting in much variation in the rate at which egos work out their heaven-lives.

One important reason for this is the necessity of bringing together groups of people into incarnation at the same time, not only in order that they may work out

mutual karmic inter-relations, but also that they may learn to work together for certain great ends.

There are, for example, certain groups of egos, known as "servers", who come together life after life, in order that they may pass through similar preparatory experiences, that the bonds of affection between them may be knit so strongly that they will be incapable of misunderstanding or mistrusting one another, when the strain of the real work they are destined to do comes upon them in the future. The one great fact that the group is devoted to service overpowers all other considerations, and the group is thus brought together in order that it may perform that service as a body of people.

In this, needless to say, there is no injustice; no one can escape one jot of the karma legitimately due to him. But the rate at which karma is worked out is adjusted to meet the particular circumstances of each case. Thus it sometimes happens that certain past karma would be cleared up rapidly in order that the person may be free to do higher work without hindrance from it; to this end it sometimes happens that a considerable accumulation of karma may descend upon a man at once in some great catastrophe; he thus gets rid of it rapidly, and his way is cleared before him.

Of course, in the case of the great bulk of humanity, there is no special interference of this nature, and their heaven-life works itself out at its ordinary rate.

Differences in the *time* of working out karma, involving a difference in intensity in the life, are shown by a greater or lesser brilliancy in the light of the mental body.

## CHAPTER XXII

### DEVACHAN : FURTHER PARTICULARS

Having studied some of the general features of devachan, and its broad purpose, it will now be necessary to go over the ground again, filling in more details, and adding other particulars which could not, without overloading, be included in the first description.

In spite of devachan being to a certain extent illusory, as indeed is all manifested life, in varying degree, nevertheless there is much greater reality in the heaven-life than there is in the earth life. This is clearly seen when we consider the conditions requisite for the attainment of devachan. For, in order that an aspiration or a thought-force should result in existence on the mental plane, its dominant characteristic must be unselfishness.

Affection for family or friends takes man a man into the heaven-life, as also does religious devotion; but only if the affection or the devotion is unselfish. Affection which is an exacting, selfish kind of passion, which desires mainly to *be loved*,

which thinks of what it receives rather than of what it gives, and which may so easily degenerate into the vice of jealousy, has in it no seed of the mental development; the forces which it sets in motion will never rise above the astral plane, the plane of desire, to which they so clearly belong.

Where there is no grasping, no drawing towards the self, no thought of return, there is a tremendous outpouring of force, which no astral matter can express, nor could the dimensions of the astral plane contain it. It needs the finer matter and the wider space of the mental plane, the energy generated belonging to that higher world.

Similarly the devotion of the religious devotee whose main thought is, not the glory of the deity, but how he may save his own soul, cannot lead to devachan. But on the other hand real religious devotion, which never thinks of self, but only of love and gratitude towards the deity or leader, and is inspired by ardent desire to do something for him or in his name, often leads to a prolonged heaven-life of a comparatively exalted type.

This would be the case whoever the deity or leader might be, and hence followers of the Buddha, of Krishna, of Ormuzd, Allah, or the Christ, would all equally attain their meed of celestial bliss, its length and quality depending not in the least upon its object, but upon the intensity and purity of the feeling.

It is an error to suppose that a man on the astral and mental planes after death is merely working out the results of his past earth-life; broadly speaking, this is true of the ordinary man, yet nevertheless even whilst he is enjoying the bliss of his devachan, he is at the same time affecting others, and he is therefore producing results, i.e., he is generating karma.

This must be so, in the very nature of things, because thought is the most potent factor in the creation of human karma. Every force has the characteristic of the plane on which it is generated, and the higher the plane the more potent and the more persistent the force.

In those cases, at present rare, in which, by raising the consciousness to the causal level, the higher mind and lower selves are unified, the consciousness of the ego is at the disposal of the man throughout the whole of his physical, astral and mental lives. Hence it follows that he is generating karma just as much at one period as at another, and he is able to modify the conditions of his life by the exercise of thought and will.

But, apart from such cases of well-developed men, even an ordinary man produces, quite unintentionally and unconsciously to himself, three separate results during the whole of his heaven-life.

*First:* The affection which he pours upon the thought-image he has made of his friend is a mighty power for good, which bears no inconsiderable part in the

evolution of the ego of that friend. Affection is evoked from the friend, thus tending to intensify that admirable quality in him. Such an act is obviously one which generates karma.

It is even possible that the effect of this action may be manifested in the personality of the friend on the physical plane. For, if the ego be modified by the affection showered upon the thought-form it en-souls, it is possible that that modification may show itself in the personality, which is of course another manifestation of the same ego.

*Second* : A man who pours out a great flood of affection, and evokes in response other floods from his friends, is clearly distinctly improving the mental atmosphere of his neighbourhood. This atmosphere plays upon all the inhabitants of the world who are living in that atmosphere –devas, men, animals, plants, etc. This will clearly produce a karmic result.

*Third* : A thought of unselfish affection or devotion not only calls forth a response from the Logos to the individual who originated the thought, but also helps to fill the reservoir of spiritual force, which is held by the Nirmanakayas at the disposal of the Masters of Wisdom and Their pupils for the helping of humanity [vide *The Astral Body* , p. 57]. Magnificent as may be the result of such affection or devotion during physical life, it is easy to see that the response to the thought of an entity in devachan, sustained perhaps for a thousand years, will make to the reservoir a considerable contribution, bringing to the world a benefit which is not calculable in any terms that we use upon the physical plane.

From all these considerations it should be clear that even quite an ordinary man, who has yet no special development of consciousness, is nevertheless capable of doing a great deal of good during his life in devachan. Hence he is during that time actually making fresh karma for himself, and may even modify his heaven-life while it is in progress.

In the physical world, many of our thoughts are mere fragments. In devachan the dreamer contemplates such fragments and patiently works them out in every detail, in every possibility of splendid performance, living through them with a vividness which nothing on earth can rival. He builds, shapes, moulds them into all their varied possibilities and tosses them into the world of form . Others may then pick them up, and be inspired by them to undertake schemes of reform, works of philanthropy, and so forth. Thus from the radiant thought-stuff of some solitary dreamer may arise wonderful changes, his "dreaming" helping to re-create the world.

It must however, be borne in mind that, owing to the limitations which the ordinary man imposes upon himself in devachan, he cannot originate a *fresh* line of affection or devotion. But his affection and devotion, along the lines which he has already decided, will be distinctly more powerful than they ever could have been while he was labouring under the heavy limitations of the physical body.

This point will bear a little further elaboration. In order to understand the relation of a man in devachan to his surroundings, we have to think [1] of the matter of the plane as moulded by his thought, and [2] of the forces of the plane as evoked in answer to his aspirations.

We have already seen how the man moulds the matter of the plane into thought-images of his friends, and how egos of the friends express themselves through the images.

There are also other living forces about him, mighty angelic inhabitants of the plane; of these, many are very sensitive to certain aspirations of man, and readily respond to them.

But the main point to bear in mind is that both his thoughts and his aspirations are along those lines only which he has already prepared during earth-life.

It might perhaps have been imagined that when a man rises to a plane of such transcendent force and vitality, he would be stirred to entirely new activities along new lines; but this is not the case. His mental body [as we saw previously] is not by any means in the same order as his lower vehicles, neither is it so fully under control. It has in the past been accustomed to receive its impressions and incitements to action from below, chiefly from the physical, and sometimes from the astral. It has done very little in this way of receiving direct mental vibrations at its own level; consequently it cannot suddenly begin to accept and respond to them. Practically, thus, the man does not initiate any new thoughts, but is limited to those which he has previously entertained, and which form the only windows through which he can look out on his new world. Hence, a colourless, flavourless personality necessarily has a colourless, feeble devachanic state.

A man thus takes into devachan just the mental furniture he has –neither less nor more. It is clearly, therefore, of great importance that during physical life he should make his thinking as accurate and as precise as possible, otherwise he will very much limit the usefulness of his devachan.

From this point of view, devachan is a world of effects, not causes, each man being limited to his own individual shades of perception and his capacity to appreciate. The more points of contact he has with the outer world, the more will be the starting-points or foci for development in devachan.

On the other hand, devachan, from the point of view of the next life, is essentially a world of causes, because in it all experiences are worked up into the character which will be brought forward when the man returns into incarnation. Devachan is thus the direct result of one life on earth, and prepares the way for the next life on earth.

The way in which man's vision is determined and limited by the windows through

which perforce he must look, may best be studied by taking an actual example. Let us take that of music. A man who has no music in his soul has no window at all in that direction. A man, however who has a musical window is in the presence of a stupendous power. The degree to which he is able to respond will be determined by three factors. Pursuing the analogy of the glass in a window, we may call these three factors [1] the size of the glass; [2] its colour; [3] the quality of its material. Thus, if while on earth the man was able to appreciate only one class of music, he will obviously now be limited to that extent. His ideas of music may also be coloured, so as to admit only certain vibrations of music, or they may be of such poor material as to distort and darken everything that reaches him.

Assuming however, that his window is a good one, he will receive through it three distinct sets of impressions.

*First*: He will sense that music which is the expression of the ordered movement of the forces of the plane. There is truth behind the poetic idea of the "music of the spheres", for on these higher planes all movement and action produce harmonies of sound and colour. All thought –both his own and that of others – expresses itself in this way, in a lovely yet indescribable series of ever-changing chords, as of a thousand Aeolian harps. The musical manifestation of the glowing life of the heaven-world forms a background to all his other experiences.

*Second* : Among the inhabitants of the mental plane there is an order of devas, or angels, who are specially devoted to music and who habitually express themselves by its means to a fuller extent than the rest. They are known to the Hindus as Gandharvas . The man who has musical appreciation will certainly attract their attention, will come into contact with them, and with the music they create, and will assuredly acquire much from that intercourse, for they will use all kinds of overtones and variations which were previously unknown to him. In this way he will eventually emerge from the heaven-life far richer than he entered it.

*Third* : He will listen with keen appreciation to the music made by his fellow-men in the heaven world.

Many of the great composers are there, pouring forth far greater music than any which they knew on earth. Much of the inspiration of earthly musicians is, in fact, but a faint echo of the music on the mental plane which they have dimly sensed.

The experience of a man who was a painter would be similar. He also would have the same three possibilities: [1] He would perceive the natural order of the plane expressing itself in colour as well as sound; [2] he would perceive the colour-language of the devas, an order of beings who communicate with one another by flashings of splendid colour ; [3] he would perceive the colour-creations of great artists on the mentalplane.

The same possibilities, *mutatis mutandis*, are open to a man in devachan, in all other directions of art or thought, so that there is an infinity for him to enjoy and to learn.

In considering the action and reaction between the man in devachan and the thought-image he makes of his friend, there are two factors to be taken into account: [1] The degree of development of the man himself; [2] the degree of development of the friend.

If the man himself is undeveloped, the image he makes of his friend will be imperfect, many of the higher qualities of the friend not being represented. Consequently the ego of the friend may be able to make but little use of the image, there being nothing through which he can express some of his qualities.

Nevertheless, even at the worst the expression of a friend through an image is much fuller and more satisfying than it ever was in the physical life. For in earth-life we see our friends but partially; our knowledge of them must always be exceedingly defective, and our communion with them imperfect; even when we do believe we know our friend truly and wholly, it is still only part of him which is in incarnation that we can know, there being far more behind in the real ego which we cannot reach at all.

In fact, if it were possible for us to see with mental vision, the whole of our friend, the probability is that he would be quite unrecognisable; certainly he would not be the one whom we thought we had known before.

If, on the other hand, it is the friend who is undeveloped, even when a good image is made, there may not be sufficient development in the friend to enable him to take due advantage of the image ; i.e., he may be unable to fill completely the image of him that has been made. This however, is unlikely, and could take place only when a quite unworthy object had been unwisely idolised. Even then the man who made the image would not find any change or lack in his friend, for the friend is now *better* able to fulfil his ideal than he ever was during physical life. Hence the joy of the man in devachan is not in any way diminished.

Whilst an ego can fill hundreds of images with those qualities which he possesses, he cannot suddenly evolve and express a quality which he has not developed, merely because someone has imagined him to have developed it. Hence the enormous advantage of forming images of those [such as the Masters] who are capable of rising above even the highest conception that the lower mind can form of them. In the case of a Master, a man is drawing upon a depth of love and power which his mental plummet can never sound.

But in every case, the ego of the friend is reached by affection, and whatever may be its stage of development it at once responds by pouring itself into the image which has been made. Even the feeblest image that can be made is at any rate on the mental plane, and, therefore, is far easier for the ego to reach than is a physical body two planes lower down.

If the friend is still living in the physical body, he will of course be entirely unaware in his physical consciousness that his true self, or ego, is enjoying the additional manifestation; but this in no way affects the fact that the manifestation is a more real one and contains a nearer approximation to his true self than the one on the physical plane, which is all that most of us can as yet see.

From all these considerations it follows that a man who has made himself generally beloved, who has many real friends, will have a large number of thought-images in the devachans of his friends, and will thus evolve with far greater rapidity than a more ordinary man. This result is obviously the result of the karma of his development within himself of the qualities which make him so loveable.

The student will now clearly perceive why the personality, which we know on the physical plane, does *not* converse with its friends in devachan. But the real man, the ego, does do so, acting through the thought-image, which has been created on the mental plane.

The principle may perhaps be rendered still more clear by a practical example. Suppose that a mother, being somewhat narrow in her religious views, died, leaving behind her a well-loved daughter, and that the daughter later on broadened her religious ideas. The mother would continue to imagine that her daughter was still orthodox, and she would be able to see only as much of her daughter's thought as could be expressed by orthodox ideas; she would be unable to grasp the wider religious views which her daughter had now adopted.

But in so far as the ego of the daughter profited by what the personality had learned, there would be a tendency on her part gradually to widen out and perfect the conceptions of the mother, though always along the lines to which the mother was accustomed. There would be between them no sense of difference of opinion, and no avoidance of subjects of religion.

The above considerations apply to a person of ordinary development. In the case of a more advanced man, who was already conscious in the causal body, he would put himself down *consciously* into the thought-image provided for him by a friend in devachan, as into an additional mental body, and work through it with definite intention. If he happened to acquire additional knowledge he could thus directly and intentionally communicate to this friend. In this way the Masters work on such of Their pupils as take the heaven-life, and alter their characters immensely.

A man who makes for himself an image of a Master is thus able to benefit enormously from the influence which the Master is able to pour down into it, and to receive definite teaching and help.

Two friends may know far more of each other at the mental level, than they ever

could when physically alive, because each has now only the one veil, that of the mental body, cast over his individuality. If a man in devachan has known only one side of his friend during physical life, it will be only through that side that the friend can express himself in the heaven world. But, although he is largely confined to that side, he can express that aspect of himself much more fully and satisfactorily than ever before; the expression, in fact, is fuller than the man now in devachan was ever able to see on the lower planes.

We have already seen that an ordinary man in devachan is living in a shell of his own thoughts; he has thus shut himself off absolutely from the rest of the world, i.e., both from the mental plane and from the lower planes. But, although he is shut away from the full enjoyment of the possibilities of the mental world, he is not in the slightest degree conscious of any curtailment of his activities or his feelings. On the contrary, he is filled with bliss to the very utmost of which he is capable, and it is to him incredible that there can be any greater joy than that which he is himself experiencing.

Thus, although he has shut himself within certain limits, he is quite unconscious of those limits, and within them he has all that he can possibly desire or think. He has surrounded himself with images of his friends, and through those images he is actually in closer contact with his friends than he has ever been on any other plane.

The man in devachan by no means forgets that there is such a thing as suffering, because he remembers clearly his last life; but he understands now many things that were not clear when he was on the physical plane, and the delight of the present is for him so great that sorrow seems to him almost a dream.

The shell on the mental plane may be compared to the shell of an egg on the physical plane. The only way to get anything into the shell of the egg, without breaking it, would be to pour it in from a higher dimension, or to find a force whose vibrations are sufficiently fine to penetrate between the particles of the shell without disturbing them. The same is true of the mental shell; it cannot be penetrated by any vibrations of matter of its own level, but the finer vibrations which belong to the ego can pass through it without disturbing it in the least; i.e., it can be acted upon freely from above, but not from below.

From this follows two effects : [1] vibrations sent out from the mental body of the man in the shell cannot strike directly upon the mental body of his friend, nor can he generate a thought-form which could travel through space and attach itself to the friend in the ordinary way. This could happen only if the man were able to move freely and consciously about the mental plane, which of course he cannot do; [2] the thoughts of his friend cannot reach the man in his devachanic shell, as they do in ordinary life on the physical or astral plane.

We see, therefore, that all the difficulties produced by the mental shell round a man in devachan are completely overcome by nature" method of the direct action

of the ego on the thought-image which the man has created.

It follows also from the conditions of man in devachan that he can no longer be recalled to earth by Spiritualistic methods.

In spite of men in devachan being not readily accessible to influence from without, nevertheless one who can pass into the mental world in full consciousness can affect those in devachan to some extent. Thus he could flood them with thoughts of affection, for example, and although these thoughts may not be able so far to penetrate the shells as to make those within the shells conscious of the author of the thoughts, yet the stream of affection can act on the occupants of the shells much as the warmth of the sun can operate upon the germ within the egg, hastening its fructification and intensifying any pleasurable sensations it may be supposed to have.

If a man is an agnostic or a materialist, his disbelief in a future life does not in the least prevent him from experiencing astral or mental life just the same as anyone else; for a man's disbelief in a future existence clearly cannot alter facts in nature. If a man has lived an unselfish life, the forces which he has generated must work themselves out, and this can take place only on the mental plane, ie., in devachan.

There is, of course, no fatigue in devachan; it is only the physical body that ever becomes tired. When we speak of mental fatigue, it is the brain and not the mind that is tired.

The fact that our minds can grasp three dimensions only, whereas there are four dimensions on the astral plane, and five on the mental plane, makes it difficult to describe exactly the position in space of those who have left physical life. Some tend to hover round their earthly homes, in order to keep in touch with their friends of the physical life and the places which they know; others, on the other hand, have a tendency to float away and to find for themselves, as if by specific gravity, a level much further removed from the surface of the earth.

Thus, for example, the average person passing into heaven-life, tends to float to a considerable distance above the surface of the earth, although on the other hand, some of such people are drawn to our level. Still, broadly speaking, the inhabitants of the heaven-world may be thought of as living in a sphere or zone round the earth.

For all but very highly advanced persons the heaven-life is absolutely necessary, because it is only under its conditions that aspirations can be developed into faculty, and experiences into wisdom. The progress which is thus made by the soul is far greater than would be possible if by some miracle the man was enabled to remain in physical incarnation for the entire period.

But for the advanced man who is making rapid progress it is sometimes possible to give up the life of bliss in the heaven-world –to renounce devachan, as it is sometimes called –between two incarnations, in order to return more rapidly to carry on work on the physical plane. But no man is permitted to renounce blindly that of which he is ignorant, nor to depart from the ordinary course of evolution unless and until it is certain that such a departure will be for his ultimate benefit.

The general rule is that no one may renounce devachan until he has experienced it during earth-life, ie., until he is sufficiently developed to be able to raise his consciousness to that plane and bring back with him a clear and full memory of its glory.

The reason for this is that it is the life of the personality, with all its familiar personal surroundings, which is carried on in the lower heaven-worlds, and therefore, before the renunciation can take place, the *personality* must realise clearly what it is that is being given up; the lower mind must be in accord with the higher on this subject.

To this general rule there is an apparent exception. In the one-sided and artificial condition which we call modern civilisation, people do not always develop quite regularly and normally; cases are to be found in which a considerable amount of consciousness on the mental plane has been acquired, and duly linked on to the *astral life*, yet no knowledge of it ever gets through into the *physical brain* at all.

Such cases are very rare, though they undoubtedly exist. They are not however, exceptions to the principle embodied in the general rule, viz., that the *personality* must make the renunciation. For in these cases, the astral life would be one of full and perfect consciousness for the personality, even though no memory of it ever penetrated into the purely physical consciousness. Thus the renunciation is made by the personality, but through the astral consciousness instead of through the physical, as in most instances. Such cases would be unlikely to occur except among those who were at least probationary pupils of a Master.

A man who wishes to perform the great feat of renouncing devachan must work with intense earnestness to make himself a worthy instrument in the hands of Those who help the world, and must throw himself with devoted fervour into labour for the spiritual good of others.

A man sufficiently advanced to be permitted to "renounce his devachan" would clearly have enjoyed an extremely long heaven-life; he is then able to expend this reserve of force in quite another direction, for the benefit of humanity, thus taking a part, however small, in the work of the Nirmânakâyas.

When a pupil has decided to do this, he waits upon the astral plane until a suitable incarnation can be arranged for him by his Master. Before the attempt can be made, permission of a very high authority must be obtained. Even when this is granted, so strong is the force of natural law, that it is said the pupil must

be careful to confine himself to the astral plane, lest if once, even for a moment, he touched the devachanic plane, he might be swept as by an irresistible current into the line of normal evolution again.

In some cases, though these are rare, the man is enabled to take an adult body whose previous tenant has no further use for it, but naturally it is not often that a suitable body is available.

An animal that has attained individualisation, after his death on the physical and astral planes, has usually a very prolonged, though often somewhat dreamy life in the lower heaven-world. His condition is sometimes called "dozing" consciousness, and is analogous to that of a man on the same level, though with far less mental activity. He is surrounded by his own thought-images, even though he may be but dreamily conscious of them, and these will of course include images of his earth-friends in their very best and most sympathetic moods. These images will of course awaken response from the egos of his friends in the usual way. The animal will remain in the condition described until in some future world he assumes the human form.

Individualisation, by means of which an animal rises to the human kingdom, is attained by association with men, the intelligence and affection of the animal being developed to the degree necessary by his close relationship with his human friend. But we have already dealt with this matter in Chapter XIII.

## **CHAPTER XIII**

### **THE FIRST HEAVEN : SEVENTH SUB-PLANE**

Although, as we shall see presently, each of the four lower heavens has its own characteristic, it must not be supposed that a man divides his heaven-life between the various levels, according to the characteristics which he may have developed. On the contrary, as was mentioned briefly before, a man awakens to consciousness in devachan on that level which best corresponds to the degree of his development; and on that level he spends the whole of his life in the mental body. The reasons for this is that the higher level may always *include* the qualities of the lower, as well as those peculiar to itself; and when it does so its inhabitants almost invariably have these qualities in fuller measure than the souls on the lower level.

The lowest heaven, that on the seventh sub-plane, has for its principal characteristic that of affection for family and friends; that affection must, of course, be unselfish, but it is usually somewhat narrow. It must not however, be supposed that love is confined to the lowest heaven, but rather that this form of affection is the highest of which those who find themselves on the seventh level are capable. On the higher levels love of a far nobler and grander type is to be found.

It may be useful to describe a few typical examples of the inhabitants of the seventh sub-plane. One was that of a small tradesman, honest and respectable, but of no intellectual development or religious feeling.

Although he had probably attended church regularly, religion had been to him a sort of dim cloud which he did not really understand which had no connection with the business of everyday life, and which was never taken into account in deciding its problems. Whilst he had, therefore, no depth of devotion, he had nevertheless warm affection for his family. They were constantly in his mind, and he worked in his shop far more for them than for himself. His surroundings in devachan would not be of a very refined type; but nevertheless he would be as intensely happy as he would be capable of being and he would be developing unselfish characteristics which would be built into his soul as permanent qualities.

Other typical cases were that of a man who had died while his only daughter was still young. In his devachan she was always with him, and at her best, while he was continually weaving all sorts of beautiful pictures of her future. Another case was that of a young girl who was always absorbed in contemplating the manifold perfections of her father, and planning little surprises and fresh pleasures for him. Another was a Greek woman who was marvellously happy with her three children, one of them a beautiful boy, whom she delighted in imagining as the victor in the Olympic games.

A striking characteristic of this sub-plane for the last few centuries has been a very large number of Romans, Carthaginians, and Englishmen found there, this being due to the fact that among men of these nations the principal unselfish activity found its outlet through family affection. Comparatively few Hindus or Buddhists are on this sub-plane, because in their case real religious feeling usually enters more immediately into their daily lives, and consequently takes them to a higher level.

Among the cases observed, there was an almost infinite variety, their different degrees of advancement being distinguishable by varying degrees of luminosity, while differences of colour indicate the qualities which the persons had developed. Some were lovers who had died in the full strength of their affection, and so were always occupied with the one person they loved, to the entire exclusion of all others. Others there were who had been almost savages, yet who had had some touch of unselfish action.

In all these cases, the only element in the activity of their personal lives which could have expressed itself on the mental plane, was affection. In most cases observed on this level, the thought-images are very far from perfect, and consequently the egos of the friends concerned can express themselves but poorly through them. But even at the worst, as explained in a previous chapter, that expression is fuller and more satisfying than it ever was in physical life.

For those on this lowest level of the heaven-world there is not much material out

of which faculty can be moulded, and their life is but very slightly progressive. Their family affections will be nourished and a little widened, and they will be re-born with a somewhat improved emotional nature, with more tendency to recognise and respond to a higher level.

## CHAPTER XXIV

### THE SECOND HEAVEN : SIXTH SUB-PLANE

The dominant characteristic of the sixth sub-plane of the heaven-world may be described as anthropomorphic religious devotion. There appears to be some correspondence between this level of the heaven-world and the second astral sub-plane, the difference being that on the astral there is invariably an element of selfishness, of bargaining, in the religious devotion, whereas in the heaven-world the devotion is of course entirely free from any such taint.

On the other hand, this phase of devotion, which consists essentially in the perpetual adoration of a personal deity, must be distinguished from those still higher forms which find their expression in performing some definite work for the deity's sake. A few examples will show these distinctions.

A fairly large number of entities on this level are drawn from oriental religions, only those being included whose devotion is pure, but comparatively unreasoning and unintelligent. Worshippers of Vishnu, and a few of Shiva, are found here, each wrapped up in a cocoon of his own thoughts, alone with his god, and oblivious of the rest of mankind except in so far as his affections may associate those whom he loved on earth with his adoration of his deity. A Vishnavite was observed wholly absorbed in the ecstatic worship of the very image of Vishnu to which he had made offerings during earth-life.

Women form a very large majority of the inhabitants of this sub-plane, and afford one of its most characteristic examples. Among others, there was a Hindu woman who had glorified her husband into a divine being, and who also thought of the child Krishna as playing with her own children; but while these latter were thoroughly human and real, the child Krishna was obviously nothing but the semblance of a blue wooden image galvanised into life. Krishna also appeared in her heaven as an effeminate young man playing a flute; but she was not in the least confused by this double manifestation.

Another woman, a worshipper of Shiva, looked upon her husband as a manifestation of her god, so that the one seemed to be constantly changing into the other.

Some Buddhists are also found on this level, but apparently only those less instructed ones who regard the Buddha rather as an object of adoration than as a great teacher.

Many Christians are found here; an illiterate Roman Catholic peasant, for example, full of unintellectual devotion, or an earnest or sincere "soldier" of the Salvation Army. An Irish peasant was seen absorbed in the deepest adoration of the Virgin Mary, whom he imaged as standing on the moon, but holding out her hands and speaking to him. A mediaeval monk was observed in ecstatic contemplation of Christ crucified, and the intensity of his yearning love and pity was such that, as he watched the blood dropping from the wounds of the figure of his Christ, the stigmata reproduced themselves upon his own mental body.

Another man thought of his Christ only as glorified on his throne, with the crystal sea before him, and all around a vast multitude of worshippers, among whom he himself stood with his wife and family. Although his affection for his relatives was very deep, yet his thoughts were more occupied in adoration of the Christ, though his conception of his deity was so material that he imaged him as constantly changing kaleidoscopically backwards and forwards between the form of a man and that of a lamb bearing the flag, as often represented in church windows.

An interesting case was that of a Spanish nun who had died at about the age of nineteen. In her heaven she imagined herself accompanying the Christ in his life as recounted in the gospels, and after his crucifixion taking care of the Virgin Mary. Her pictures of the scenery and costumes of Palestine were entirely inaccurate, the Saviour and his disciples wearing the dress of Spanish peasants, while the hills round Jerusalem were mountains clothed with vineyards, and the olive trees were hung with grey Spanish moss. She thought of herself as eventually martyred for her faith and ascending into heaven, but yet only to live over and over again this life in which she so delighted.

A child who had died at the age of seven was occupied in re-enacting in the heaven-world the religious stories which his Irish nurse had told him. He loved to think of himself as playing with the infant Jesus, and helping him to make those clay sparrows which the power of the Christ is fabled to have brought to life and caused to fly.

Even if a man is a materialist and agnostic, he will still have a heaven-world, provided he had been capable of devotion. For deep unselfish family affection, as well as earnest philanthropic effort, are also great outpourings of energy, which must produce their result, and can produce it nowhere but on the mental plane.

It will be seen that blind unreasoning devotion, of which examples have been given, does not at any time raise its votaries to any great spiritual heights; but of course they are entirely happy and fully satisfied, for they receive the highest which they are capable of appreciating. Nor is such a heaven-life without a very good effect on their future career. For although no amount of mere devotion will ever develop intellect, yet it does produce an increased capacity for a higher form of devotion, and in most cases it leads also to purity of life. A person, therefore, who enjoys a heaven, such as has been described, is not likely to make rapid

progress, yet he is at least guarded from many dangers; for it is improbable that in his next birth he will fall into any of the grosser sins, or be drawn away from his devotional aspirations into a merely worldly life of avarice, ambition, or dissipation.

Nevertheless a survey of the sixth sub-plane distinctly emphasises the desirability of following the advice of St. Peter: "Add to your faith - virtue, and to virtue knowledge.

## CHAPTER XXV

### THE THIRD HEAVEN : FIFTH SUB-PLANE

The chief characteristic of this level of the heaven-world may be described as devotion expressing itself in active work. It is especially the plane for the working out of great schemes and designs unrealised on earth, of great organisations inspired by religious devotion, and usually having for their object some philanthropic purpose.

It must however, be borne in mind that as we rise higher, greater complexity and variety are introduced, so that many variations and exceptions occur which do not so rapidly range themselves under the general heading for the plane as a whole.

A typical case, somewhat above average, was that of a deeply religious man who was found carrying out a grand scheme, which he had himself devised, for the amelioration of the condition of the poorer classes.

The scheme comprised amalgamation of businesses in order to effect economies, high wages, the provision of cottage and gardens, and profit sharing. He hoped that this demonstration of the practical side of Christianity would win many to his own faith, out of gratitude for the material benefits they had received.

A somewhat similar case was that of an Indian prince who had tried to model his life and methods of government, while on earth, on the example of the divine hero-king Rama. On earth many of his schemes had failed, but in his heaven-life everything went well, Rama himself personally advising and directing the work, and receiving perpetual adoration from all his devoted subjects.

A curious case of personal religious work was that of a nun, who had belonged to a working order. In her heaven, she was constantly occupied in feeding the hungry, healing the sick, clothing and helping the poor, the peculiarity of each case being that each person, to whom she administered, at once changed into the appearance of Christ, whom she then worshipped with fervent adoration.

An instructive case was that of two intensely religious sisters, one of them a cripple, the other having devoted herself to tending her. On earth they had often discussed and planned the religious and philanthropic work they would carry out

if they were able to do so. In the heaven-world, each is the most prominent figure in the heaven of the other, the cripple being well and strong, while each thinks of the other as working with her in carrying out the unrealised wishes of her earth life. In these cases the only difference that death has made is to eliminate disease and suffering, and to render easy the work which before had been impossible.

On this plane are found the higher type of sincere and devoted missionaries, engaged in the congenial occupation of converting multitudes of people to the particular religion which they advocated.

There occur also on this plane some cases of devotees of art, who follow it for its own sake, or regard it as an offering to their deity, not thinking of its effect on their fellows.

Artists who pursued art, for the sake of fame and self-gratification, would not of course find their way to this plane at all. On the other hand, those who regarded their faculty as a great power entrusted to them for the spiritual elevation of their fellows would reach a heaven even higher than the one we are now considering.

As an example, mention may be made of a musician of very religious temperament who regarded all his labour of love simply as an offering to the Christ, knowing nothing of the magnificent display of sound and colour which his compositions produced on the mental plane. His enthusiasm would not, of course be wasted, for, without his knowledge, it brought joy and help to many, and its results would certainly be to give him increased devotion and greater musical capacity in his next birth. But without the still wider aspiration to help humanity this kind of heaven-life might repeat itself almost indefinitely.

The student will perceive that the three lower heavens - on the seventh, sixth, and fifth sub-planes - are concerned with the working out of devotion to *personalities*, either to one's family and friends, or to a personal deity, rather than the wider devotion to humanity for its own sake, which, as we shall see, finds its expression on the next sub-plane.

## CHAPTER XXVI

### THE FOURTH HEAVEN : FOURTH SUB-PLANE

The Fourth Heaven, on the fourth sub-plane, is on the highest of the lower rûpa levels. Its activities are so varied that it is difficult to group them under a single characteristic. They may best be arranged into four main divisions:-

- [1] Unselfish pursuit of spiritual knowledge
- [2] High philosophic or scientific thought

[3] Literary or artistic ability, exercised unselfishly

[4] Service for the sake of service

A few examples of each of these classes will make them more readily comprehensible.

*[1] Unselfish pursuit of spiritual knowledge.*

Most of the inhabitants of this class are drawn from those religions in which the necessity of obtaining spiritual knowledge is recognised. Thus, of Buddhists, there are found here those more intelligent followers who looked upon the Buddha as a teacher, rather than as a being to be adored, and whose supreme aspiration was to sit at his feet and learn.

In their heaven-life their wish is fulfilled; for the thought-image which they have made of the Buddha is no mere empty form; through it shines the wonderful wisdom, power and love of that greatest of earth's teachers. They are therefore acquiring fresh knowledge and wider views, the effect of which on their next life cannot but be most marked. They will not perhaps remember any individual facts, though when such facts are presented to them in a subsequent life, they will grasp them readily, and intuitively recognise their truth. Furthermore, the result of the teaching will be to build into the ego a strong tendency to take broader and more philosophical views on all such subjects.

The effect of such a heaven-life is to hasten considerably the evolution of the ego. Hence the enormous advantage gained by those who accepted the guidance of living and powerful teachers.

A similar result, in lesser degree, accrues to a man who followed the teachings of a great and spiritual writer, and made of that writer an ideal figure. The ego of the writer will enter into the student's heaven-life and, by virtue of his own developed power, vivify the mental image of himself, thus being able further to illuminate his written teachings.

Many Hindus find their heaven on this level, as also a few of the more advanced Sufis and Parsis, and some of the early Gnostics. But, except for a few Sufis and Gnostics, neither Mohammedanism nor Christianity seems to raise its followers to this level; some, however, who nominally follow these religions may be carried to this sub-plane by the presence in their character of qualities which do not depend upon the teachings peculiar to their own religion.

Here are found also earnest students of Occultism, who are not yet sufficiently advanced to be permitted to "renounce" their devachan [see p. 203]. These include students of schools of occultism other than that which is best known to most members of the Theosophical Society.

An interesting case was observed, where a person who had fallen into an attitude of unworthy and unjustifiable distrust of the motives of her old friend and teacher,

had thereby shut out to a considerable extent the higher influence and teaching, which otherwise she might have enjoyed in her heaven-life. The influence and teaching were in no way withheld from her, but her own mental attitude had rendered her to some extent unreceptive of them, although she herself was quite unconscious of this. A wealth of love, strength and knowledge lay at her hand, but her own ingratitude had sadly crippled her power to accept it.

[2] *High Philosophic or Scientific Thought.*

This class does *not* include those philosophers who spend their time in verbal argument and hair-splitting, for that is a form of discussion which has its roots in selfishness and conceit, and can therefore never help towards a real understanding of the facts of the universe, not produce results that can work themselves out on the mental plane.

We find here rather those noble and unselfish thinkers who seek insight and knowledge only for the purpose of enlightening and helping their fellows.

A typical example was that of a later follower of the neo-platonic system, who was occupied in unravelling the mysteries of that school of thought, and in endeavouring to understand its bearing upon human life and development.

Another case was that of an astronomer whose studies had led him to Pantheism. He was still pursuing his studies with reverence, and was gaining knowledge from those orders of devas, through whom on this plane the majestic cyclic movement of the stellar influences seems to express itself in ever-changing coruscations of living light. He was lost in contemplation of a vast panorama of whirling nebulae and gradually-forming systems and worlds, and striving to form some idea of the shape of the universe. His thoughts surrounded him, shaped as stars, and he listened with joy to the stately rhythm of the music that pealed out in mighty chorales from the moving orbs.

Scientists such as this astronomer would return to earth as great discoverers, with unerring intuitions of the mysterious ways of nature.

[3] *Literary or Artistic Effort exercised unselfishly.*

On this level are found our greatest musicians. Mozart, Beethoven, Bach, Wagner and others are still flooding the heaven-world with harmony far more glorious than they were able to produce when on earth.

Streams of divine music pour into them from the higher regions, to be specialised by them and made their own, and then to be sent forth through all the plane in a tide of melody which adds to the bliss of all around. Both those who are functioning in full consciousness on this plane, and disembodied entities of this level, each of whom is wrapped up in his own thought-cloud, are deeply affected by the ennobling influence of this music.

Painters and sculptors are here constantly making, by their thought, artificial elementals in all kinds of lovely forms, which they send forth for the delight and encouragement of their fellow-men.

These beautiful conceptions may also in many cases be grasped by the minds of artists still in the flesh, acting as inspirations to them.

An interesting figure seen on this level was that of a chorister who had died young. He had little save the one great gift of song, but he had used that gift worthily, trying to be the voice of the people to heaven, and of heaven to the people, and ever longing to know more music, and render it more worthily, for the Church's sake. In his heaven-life his wish was bearing fruit, and over him was bending the quaint angular figure of St. Cecilia, formed by his thought of the picture of her in a stained glass window. This thought-form was vivified by one of the archangels of the celestial hierarchy of song, and through it he taught the chorister a grander strain of music than ever earth has known.

Another example was that of a man who had on earth refused to use his literary power merely to earn a living for himself, but had instead written a book which none would read; he had been alone all his life, and eventually died of sorrow and starvation. In his heaven-life he was also in solitude, but he saw stretching before him the Utopia of which he had dreamed, and the vast impersonal multitudes whom he had longed to serve. The joy of their joy surged back to him and made his solitude a heaven.

#### [4] *Service for the sake of service.*

On this level are found many who have rendered service for the sake of service, rather than because they desired to please any particular deity. They are engaged in working out with full knowledge and calm wisdom, vast schemes of beneficence, magnificent plans of world improvement, and at the same time they are maturing powers with which to carry them out in the future on the lower plane of physical life.

## CHAPTER XXVII

### THE MENTAL PLANE

It is the function of mental matter to vibrate in response to the modes of the Spirit working as intellect, just as astral matter plays a similar part for desire and emotion, and as buddhic matter responds to the Spirit working as intuition. Hence the mental plane is that part or aspect of nature which belongs to consciousness working as thought; not to mind working through the physical brain, but to mind working in its own world, unencumbered with physical matter.

The five lower planes of nature correspond to the five "Elements" of the ancients as follows:

:

Planes or Worlds		'Elements' of the ancients	
Sanskrit	English	Sanskrit	English
Âtmâ	Will	Âkâsha	Ether or sky
Buddhi	Intuition	Vâyu	Air
Manas	Mind	Tejas or Agni	Fire
Kâma	Feeling	Apas or jala	Water
Sthûla	Physical Life	Prithivî	Earth

In certain Hindu books there is another classification, in which the mind is grouped with the elements. The Hindu has a way of looking at things from a very high standpoint, often, apparently, from that of the Monad, and to him the mind is but an instrument of consciousness. Thus, in the seventh chapter of the Gîtâ, Shri Krishna says: "Earth, water, fire, air, ether, manas, buddhi, and ahamkâra – these are the eightfold divisions of my manifestation". (Prakriti) A little later on she speaks of these eight as "my lower manifestation".

The mental world is the world of the real man, the very word man deriving from the Sanskrit root man, the root of the verb "to think": thus *man* means *thinker*: he is named by his most characteristic attribute, intelligence.

The mental world is thus the land of our birth, the realm to which in truth we belong, for our native atmosphere is that of ideas, not of physical phenomena.

When man, the Thinker, became incarnate in the physical vehicle built for his reception, the senseless animal became the thinking being by virtue of the Manas which entered into and dwelt in him. Thus man became clothed in his "coat of skin" after his fall into physical matter, in order that he might eat of the Tree of Knowledge and thus become a "God". Hence man is the link between the Divine and the animal.

The mental world is of peculiar interest, not only because man, after the mind is fairly developed, spends here nearly all his time, dipping down into the physical world only for brief snatches of mortal life, but also because it is the meeting ground of the higher and lower consciousness.

In English the word "mind" stands both for the intellectual consciousness itself, and also for the effects produced on the physical brain by that consciousness. In occultism however, we must conceive of the intellectual consciousness as an individual entity, a being, the vibrations of whose life are thoughts, expressed not as physical words, but as images.

The real man is Manas, the Thinker, working on the higher or causal levels of the mental plane. Only a small section of his vibrations, and even that very imperfectly, can be reproduced in the comparatively coarse physical materials,

the physical brain and nervous system being able to reproduce but a small fragment of the vast series of mental vibrations set up by the Thinker in his own world.

Very receptive brains respond up to the point of what we call great intellectual power; exceptionally unresponsive brains respond up to the point of what we call idiocy; exceptionally responsive brains up to the point of what we call genius. The so-called mental powers of each man thus represent the degree of sensitiveness of his brain to the millions of thought-waves from the Thinker to which it can respond.

Thus consciousness working in the brain is illuminated, from above, by ideas that are not fabricated from materials supplied by the physical world, but are reflected into it directly from the Universal Mind [see below]. The great "laws of thought" regulate all thinking, and the very act of thinking reveals their pre-existence, as it is done by them and under them, and is impossible without them.

Taking a still wider view of the mental plane, it may be described as that which reflects the Universal Mind in Nature, the plane which, in our little system, corresponds with the Great Mind in the Kosmos. This Great Mind is Mahat, the Third Logos, or Divine Creative Intelligence, the Brâhma of the Hindus, the Mandjusri of the Northern Buddhists, the Holy Spirit of the Christians.

The Universal Mind is that in which all archetypically exists; it is the source of beings, the fount of fashioning energies, the treasure-house in which are stored up all the archetypal forms which are brought forth and elaborated in lower kinds of matter during the evolution of the universe. These are the fruits of past universes brought over as seeds for unfoldment in the present universe.

It is on the higher part of the mental plane that exist the archetypal ideas which are now in course of concrete evolution. In its lower regions these are worked out into successive forms, to be duly reproduced in the astral and physical worlds.

An example of these ideas is that of the small artificial elementals, which may sometimes be seen hanging around a plant or flower, all through the time that the buds are forming. These are thought-forms of the great devas who supervise the evolution of the vegetable kingdom, and are created for the special purpose of carrying out their ideas connected with the plants and flowers. Such an elemental usually takes the form of an etheric model of the flower itself, or of a little creature which gradually builds the flower into the shape and colour of which the deva has thought. When the work is done, the power of the elemental is exhausted, and the matter of which it is composed dissolves into the general store of such matter.

These artificial elementals must not, of course, be confused with nature-spirits [see *The Astral Body* p. 181], which are frequently seen playing about flowers.

Before the Manu of a Chain or Round commences the task appointed for Him, He examines the part of that mighty thought-form of the Logos which refers to His work, and brings it down to some level within easy reach for constant reference. The same thing is done at a lower level by the Manu of each World and of each Root-Race. Each Manu then builds as nearly as He can to the model He has before Him, usually approaching the perfection required by degrees, the earlier efforts at the formation of a race, for example, being often only partially successful.

At the beginning of the present – [fourth]- round, all the archetypes for humanity were brought down, including those races which have not yet come into existence. From an examination of these, it is possible to see what the men of the future will be like. They will have finer vehicles in every way, and will be distinctly more beautiful in appearance, expressing in their forms the spiritual forces.

It was on Globe A in the fourth round that mind became definite on the lower mental level, and so we may say that it is in this round man began really to think. The result at first was by no means good. In previous rounds he had not been sufficiently developed to originate thought-forms to any great extent, and so the elemental essence of the globes had been affected only by the thoughts of the devas, who left everything harmonious and peaceful. But when man began to interject his selfish and jarring thoughts, this comfortable condition was very largely disturbed. Strife, unrest and disharmony were introduced, and the animal kingdom drew decisively apart from man, and began to feel fear and hatred towards him.

On Globe A there were also the group-souls of animals and vegetables, and even minerals. It is, of course, difficult for us to conceive what a mineral could be on the mental plane; it would correspond to our thought of a mineral; but the thought-form which exists there is that of the Manu, and is moulded by a power altogether beyond comparison with that of our mentality.

As we saw in Chapter II, in the natural course of events, the present fourth round should be devoted chiefly to the cultivation of the emotions; the next round, the fifth, should be that of intellectual advancement. We are, however, a long way in advance of the programme marked out for us. This advance is entirely due to those august Beings variously called the Lords of the Flame, the Children of the Fire-Mist, the Lords of Venus, who came to this earth from the planet Venus.

Most of them stayed with us only through that critical period of our history; a few still remain to hold the highest offices in the Great White Brotherhood, until the time when men of our own evolution shall be able to relieve Them of Their high office.

As was explained in Chapters VII and VIII, the materials of the mental plane are capable of combining, under the impulse of thought-vibrations, and can give rise to any combination which thought can construct. Just as iron can be made into a

spade or a sword, so can mental matter be shaped into thought-forms to help or to injure. In this region, thought and action are thus one and the same thing; matter is the obedient servant of life, adapting itself to every creative impulse.

The mental plane, being that of thought itself, the very home of thought, is thus far nearer reality than any lower plane. For everything that is material is buried and hidden in matter, whatever of reality it may possess being far less obvious and recognisable than it would be when regarded from a higher standpoint.

The whole of our Solar System being a manifestation of the Logos, every particle in it is part of His vehicles. Hence all the mental matter in the system constitutes His mental body.

This, of course, comprises not only the mental world belonging to each of the physical planets, but also those belonging to each of the astral planets, and in addition, the purely mental planets, usually called, in our Chain of worlds, globes A and G.

It may be noted, parenthetically, that the man of globe A in the First Round can hardly be called a man at all; he is a thought; he is what will some day be a mind-body—the germ of a mind-body, bearing perhaps the same relation to its later possibilities as the embryonic form of an infant after the first month bears to the fully developed human body. At this early stage he has marvellously little consciousness

The matter described above as composing the mental body of the Solar Logos also composes the mental bodies of the seven Planetary Logoi, which are centres of force within the Solar logos.

Now in every man's mental body there are particles belonging to each one of the seven Planetary Logoi, but the proportions vary infinitely, these proportions determining the *type* of each person.

In the seven Planetary Logoi certain psychic changes periodically occur, and these changes are bound to affect the bodies of every man in the world, because the materials of his bodies are also the materials of the Planetary Logoi. The degree to which he will be affected will, of course, depend upon the proportion in his bodies of the type of matter appropriate to that particular Logos. Hence the importance to man of the motions of these Planetary Spirits—and the ultimate rationale of astrological science.

The influences belonging to these great types affect, amongst other things, the elemental essence which, as we have seen [see p. 6], is vividly active in the astral and mental bodies of men. Hence any unusual excitement of any of these types must affect to some extent either man's emotions or his mind, or both, to a degree corresponding to the amount of the particular type of essence concerned which he possesses in his vehicles. Such influences in themselves are no more

good nor evil than any other natural force; they may be helpful or hurtful according to the use we make of them.

It is important to realise that any pressure these influences may bring to bear on man cannot dominate his will in the slightest degree. The most it can do is in some cases to make it easier, or more difficult, for that will to act along certain lines. A man of iron determination, or a student of occultism, may put these influences aside as a negligible quantity; for men of weaker will it may sometimes be worth while to know at what moment this or that force can most advantageously be applied. "The wise man rules his stars: the fool obeys them".

Whilst each physical globe has its physical, astral and mental planes, all interpenetrating one another, and therefore occupying the same space, all of these are yet quite apart, and do not communicate with the corresponding planes of any globe. [ It is only at and beyond the buddhic level that there is a condition common to all the planets of our chain].

Notwithstanding the above, there is a condition of the atomic matter of each of these planes which is cosmic in its extent. In fact, the seven atomic-sub-planes of our system, taken apart from the rest, may be said to constitute the lowest cosmic plane, sometimes called the cosmic-prakritic. Thus our mental plane is the third sub-division of the lowest cosmic plane.

Regarded in another way, the atomic part of our mental plane is also the lowest sub-plane of the mental body of the Planetary Logos.

The astral plane of the earth extends to a little less than the mean distance of the moon, the earth and the moon being nearly 240,000 miles apart; the mental plane of the earth, which is of course a definite globe, extends still further into space than does the astral plane, bearing about the same proportion to the astral as does the astral to the physical.

Only that portion of the atomic matter of the astral and mental planes which is in an entirely free condition is co-extensive with the interplanetary ether [which consists of ultimate physical atoms in their normal and uncompressed state]. Consequently a person can no more pass from planet to planet of our chain in his astral or mental body than he can in his physical body. In the causal body, when very highly developed, this achievement is possible, though not with the ease and rapidity with which it can be done at the buddhic level.

Furthermore, the detailed sight of other planets would not be possible for any system of clairvoyance connected with the mental or any lower plane, though a good deal of information could be obtained by exercising a high magnifying power , [see p. 116].

Matter of the lower planes is never carried over from planet to planet. When, for example, we leave this planet in order to incarnate upon Mercury, only the egos will be carried over. Those egos will draw round themselves mental and astral

matter belonging to their new planet, and will obtain physical bodies provided by those who are already inhabiting Mercury.

The matter of the mental plane is divided into seven grades of fineness, precisely as is that of the astral and the physical planes. For want of other terms these must for the present be denoted by the terms given to the seven grades of physical matter, i.e., solid, liquid, gaseous, etc. The highest or finest sub-division consists, of course, of ultimate mental atoms.

An ultimate mental atom contains 49 to the 4th or 5,764,801 [roughly five and three quarter million] "bubbles in kilon".

The three higher grades of mental matter are called arûpa, or formless; the four lower grades are termed rûpa, or having form. The distinction is a real one, being related to the divisions on the mind itself.

In the rûpa levels the vibrations of consciousness give rise to images or pictures, every thought appearing as a living shape; in the arûpa levels consciousness seems rather to send out flashes or streams of living energy, which does not body itself into distinct images, while it remains on its own levels, but which, when it rushes into the lower mental levels, sets up a variety of forms, all linked by some common condition. In other words, the arûpa levels are concerned with the expression of abstract thoughts, ideas, principles, and the rûpa levels with concrete thoughts and particular ideas.

Words being largely symbols of images, and belonging to the workings of the lower mind in the brain, it follows that it is almost, if not quite, impossible to describe in words the workings of abstract thought. For the arûpa levels pertain to the pure reason, which does not work within the narrow limits of language.

Another broad distinction between the rûpa and the arûpa levels of the mental plane is that on the rûpa levels a man lives in his own thoughts, and fully identifies himself with his personality in the life which he has recently quitted. On the arûpa levels he is simply the reincarnating ego who, provided he is sufficiently developed on that level to know anything at all, understands, at least to some extent, the evolution upon which he is engaged, and the work that he has to do.

Mental matter being so much finer than either astral or physical matter, it follows that the life-forces on the mental plane are enormously increased in activity. Mental matter is in constant, ceaseless motion, taking form under every thrill of life and adapting itself readily to every change of motion. Even astral matter seems relatively heavy and lustreless. The vibrations of mental matter are as much more rapid than physical vibrations as vibrations of light are more rapid than physical vibrations as vibrations of light are more rapid than those of sound.

We might say that mental matter moves actually *with* thought; astral matter moves so quickly after thought that the ordinary observer can scarcely note any

difference; etheric matter, of course, does not obey thought as rapidly as does astral matter.

The student will of course realise that just as each particle of physical ether floats in a sea of astral matter, so each astral particle floats in a mental ocean.

In spite of the idea, entertained by many people, that it is easier to deal with things on the physical plane than with those on the astral or mental planes, the reverse is the truth. For the very fineness of mental matter, and its ready response to mental impulses, makes it far easier to move, and to direct, by the action of the will, than either astral or physical matter.

In The Voice of the Silence, three Halls are spoken of –the Hall of Ignorance; the Hall of Learning; the Hall of Wisdom. It seems probable that the Hall of Ignorance stands for the physical plane; the Hall of Learning for the astral and lower mental planes; and the Hall of Wisdom for the planes of higher mind and buddhi.

On the four lower levels of the mental plane, some degree of illusion is still possible; but less it appears, for the man who can function there in full consciousness during physical life than for the undeveloped person after death, as was explained in the Chapters on Devachan.

The lower mental plane is thus still a region of personality and error; in it, as well as in the astral world, there is a serpent coiled under every flower; for if personal and foolish desires infest the one, pride and prejudice inhabit the other.

On the higher mental plane, though there will be much that the ego does not know, what he does know he knows correctly. With the life of the causal body, however, we are not directly concerned in this volume.

There is a radical difference between the lower and higher mental planes. In the lower mental, matter is dominant; it is the first thing that strikes the eye; and consciousness shines with difficulty through the forms. But in the higher planes, life is the prominent thing, and forms are there only for its purposes. The difficulty in the lower plane is to give life expression in the forms, but in the higher it is quite the reverse –to hold and give form to the flood of life. It is only above the line that divides the lower from the higher mental plane that the light of consciousness is subject to no wind, and shines with its own power. Hence the symbol of a spiritual fire is very fitting for consciousness at the higher levels, as distinguished from the lower planes, where the symbol of fire burning fuel is more appropriate.

In the case of the astral plane, it is possible to give some account of its scenery; but this cannot be done for the mental plane, because the mental plane has no scenery, except such as each individual chooses to make for himself by his thought; we do not, of course, include as "scenery" other mental entities who are themselves in many cases objects of great beauty.

The conditions of the mental plane, however, are so difficult to describe in words that it would perhaps be more accurate to say that all possible scenery exists there; there is nothing conceivable of loveliness which is not there with a fullness and intensity beyond all power of imagination. But out of this splendour of living reality each man sees only that which his development enables him to perceive.

It is said to be difficult to describe the difference between the matter of the various sub-planes of the mental world, because the scribe bankrupts himself of adjectives in his attempt to describe the lowest sub-plane, and thus has no words left for the description of the higher sub-planes. All that can be said is, that as we ascend, the material becomes finer, the harmonies fuller, the light more living and transparent. There are more overtones in the sound, more delicate shades in the colours, more and new colours appear, as we rise through the sub-planes. It has been said poetically, and truly, that the light of a lower plane is darkness on the one above it.

On the highest sub-plane the matter is ensouled and vivified by an energy which flows like light from above, from the buddhic plane. As we descend through each sub-plane, the matter of each sub-plane becomes the energy of the sub-plane immediately below; more accurately, the original energy, plus the matter of the higher sub-planes, becomes the ensouling energy of the next lower sub-plane. Thus the seventh or lowest sub-plane consists of the original energy six times enclosed or veiled, and therefore by so much, weaker and less active.

The first impressions of one who enters the mental plane in full consciousness will be very much as described in Chapter XX, when dealing with a man awakening, after astral death, in devachan. He will experience intense bliss, indescribable vitality, enormously increased power, and the perfect confidence which flows from these. He finds himself in the midst of what seems to him a whole universe of ever-changing light, colour and sound. He will seem to be floating in a sea of living light, surrounded by every conceivable variety of loveliness in colour and form, the whole changing with every wave of thought that he sends out from his mind, and being indeed, as he will discover, only the expression of his thought in the matter of the plane and its elemental essence. Concrete thoughts, as we saw previously, take the shapes of their objects, while abstract ideas usually represent themselves by all kinds of perfect and most beautiful geometrical forms. In this connection it should be remembered that many thoughts, which to us on the physical plane are little more than mere abstractions, are on the mental plane concrete facts.

The feeling of freedom in the mental world is so great that in comparison with it astral life seems a state of bondage.

Anyone who wishes to abstract himself from his surroundings on the mental plane and devote himself to quiet thought, may live in a world of his own without possibility of interruption; he will also have the additional advantage of seeing all his ideas, and their consequences, full worked out, passing before him in a sort of panorama.

If, however, he wishes instead to observe the plane upon which he is, he must very carefully suspend his own thought for a time, so that he may not influence the readily impressible matter around him [see p. 114].

Having attained to that condition in which he is no longer himself the centre of radiation of that light, colour, sound and form, it has not therefore ceased to exist: on the contrary, its harmonies and coruscations are grander than ever. Presently he will perceive that he is seeing the colour-language of the devas, the expression of thought or conversation of beings far higher than himself in the scale of evolution. By experiment and practice he will also find that he can himself use this mode of expression, and thus hold converse with, and learn from, these lofty non-human entities, whom we shall describe in a later chapter. For, as the student will recollect, a thought-form, composed of rapidly vibrating particles of mental matter, sets up vibrations all around it; and these vibrations give rise to sensations of sound and colour in any entities adapted to translate them thus.

It is possible also for a visitor to the mental plane to form round himself a huge shell, through which none of the thought or conversation of other entities can penetrate. Then holding his own mind perfectly still, he can examine the conditions inside his shell.

He is now able to perceive another, and entirely different, series of regular pulsations, which the other more artificial phenomena had obscured. These are universal, and cannot be checked or turned aside by any shell made by human power. They produce no colour or form, but flow with resistless regularity through all the matter of the plane, outwards and in again, like the exhalations and inhalations of a great breath.

There are several sets of these, clearly distinguishable from one another by volume, period of vibration, and the tone of the harmony which they bring. Grander than them all sweeps one great wave which seems the very heart-beat of the system –a wave which, welling up from unknown centres on far higher planes, pours out its life through all our world, and then draws back in its tremendous tide to That from which it came. It comes in one long undulating curve, and the sound of it is like the murmur of the sea. Yet in it and through it there echoes a ringing chant of triumph, the very music of the spheres.

A man who has once heard that glorious song of nature never quite loses it again. Even in the physical world, so dreary by comparison, he hears it always as a kind of undertone.

If the man has reached a certain degree of spiritual development, it is possible for him to merge his consciousness with the sweep of the wave and let it bear him upward to its source. But it is not wise to do this, unless a Master stands beside him to draw him back at the right moment; for otherwise its irresistible force will carry him away into still higher planes, whose far greater glories his ego

is as yet unable to sustain. He will lose consciousness, with no certainty as to when and where he will regain it.

Whilst the attainment of such unity is the ultimate object of man's evolution, he must reach that goal in full and perfect consciousness, and not drift into absorption in a state of blank unconsciousness but little removed from annihilation.

On the mental plane a man may circle the world with the speed of thought; he is at the other side of it even as he formulates the wish to be there, for the response of mental matter to thought is immediate, and it is very readily controlled by the will.

On the mental plane there is no alternation of day and night, and nothing to correspond to sleeping or waking, except of course on first entering the plane and on finally leaving it.

As the physical world is three-dimensional, and the astral world four-dimensional, so is the mental world five-dimensional. But, as was explained in *The Astral Body*, p. 165, it is probably more accurate to say that consciousness on each plane is able to appreciate the world in which it is functioning in the number of dimensions given above.

The three known forms of energy have their appropriate manifestations on every plane which our students have yet reached. Hence Fohat, Prana and Kundalini all exist on the mental plane, though at present little is known of the details of their workings.

A man in full consciousness on the mental plane will, of course, see the whole of humanity, excepting those who are living in their causal bodies only, for every man who is in physical or astral life must also possess a mental body. Those, however, who are confined in their own shells of thoughts in their heavens can scarcely be considered as companions, for reasons explained in the chapters on Devachan.

Between those who are fully conscious on the mental plane there is far closer union than is possible at any lower level. A man can no longer deceive another with regard to what he thinks, for all mental operations lie open for every one to see. Opinions or impressions can now be exchanged, not only with the quickness of thought, but also with perfect accuracy, for each now receives the exact idea of the other, clean, clear-cut, instantaneous, without having to puzzle his way through the maze of words.

The student will recollect that on the astral plane difference of language is a barrier to communication, as thoughts must be definitely formulated in words in order to be comprehensible to another entity on that plane. On the mental plane, however, men communicate directly by thought-transference, whatever their language may be.

Space is no barrier, for a man can come into touch with any other man merely by directing his attention to him. The real barrier between men are those due to the difference in their evolution. The less evolved can know only as much of the more evolved as he is able to respond to, and such limitations can obviously be felt, only by the more evolved, as the lesser has all he can contain.

The method of finding a man on the mental plane, whether he be living or dead, is as follows.

For each of a man's vehicles there is what may be called a keynote, a sort of average tone of the man's various forces and qualities on the plane concerned. There have never been found two persons whose keynotes were identical at all levels, i.e., etheric, astral, mental and causal, so as to make the same chord, when struck simultaneously.

Thus the chord of each man is unique, and whether he be sleeping or waking, living or dead, his chord is always the same, and he can always be found by it.

If the man is in the higher world, in his causal body alone, he still has his chord with him, because his permanent atoms are quite sufficient to give out the distinctive sound.

The trained seer, who is able to sense the chord, attunes his own vehicles for the moment exactly to its notes, and then by an effort of will sends forth its sound. Wherever in the three worlds the man sought may be, there is an instantaneous response from him. His causal body lights up instantly, like a great flame, and this is at once visible to the seer, so that a magnetic line of communication is established.

The seer can use that line as a kind of telescope, or, if he prefers, he can send his consciousness flashing along it with the speed of light, and see from the other end of it, as it were.

The man's chord is his true occult name. Some vague tradition of this is probably the origin of the belief among certain savages that a man's real name must be concealed, lest magic be worked upon him.

Thus also it is said, that at each Initiation the man's true name is changed, since each Initiation is at once the official recognition, and the fulfilment of a progress by which the man, as it were, has raised himself into a higher key, so that thenceforward his chord must be sounded differently.

This name of the man must not be confused with the name of the Augoeides [see below], for that is the chord of the three principles of the ego, produced by the vibrations of the âtmic, buddhic and mental atoms, and the monad behind them.

The chord is not actually either heard or seen; it is received by a complex perception which requires the practically simultaneous activity of the consciousness in the causal body and in all the lower vehicles.

Thus every man pronounces his own true name. Just as he has his own odour materially, by which a bloodhound can track him, so he has his sound spiritually. Those who can hear that sound of his in the inner worlds know where he stands on the ladder of evolution, and what he can and cannot do. Freemasons will recognise the chord as the man's own "knock", his own "report", made by the t... of the inner self, that opens for the man the way into the true Lodge.

The Augoeides, the glorified man, is a name sometimes given to the three higher principles of a man, viz., Âtmâ-Buddhi-Manas, which constitute the ego, in the causal body. This, of course, is not an image of any one of the man's past vehicles, but contains within itself the essence of all that was best in each of them; it is the body which indicates more or less perfectly, as through experience it grows, what the deity means that man shall be.

From that vehicle, on the causal levels, it is possible to see not only what the man's past history has been, but also to a considerable extent the future that lies before him.

## **CHAPTER XXVIII**

### **THE AKASHIC RECORDS**

No description of the mental plane would be complete without an account of what are known as the Akashic Records. They constitute the only reliable history of the world, and are often spoken of as the memory of nature, also as the true Karmic Records, or the Book of the Lipika.

The word âkâshic is somewhat of a misnomer, for, though the records are read from the âkâsha, or matter of the mental plane, yet they do not really belong to that plane. A still worse name, which was often used in the earlier literature of the subject, was "records of the astral light", for they lie far beyond the astral plane, only broken glimpses of them being found on the astral plane, as we shall see presently.

The word âkâshic is suitable only because it is on the mental plane that we first come definitely into contact with the records, and find it possible to do reliable work with them.

The student is already familiar with the fact that as a person develops, his causal body, which determines the limit of his aura, increases in size, as well as in luminosity and purity of colour. Pursuing this conception to an enormously higher level, we arrive at the idea that the Solar Logos comprehends within Himself the whole of our solar system. Hence anything that happens within our system is within the consciousness of the Logos. Thus we see that the true record is His memory.

Furthermore, it is equally clear that on whatever plane that memory exists, it

cannot but be far above anything that we know. Consequently, whatever records we may find our selves able to read must be only a reflection of the great original, mirrored in the denser media of the lower planes.

We know of these records on the buddhic, mental and astral planes, and we will describe them in the reverse order.

On the astral plane the reflection is exceedingly imperfect; such records as can there be seen are fragmentary in the extreme, and often seriously distorted. The analogy of water, which is so often used as a symbol of the astral world is remarkably apt in this case. A clear reflection in still water is at best only a reflection, representing in two dimensions objects which are three-dimensional, and then showing only their shape and colour; also the objects are reversed.

If the surface of the water be ruffled, the reflection is so broken and distorted as to be almost useless, and even misleading as a guide to the real shape and appearance of the objects reflected.

Now on the astral plane we can never have anything approaching what corresponds to a still surface; on the contrary, we have to deal with one in rapid and bewildering motion. Hence we cannot depend upon getting a clear and definite reflection. Thus a clairvoyant who possesses the faculty only of astral sight can never rely upon any picture of the past that comes before him as being accurate and perfect. Here and there some part of it *may* be so, but he has no means of knowing which it is. By long and careful training he may learn to distinguish between reliable and unreliable impressions, and to construct from broken reflections some kind of image of the object reflected. But usually long before he has mastered these difficulties he will have developed mental sight, which renders such labours unnecessary.

On the mental plane, conditions are very different. There, the record is full and accurate; also it is impossible to make any mistake in reading. That is to say, any number of clairvoyants, using mental sight, and examining a certain record, would see precisely the same reflection, and each would acquire a correct impression from reading it.

With the faculties of the causal body the task of reading the records is still easier. It appears, in fact, that for perfection in reading-- [so far as that is possible on the mental plane]—the ego must be fully awakened, so that he can use the atomic matter of the mental plane.

It is well known that if a number of persons witness a given event on the physical plane, their accounts afterwards will often vary considerably. This is because of faulty observation, each frequently seeing only those features of the event which most appealed to him.

This personal equation would not appreciably affect the impressions received in the case of an observation on the mental plane. For each observer would thoroughly grasp the entire subject, and so it would be impossible for him to see its parts out of due proportion.

Error, however, may easily occur in transferring the impressions received to the lower planes. The reasons for this we may group roughly as those due to the observer himself, and those due to the inherent difficulty, or rather impossibility, of performing the task perfectly.

In the nature of things, only a small fraction of the experience on the mental plane could be expressed in physical worlds at all; hence, since all expression must be partial, there is obviously some possibility of choice in selecting the part expressed. For this reason, clairvoyant investigations by leading Theosophists are constantly checked and verified by more than one investigator, before they are published.

Apart from the personal equation, however, there are still the difficulties inherent in bringing impressions down from a higher to a lower plane. In order to understand this, the analogy of the art of painting is useful. A painter has to endeavour to reproduce a three-dimensional object on a flat surface, which of course has only two dimensions. Even the most perfect picture is in reality almost infinitely far from being a reproduction of the scene it represents: for hardly a single line or angle in it can ever be the same as those in the object copied. It is simply a highly ingenious attempt to make upon *one* sense only, by means of lines and colours on a flat source, an impression similar to that which the actual scene depicted would make upon us. It can convey to us nothing, except by suggestion dependent on our own previous experience, of, for example, the roar of the sea, the scent of flowers, the taste of fruit, the hardness or softness of surfaces.

Far greater are the difficulties experienced by a clairvoyant in endeavouring to express mental phenomena in physical plane language; for, as was mentioned in an earlier chapter, the mental world is five-dimensional.

The appearance of the records varies to a certain extent, according to the conditions under which they are seen. Upon the astral plane, the reflection is usually a simple picture, though occasionally the figure seen would be endowed with motion. In this case, instead of a mere snapshot, a rather longer and more perfect reflection has taken place.

On the mental plane, they have two widely different aspects. *First:* if the observer is not thinking specially of them, the records simply form a background to whatever is going on. Under such conditions they are really merely reflections from the ceaseless activity of a great Consciousness upon a far higher plane, and have very much the appearance of cinematography pictures. The action of the reflected figures constantly goes on, as though one were watching the actors

on a distant stage.

*Second:* if the trained observer turns his attention specially to any one scene, then, this being the plane of unhampered thought, it is instantly brought before him. Thus, if he wished to see the landing in Britain of Julius Caesar, in a moment he finds himself, not looking at a picture, but actually standing on the shore among the legionaries, with the whole scene being enacted around him, precisely as he would have seen it had he been there when it occurred in 55 BC. The actors are of course entirely unconscious of him, as they are but reflections, nor can any effort of his change the course of their action in any way.

But he has the power of controlling the rate at which the drama shall pass before him. He could thus have the events of a year take place before him in one hour. He could also stop the movement at any moment and hold any particular scene in view as long as he chooses.

Not only does he see all that he would have seen physically, had he been present when the events occurred, but he hears and understands what the people say, and he is conscious of their thoughts and motives.

There is one special case where an investigator can enter into an even closer sympathy with the records. If he is observing a scene in which he himself took part in a previous life, there are two possibilities open to him. [1] He may regard it in the usual manner, just as a spectator, though [as indicated above] a spectator whose insight and sympathy are perfect; or [2] he may once more identify himself with that long-dead personality of his and experience over again the thought and emotions of that time. He recovers, in fact, from the universal consciousness, that portion with which he has himself been associated.

The student will readily perceive the wonderful possibilities that open up before the man who is in full possession of the power to read the akâshic records at will. He can review at leisure all history, correcting the many errors and misconceptions which have crept into the accounts handed down by historians. He can also watch, for example, the geological changes that have taken place, and the cataclysms which have altered the face of the earth many times.

It is usually possible to determine the date of any record which may be examined, but it may require considerable pains and ingenuity. There are many ways of doing this: [1] The observer may look into the mind of an intelligent person present in the picture, and see what date he supposes it to be; [2] he may observe the date, written in a letter or document. As soon as he has secured the date say according to the Roman or Grecian system of chronology, it is of course merely a matter of calculation to reduce it to the present accepted system. [3] He may turn to some contemporary record, the date of which can easily be ascertained from ordinary historical sources.

In comparatively recent times there is usually no great difficulty in ascertaining the date. But in much older times other methods have to be adopted. Even if the date can be read in the mind of someone living in the picture there may be difficulty in relating his system of dates to that of the observer. In such cases: [4] the observer may run the records before him [which he can do at any speed, such as a year or a second, or faster if he chooses] and count the years from a date that is known. In such cases it is of course necessary to form some approximate idea, from the general appearance and surroundings, of the period, in order that he may not have too long a series of years to count. [5] Where the years run into thousands, the above method would be too tedious to be practical. The observer, as an alternative, can notice the point in the heavens to which the axis of the earth is pointing, and calculate the date from the known data concerning that secondary rotation of the earth, known as the precession of the equinoxes. [6] In extremely early records of events which took place millions of years ago, the period of the precession of the equinoxes [approximately 26,000 years] can be used as a unit. In these instances absolute accuracy is not required, hence the date in round numbers is sufficient for all practical purposes in dealing with such remote epochs.

The accurate numbering of the records is possible only after careful training. As we have seen, mental sight is necessary before any reliable reading can be done. In fact, to minimise the possibility of error, mental sight ought to be fully at the command of the investigator while awake in the physical body; and to obtain this years of labour and rigid self-discipline are necessary.

Moreover, as the true records lie on a plane at present far beyond our ken, to comprehend them *perfectly* demands faculties of a far higher order than any which humanity has yet evolved. Hence our present view of the whole subject must necessarily be imperfect, because we are looking at it from below instead of from above.

The âkâshic records must not be confused with mere man-made thought-forms, which exist in such abundance on both the mental and astral planes.

Thus for example, as we saw in Chapter VIII, any great historical event, having been constantly thought of, and vividly imaged by large numbers of people, exists as a definite thought-form on the mental plane. The same applies to characters in drama, fiction, etc. Such products of thought [ often be it noted, of quite ignorant or inaccurate thought] are much easier to see than the true âkâshic record, for, as we have said, to read the records requires training, whilst to see thought-forms needs nothing but a glimpse of the mental plane.

Hence many visions of saints, seer, etc., are not of the true records but merely of thought-forms.

One method of reading the records is by means of psychometry. It appears that

there is a sort of magnetic attachment or affinity between any particle of matter and the record which contains history. Every particle, in fact, bears within it forever the impress of everything that has occurred in its neighbourhood. This affinity enables it to act as a kind of conductor between the record and the faculties of anyone who can read it.

The untrained clairvoyant usually cannot read the records without some such physical link to put him *en rapport* with the subject required. Such a method of exercising clairvoyance is psychometry.

Thus, if a fragment of stone belonging, say, to Stonehenge, is given to a psychometer, he will see, and be able to describe, the ruins and the country surrounding them; in addition, he will probably also be able to see some of the past events with which Stonehenge was associated, such as Druidical ceremonies, for example.

It is quite probable that ordinary memory is but another expression of the same principle. The scenes through which we pass in the course of our lives seem to act upon the cells of the brain in such a way as to establish a connection between those cells and the portion of the records with which we have been associated, and so we "remember" what we have seen.

Even a trained clairvoyant needs a link to enable him to find the record of an event of which he has no previous knowledge. There are several ways in which this may be done. Thus : [1] if he has visited the scene of the event, he may call up the image of the spot, and then run through the records until he reaches the period desired. [2] If he has not seen the place in question, he may run back in time to the date of the event and then search for what he wants; [3] he may examine the records of the period, when he will have no difficulty in identifying any prominent person connected with the event; then he can run through the records of that person till he comes to the event for which he was looking.

We thus see that the power to read the memory of nature exists in men in many degrees; there are the few trained clairvoyants who can consult the records for themselves at will; the psychometer who needs an object connected with the past in order to bring him into touch with the past; the person who gets occasional, spasmodic glimpses of the past; the crystal-gazer who can sometimes direct his less certain astral telescope [see *The Astral Body*, p. 235] to some scene of long ago.

Many of the lower manifestations of these powers are exercised unconsciously. Thus many a crystal-gazer watches scenes from the past, without being able to distinguish them from visions of the present; other vaguely psychic persons find pictures constantly arising before their eyes, without ever realising that they are actually psychometrising the various objects which happen to be around them.

A variant of this class of psychic is the man who is able to psychometrise persons only, instead of inanimate objects, as is more usual. In most cases this faculty shows itself erratically. Such psychics will sometimes, when they meet a stranger, see in a flash some prominent event in that stranger's life; on other occasions they will receive no special impression.

More rarely are found persons who get detailed visions of the past life of everyone they encounter. One of the best examples of this class is probably that of the German Zschokke, who describes his remarkable faculty circumstantially in his autobiography.

Although it is outside the scope of this book to treat of the buddhic plane, yet for the sake of completeness, and in this once instance, it may be well briefly to refer to the records as they exist on the buddhic plane.

The records, referred to as the memory of nature, are on the plane of buddhi very much more than a memory in the ordinary sense of the word. On this plane time and space are no longer limitations. The observer no longer needs to pass a series of events in review, for past and present, as well as future, are all alike and simultaneously present to him, for he is in what is called the "Eternal Now" – meaningless as such a phrase may sound on the physical plane.

Infinitely below the consciousness of the Logos as even the buddhic plane is, it is abundantly clear that the "record" is not merely a memory; for all that has happened in the past, or that will happen in the future, is *happening now* before His eyes, just as much as are the events of what we call the present. Incredible as this may sound, it is nevertheless true.

A simple and purely physical analogy may help to a partial understanding, not indeed of the future, but of the past and present being visible simultaneously.

Let the following two premises only be granted:

- [1] That physical light can travel, at its usual speed, indefinitely into space without loss.
- [2] That the Logos, being omnipresent, must be at every point in space, not successively, but simultaneously.

Granting these premises, it necessarily follows that everything which has ever happened, from the very beginning of the world, must at this very moment be taking place before the eyes of the Logos –not a mere memory of it, but the actual occurrence itself being now under His observation.

Further, by a simple movement of consciousness through space, He would not only be *continuously* conscious of every event that had ever happened, but would also be conscious of every event happening, at any speed He chooses, either *forwards* [as we reckon time], or *backwards*.

The illustration, however as stated, does not appear to throw any light on the problem of seeing the future, which for the present must remained unexplained, based, apart from metaphysical considerations, solely on the statements of those who have themselves been able to exercise, in some degree, the faculty of seeing future events.

The future cannot be seen as clearly as the past, for the faculty to see the future belongs to a still higher plane. Moreover, although prevision is to a great extent possible on the mental plane, yet it is not perfect, because wherever in the web of destiny the hand of the developed man comes in, his powerful will may introduce new threads, and change the pattern of the life to come. The course of the ordinary undeveloped man, who has practically no will of his own worth speaking of, may often be foreseen enough, but when the ego boldly takes his future into his own hands, exact prevision becomes impossible.

A man who can use his atmic body can contact the Universal Memory beyond the limits even of his own Chain.

On p.88 we mentioned one possible cause of plagiarism. Another cause, which sometimes occurs, is that two writers happening to see the same âkâshic record at the same time. In this case, they not only apparently plagiarise each other, but also, though each thinks himself the creator of a plot, a situation, etc., both are actually plagiarising the world's true history.

## CHAPTER XXIX

### MENTAL PLANE INHABITANTS

In classifying the inhabitants of the mental plane, we will adopt the classification chosen for the inhabitants of the astral plane [see *The Astral Body*, p. 168] viz. :

[1] Human, [2] Non-Human, [3] Artificial.

Since the products of man's evil passions, which bulk so largely the astral world, cannot exist on the mental plane, the sub-divisions we shall have to consider will naturally be far fewer than in the case of astral entities.

The following table sets out the main classes: -

LOWER MENTAL PLANE INHABITANTS			
Human		Non-Human	Artificial
Embodyed	Disembodied		
Adepts	Human beings in devachan	Rûpadevas	Elementals
Initiates			

<b>Highly developed men</b>		<b>Animal Group-Souls Individualised Animals Second Elemental Kingdom</b>	
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It will be seen that Human entities are divided, for convenience, into *embodied*, i.e., those who are still attached to a physical body, "alive" as we say, and those who are "dead", who have no physical body.

**HUMAN : EMBODIED** – Human beings who, while still attached to a physical body, are able to move in full consciousness and activity on the mental plane, are either Adepts or Their initiated pupils, for until a student has been taught by his Master how to use his mental body he will be unable to move with freedom upon even its lower levels.

Adepts and Initiates appear as splendid globes of living colour, driving away all evil influence wherever they go, shedding around them a feeling of restfulness and happiness, of which even those who do not see them are often conscious. It is in the mental world that much of their most important work is done, more especially upon the higher levels, where the individuality or ego can be acted upon directly. It is from this plane that they shower the grandest spiritual influences upon the world of thought. From it also they impel great and beneficent movements of all kinds. Here also much of the spiritual force poured out by the self-sacrifice of the Nirmanakayas [see *The Astral Body*, p. 57] is distributed; here also direct teaching is given to those pupils who are sufficiently advanced to receive it in this way, since it can be imparted far more readily and completely here than on the astral plane. In addition, they have a great field of work in connection with those whom we call the "dead".

Adepts or Masters for the most part reside on the highest or atomic level of the mental plane.

But in the majority of cases, those who attain to the Asekha level, no longer retain either physical, astral, mental or causal bodies, but live permanently at Their highest level. When They need to deal with a lower plane, They draw round Themselves a temporary vehicle of the matter belonging to that plane.

In order the better to understand the conditions of the mental plane and its inhabitants, it is necessary to mention also those who are not present on the plane. The characteristics of the mental world being unselfishness and spirituality, it follows that the black magician and his pupils can find no place there. In spite of the fact that in many of them the intellect is very highly developed, and consequently the matter of their mental bodies is extremely active and sensitive along certain lines, yet in every case those lines are connected with personal desire of some sort. They can find expression only

through that lower part of the mental body, which is inextricably entangled with astral matter. As a necessary consequence of this limitation, their activities are practically confined to the astral and physical planes.

A man whose whole life is evil and selfish, may indeed have periods of purely abstract thought during which he may utilise his mental body, provided he has learnt how to do so. But the moment that the personal element comes in, and the effort is made to produce some evil result, the thought is no longer abstract, and the man finds himself working in connection with the familiar astral matter once more. One might therefore say that a black magician could function on the mental plane only while he forgot that he was a black magician.

But even while he forgot it, he could be visible on the mental plane only to men functioning there consciously, never by any possibility to people in devachan, who are entirely secluded in a world of their own thoughts, into which nothing of an unpleasant or evil character can intrude from without.

For ordinary people during sleep, or for psychically developed persons in trance, to penetrate to the mental plane, is just possible, though extremely rare. Purity of life and purpose would be an absolutely pre-requisite, and even when the plane was reached there would be nothing that could be called real consciousness, but simply a capacity for receiving certain impressions. An example of this was given in the chapter on *Sleep-Life*, p. 166.

**HUMAN: DISEMBODIED** –This class comprises all those in devachan, who have already been described in the chapters dealing with that condition.

**NON-HUMAN :** -It was mentioned in *The Astral Body*, p. 169, that there are occasionally found on the astral plane certain cosmic entities, visitors from other planets and systems. Such visitors are very much more frequent on the mental plane. The difficulties of describing such entities in human language are almost insuperable, and the task will therefore not be attempted.

They are very lofty beings and are concerned, not with individuals, but with great cosmic processes. Those in touch with our world are the immediate agents for the carrying out of the law of karma, especially in connection with changes of land and sea brought about by earthquakes, tidal waves, and all other seismic causes.

**Rûpadevas** :-The beings known to the Hindus and Buddhists as Devas, to Zoroastrians as the Lords of the heavenly and the earthly, to the Christians and Mohammedans as angels, and elsewhere as Sons of God, etc., are a kingdom of spirits belonging to an evolution distinct from that of humanity, an evolution in which they may be regarded as a kingdom next above humanity, much as humanity is next above the animal kingdom. There is here however, an important difference; for, whilst an animal can pass only into the human kingdom, a human being, when he attains the Asekha level, has several choices, of which the deva

line is one.

Although connected with the earth, devas are by no means confined to it, for the whole of our chain of seven worlds is as one world to them, their evolution being through a grand system of seven chains.

Their hosts have hitherto been recruited chiefly from other humanities in the solar system, some lower and some higher than ours, since but a very small portion of our own is sufficiently advanced to be able to join them. It seems certain that some of their very numerous classes have not passed through any humanity at all comparable with ours.

It is at present not possible for us to understand very much about them, but it is clear that the aim of their evolution is considerably higher than ours; that is to say, while the level of the Asekha Adept is that at which we are aiming at the end of the seventh round, the level attained by the deva evolution in the corresponding period will be a very much higher one. For them, as for us, there is a steeper, but shorter path leading to still more sublime heights.

There are at least as many types of angels or devas as there are races of men, and in each type there are many grades of power, of intellect, and of general development, so that altogether there are hundreds of varieties.

Angels have been divided into nine Orders, the names used in the Christian Church being Angels, Archangels, Thrones, Dominations, Prinedoms, Virtues, Powers, Cherubim and Seraphim. Of these, seven belong to the great Rays of which the solar system is composed, and two may be called cosmic, as they are common to some other systems.

In each Order there are many types; in each there are some who work; some who assist those in trouble and sorrow; others who work among the vast hosts of the dead; some who guard, some who meditate, while others are at the stage where they are mainly concerned with their own development.

There are also angels of music, who express themselves in music as we express ourselves in words; to them an arpeggio is a greeting, a fugue a conversation, an oratorio an oration. There are angels of colour, who express themselves by kaleidoscopic changes of glowing hues. There are also angels who live in and express themselves by perfumes and fragrances. A sub-division of this type includes the angels of incense, who are drawn by its vibrations and find pleasure in utilising its possibilities.

There is still another kind, belonging to the kingdom of nature-spirits or elves, who do not express themselves by means of perfumes, but who live by and on such emanations and so are always found where fragrance is disseminated.

There are many varieties, some feeding upon coarse and loathsome odours, and others only upon those which are delicate and refined. Amongst these are a few

types who are especially attracted by the smell of incense, and who are therefore to be found in churches where incense is used.

Those who have been taught to know and respond to the ancient call at the preface of the Christian Eucharist and who are charged with the distribution of the force, are often called the apostolic or messenger angels. Some of these are thoroughly conversant with this class of work, from long practice, others are novices, eagerly learning what has to be done, and how to do it.

The method of angelic evolution being largely by service, a ceremony such as the Eucharist offers them a remarkably good opportunity, of which they readily avail themselves. At a Low celebration, the Directing Angel first responds to the call sent out by the priest, and he seems to assemble the rest; at a High Celebration or *Missa Cantata*, the ancient melody attracts the notice of all immediately that it rings out, and they stand ready to attend at the appropriate time for each.

The service rendered by the angels is of very many kinds, only a few bringing them into contact with human beings, mainly in connection with religious ceremonies.

The angels invoked in the Christian services are far above men in spiritual development. In Freemasonry also angelic aid is invoked, but those called upon are nearer to the level of men in development and intelligence, and each of them brings with him a number of subordinates, who carry out his directions.

Every regularly constituted Masonic Lodge is in charge of a seventh-ray Angel, who directs its affairs.

None of the devas have physical bodies such as we have. The lowest kind are called Kâmadevas, who have as their lowest body the astral; the next class is that of the Rûpadevas, who have bodies of lower mental matter, and who have their habitat on the four lower, or rûpa levels of the mental plane; the third class is that of the arûpadevas, who live in bodies of higher mental or causal matter. Above these there are four other great classes, inhabiting respectively the four higher planes of our solar system. Above and beyond the deva kingdom altogether stand the great hosts of planetary spirits. In this book we are concerned, of course principally with the Rûpadevas.

The relationship of devas to nature –spirits somewhat resembles, at a higher level, that of men to animals. Just as an animal can attain individualisation only by association with man, so it seems that a nature-spirit can normally acquire a permanent reincarnating individuality only by an attachment of a somewhat similar character to devas.

Devas will never be human, most of them already beyond that stage, but there are

some who have been human beings in the past.

The bodies of devas are more fluidic than those of men, being capable of far greater expansion and contraction. They have also a certain fiery quality which clearly distinguishes them from human beings.

The fluctuations in the aura of a deva are so great that, for example, the aura of one which was normally about 150 yards in diameter has been observed to expand to about two miles in diameter.

The colours in the aura of a deva are more of the nature of flame than of cloud. A man looks like an exceedingly brilliant, yet delicate cloud of glowing gas, but a deva looks like a mass of fire.

Devas live far more in the circumference, more all over their auras than a man does. Whilst 99 percent of the matter of a man's aura is within the periphery of his physical body, the proportion is far less in the case of a deva.

They usually appear as human beings of gigantic size. They possess vast knowledge, great power, and are most splendid in appearance; they are described as radiant, flashing creatures, myriad-hued, like rainbows of changing supernal colours, of stateliest imperial mien, calm energy incarnate, embodiments of resistless strength. In *Revelation* [x. 1] one of them is described as having "a rainbow upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire". "As the sound of many waters" are their voices. They guide natural order, their cohorts carrying on ceaselessly the process of nature with regularity and accuracy.

Devas produce thought-forms as we do, but theirs are usually not so concrete as ours, until they reach a high level. They have a wide generalising nature, and are constantly making gorgeous plans. They have a colour language, which is probably not as definite as our speech, though in certain ways it may express more.

The Initiations which we take are not taken by devas; their kingdom and ours converge at a point higher than the Adept.

There are ways in which a man can enter the deva evolution, even at our stage, or lower.

The acceptance of this line of evolution is sometimes spoken of, in comparison with the sublime renunciation of the Nirmanakayas, as "yielding to the temptation to become a god". But it must not be inferred from this expression that any shadow of blame attaches to the man who makes this choice. The Path which he selects is not the shortest, but it is a very noble one, and if his developed intuition impels him toward it, it is certainly the one best suited to his capacities.

In Freemasonry the deva captain associated with the S.D. is a rûpadeva, and he employs nature-spirits and elemental essence at his own level. The deva captains corresponding to the three Principal Officers are arûpadevas, who possess the consciousness and wield the forces of the planes which they respectively represent.

The deva of the J.W. takes charge of the 1st degree, the deva of the S.W. of the 2nd degree, and the deva of W.M. of the 3rd degree.

Nothing is known of any rule or limit for the work of the devas. They have more lines of activity than we can imagine. They are usually quite willing to expound and exemplify subjects along their own line to any human being who is sufficiently developed to appreciate them. Much instruction is given in this way, but few are able to profit by it as yet.

Whilst devas are exceedingly beautiful, the lower orders of them have the vaguest and cloudiest conceptions of things, being inaccurate so far as facts are concerned. Hence, while a deva friend may be an exceedingly interesting person, yet, having no relation to the facts amidst which humanity is evolving, the greatest care should be exercised in following advice he may give as to physical actions.

In general, the higher order of devas unreservedly co-operate with the great Plan of the universe; hence the perfect "order" that we find in nature. In the lower ranks, this perfect obedience is instinctive and automatic, rather than conscious; they do their work, feeling impelled in the direction of the One Will which runs through everything.

In the case of National devas, whilst the one at the head of each nation is a being of lofty intelligence, who always co-operates with the Plan, the lower national devas are found fighting, for example, for their own nation on a battlefield. As their intelligence develops, they co-operate more and more with the Plan.

The Spirit of the Earth, that obscure being who has the earth for his body, is not of the highest order of devas. Little is known of him; he may be said to belong more to the Rûpa Devas, because he has the earth for his body.

Devas who are beyond the level of the Asekha Adept, *i.e.*, that of the Fifth Initiation, normally live in what is called in Sanskrit the Jñânadeha, or the body of knowledge. The lowest part of that body is an atom of the nirvanic plane, serving them as our physical body serves us.

For a description of the four Devarâjas, or Regents of the Earth, the student is referred to *The Astral Body*, p. 187.

In Freemasonry, the four tassels which appear in the corners of the "Indented

"Border" symbolise the Devarâjas, the Rulers of the elements of earth, water, air and fire, and the agents of the law of Karma.

*Animal Group-Souls*. The group-souls, to which the vast majority of animals are attached, are found on the lower mental plane. It would take us too far afield to describe the nature of these group-souls, so we confine ourselves merely to mentioning them here.

*Individualised Animals*. These, together with their state of consciousness on the mental plane, have already been described on p. 204.

*Second Elemental Kingdom*. We have already, in Chapter II, described the genesis of the Mental Elemental Essence; we have also dealt with this essence in its function as part of man's mental body, and also as used in thought-forms. Little more, therefore, need be said about it here.

There are three Elemental Kingdoms: the First ensouls matter of the higher mental or causal sub-planes; the Second, the matter of the four lower levels of the mental plane; the Third, astral matter. In the Second Kingdom, the highest subdivision exists on the fourth sub-plane, whilst there are two classes on each of the three lower sub-planes, thus making in all seven subdivisions on these four sub-planes.

We have already seen [p.5] that the mental essence is on the *downward* arc of evolution, and therefore is *less* evolved than astral essence or, of course, than any of the later kingdoms, such as the mineral; and we have also emphasised the importance of this fact, which the student should bear constantly in mind.

Mental Essence is, if possible, even more instantaneously sensitive to thought-action than is the astral Essence, the wonderful delicacy with which it responds to the faintest action of the mind being constantly and prominently brought to the notice of investigators. It is, of course, in this response that its very life consists, its progress being helped by the use of it by thinking entities.

If it could be imagined as entirely free for a moment from the action of thought, it would appear as a formless conglomeration of dancing infinitesimal atoms, instinct with marvellous intensity of life, but probably making but little progress on the downward path of evolution into matter. But when thought seizes upon it, and stirs it into activity, throwing it on the rûpa levels into all kinds of lovely forms [and on the arûpa levels into flashing streams], it receives a distinct additional impulse which, often repeated, helps it forward on its way.

For when a thought is directed from higher levels to the affairs of earth, it sweeps downwards and takes upon itself the matter of the lower planes. In doing this, it brings the elemental essence, of which the first veil was formed, into contact with that lower matter; thus by degrees the essence becomes accustomed to answer

to lower vibrations, and so progresses in its downward evolution into matter.

The Essence is also very noticeably affected by music, poured forth by great musicians in devachan [see p. 197].

It should be clearly recognised that there is a vast difference between the grandeur and power of thought on its own plane and the comparatively feeble effort we know as thought on the physical plane.

Ordinary thought originates in the mental body and, as it descends, clothes itself in astral essence. A man who can use his causal body generates his thoughts at that level; these thoughts clothe themselves in lower mental essence, and are consequently infinitely finer, more penetrating, and in every way more effective.

If the thought be directed exclusively to higher objects, its vibrations may be too fine to find expression in astral matter; but when they do affect this lower matter they have far greater effect than those generated so much nearer to the level of that lower matter.

Following the idea further, the thought of an Initiate takes rise on the buddhic plane, and clothes itself in causal matter; the thought of a Master takes its rise on the plane of *âtmâ*, wielding the incalculable powers of regions of matter beyond our ordinary ken.

**ARTIFICIAL. Elementals.** Mental elementals, or thought-forms, having already been fully described, little further need be said about them. The mental plane is even more fully peopled by artificial elementals than is the astral plane, and they play a large part among the living creatures that function on the mental plane. They are, of course, more radiant and more brilliantly coloured than are astral elementals, are stronger, more lasting, and more fully vitalised.

When it is also remembered how much grander and more powerful thought is on the mental plane, and that its forces are being wielded not only by human entities, but by devas, and by visitors from higher planes, it will be realised that the importance and influence of such artificial entities can scarcely be exaggerated.

Great use is made of these mental elementals by Masters and Initiates, the elementals which they create having, of course, a much longer existence and proportionately greater power than any of those which were described in dealing with the astral plane, in *The Astral Body*, p. 190.

## CHAPTER XXX

### DEATH OF THE MENTAL BODY

Life in devachan, the heaven-world, being, as we have seen, finite, must come to an end. This takes place when the ego has assimilated all the essence of the experiences which were gathered in the preceding physical and astral lives.

All the mental faculties, which were expressed through the mental body, are then withdrawn within the higher mental or causal body. Together with them, the *mental unit*, which performs a function similar to that performed by the physical and astral permanent atoms, also is withdrawn within the causal body, and remains there in a latent condition until called forth into renewed activity, when the time comes for re-birth.

The mental unit, together with the astral and physical permanent atoms, are enwrapped in the buddhic life-web [see p. 285], and stored up as a radiant nucleus-like particle in the causal body, being all that remains to the ego of his bodies in the lower worlds.

The mental body itself, the last of the *temporary* vestures of the true man, the ego, is left behind as a mental corpse, just as the physical and astral bodies were left behind. Its materials disintegrate, and return to the general matter of the mental plane.

We are not, strictly, concerned in this volume with the life of the man on the higher mental or causal plane, but, in order not to leave the story of man's life between one incarnation and the next too incomplete, we may mention very briefly the portion of that life spent on the higher mental plane.

Every human being, on his completion of his life on the astral and lower mental planes, obtains at least a flash of consciousness of the ego, in the causal body.

The more developed, of course, have a definitely conscious period, living as the ego on its own plane.

In the momentary flash of ego-consciousness, the man sees his last life as a whole, and gathers from it the impression of success or failure in the work which it was meant to do.

Together with this, he also has a forecast of the life before him, with the knowledge of the general lesson which that is to teach, or the specific progress which he is intended to make in it. Only very slowly does the ego awaken to the value of these glimpses; but when he comes to understand them, he naturally begins to make use of them. Eventually he arrives at a stage when this glimpse is no longer momentary, when he is able to consider the question much more fully, and to devote some time to his plans for the life which lies before him.

Further description of the life of the ego on his own plane must now be deferred for the fourth volume of this series, which will deal with *The Causal Body*.

## CHAPTER XXXI

### THE PERSONALITY AND EGO

We now come to consider the relationship between the personality and the ego. As, however, we have not yet studied the ego [this, of course, having to be reserved for our next volume on the Causal Body], it will not be possible for us to investigate the relationship between personality and ego quite fully. Furthermore, we must in this volume examine the question mainly from the point of view of the personality, rather than from that of the ego. In The Causal Body we must again take up the subject, which is one of very great importance, but then, of course, principally from the point of view of the ego.

The *personality* consists of the transitory vehicles through which the true man, the Thinker, expresses himself in the physical, astral and lower mental worlds; i.e., the physical, astral and lower mental bodies, and of all the activities connected with these vehicles.

The *individuality* consists of the Thinker himself, the Self in the causal body. As a tree puts out leaves, to last through spring, summer and autumn, so does the individuality put out personalities to last through the life-periods spent on the physical, astral and lower mental planes. Just as the leaves take in, assimilate, and pass on nutriment to the sap, which is eventually withdrawn into the parent trunk, and then fall and perish, so does the personality gather experience and pass it on to the parent individuality, eventually, when its task is completed, falling and perishing.

The ego incarnates in a personality for the sake of acquiring definiteness. The ego on his own plane is magnificent, but vague in his magnificence, except in the case of men far advanced on the road of evolution.

The 'principles' of man are sometimes classified as follows:			
One classification	A slightly different classification		
The Immortal Triad or Individuality	Âtmâ	IMMORTAL	Âtmâ
	Buddhi		Buddhi
	Manas		Higher Manas
The Perishable Quarternary or Personality	Kâma	CONDITIONALLY IMMORTAL	Kâma-Manas
	Prâna	MORTAL	Prâna
	Etheric Double		Etheric Double
	Dense Body		Dense Body

A classification used by H.P. Blavatsky is as follows.

She speaks of four divisions of the mind:-

[1] Manas-taijasi, the resplendent or illuminated manas, which is really buddhi, or at least that state of man when his manas has become merged in buddhi, having no separate will of its own.

[2] Manas proper, the higher manas, the abstract thinking mind.

[3] Antahkarana; the link or bridge between higher manas and kâma-manas during incarnation.

[4] Kâma-Manas, which on this theory is the personality.

Sometimes she calls manas the deva-ego, or the divine as distinguished from the personal self. Higher manas is divine because it has positive thought, which is kriyashakti, the power of doing things, all work being in reality done by thought-power. The word divine comes from div to shine, and refers to the divine quality of its own life which shines from within manas.

The lower mind is merely a reflector, having no light of its own; it is something through which the light comes, or through which the sound comes –merely *persona*, a mask.

Among the Vedantins, or in Shri Shankarâchârya's school, the term antakarana [see p. 271] is used to indicate the mind in its fullest sense, meaning the entire internal organ or instrument between the innermost Self and the outer world, and is always described as of four parts:-

- [1] Ahamkâra-----The "I maker"
- [2] Buddhi -----Insight, intuition, or pure reason
- [3] Manas -----Thought
- [4] Chitta -----Discrimination of objects

What the Western man usually calls his mind, with its powers of concrete and abstract thought, is the last two in the above classification, viz., Manas and Chitta.

The Theosophist should recognise in the Vedantic divisions his own familiar âtmâ, buddhi, manas, and the lower mind.

In the symbolism of Freemasonry, the lower mind and the mental body are represented by the S.D.

The following table sets out the principles of man in the system of Freemasonry:-

<b>Principles in man</b>	<b>Officer</b>	<b>Colour of associated</b>
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Sanskrit	English		nature-spirits and elemental essence
Ātmâ	Will	W.M.	Rose, gold, blue and green
Buddhi	Intuition	S.W.	Predominantly electric blue
Higher Manas	Higher Mind	J.W.	Predominantly golden
Lower Manas	Lower Mind	S.D.	Yellow
Kâma	Desire and Emotion	J.D.	Crimson
Linga Sharîra	Dense Physical Body	O.G.	

Thus the Higher Triad or Spiritual Trinity, both in God and man, are represented in Freemasonry by the three Principal Officers, while the lower self, personality, or quaternary, is represented by the three Assistant Officers and the Tyler.

In Christianity we find the following symbolism:-

Elements and vessels (in the church Mass)	Principles in Man
Host	Monad
Paten	Ātmâ-Buddhi-Manas
Wine	Ego or Individuality
Chalice	Causal Body
Water	Personality

The taking on of a personality by the ego has also been likened to the projection of a spark from the Flame of Mind. The flame fires the material upon which it has fallen, and from that a new flame will arise, identical in its essence with that which generated it, but separated for purposes of manifestation. Hence it is said that you may light a thousand candles from a single flame, but the flame is never diminished, although a thousand flames are visible where only one was visible before.

The Thinker, the individuality, alone endures; he is the man for whom "the hour never strikes", the eternal youth who, as the *Bhagavad Gîtâ* expresses it, puts on and casts off bodies as a man puts on new garments and throws off the old.

Each personality is a new part for the immortal Actor, and he treads the stage of human life over and over again; but in the life-drama each character he assumes is the child of the preceding ones, and the father of those to come, so that the life-history is a continuous one.

The elements of which the personality is composed are bound together by the links of memory caused by the impressions made on the three lower vehicles, and also by the self-identification of the Thinker with his vehicles, which sets up the personal "I" consciousness known as *Ahamkâra*, derived from *Aham* meaning "I", and *kâra* meaning "making"; *Ahamkara* thus means the "I – maker".

In the lower stages of evolution, this "I" consciousness is in the physical and astral vehicles, the greatest activity being in these bodies; later it passes to the lower mental body, which then assumes predominance.

The personality, with its transient feelings, desires, passions, thoughts, thus forms a quasi-independent entity; yet all the time it draws its energies from the Thinker it enwraps.

Moreover, as its qualifications, which belong to the lower worlds, are often in direct antagonism to the permanent interests of the individuality, the "Dweller in the body", conflict is set up, victory sometimes inclining to the temporary pleasure, sometimes to the permanent gain.

In dealing with the personality, the obstacle to be overcome is *asmitâ*, the notion that "I am this", or what a Master once called "self-personality". The personality, as we have seen, develops through life into quite a definite thing, with decided physical, astral and mental form, occupation and habits. And there is no objection to that, if it be a good specimen. But if the indwelling life can be persuaded that he *is* that personality, he will begin to serve its interests, instead of using it merely as a tool for his spiritual purposes. Hence, in consequence of this error we find men seeking inordinate wealth, power, fame, etc.

"Self-personality" is the greatest obstacle to the use of the personality by the higher self, and so to spiritual progress.

The life of a personality, of course, begins when the Thinker forms a new mental body [see Chapter XXXII] and it endures until that mental body disintegrates at the close of the period spent in devachan.

The objective of the ego is to unfold his latent powers, and this he does by putting himself down into successive personalities. Men who do not understand this –and they are, of course, at the present time the great majority of humanity – look upon the personality as the real self, and consequently live for it alone, regulating their lives for what appears to be its temporary advantage.

The man, however, who understands, realises that *the only important thing is the life of the ego*, and that its progress is the object for which the temporary personality must be used. Thus, when he has to decide between two possible courses of action, he does not, as most men do, consider which will bring him the

greater pleasure or profit as a personality, but which will bring greater progress to him as an ego. Experience soon teaches him that nothing which is not good for all can ever be good for him, or for anyone. Thus he learns to forget himself altogether, and to consider only what is best for humanity as a whole.

Intensification of the personality, at the expense of the ego, is an error against which the student should ever be on his guard. Consider, for example, the probable result of the very commonest of failings –selfishness. This is primarily a *mental* attitude or condition, so that its result must be looked for in the mental realm. As it is an intensification of the personality, at the expense of the individuality, one of its results will undoubtedly be the accentuation of the lower personality, so that the selfishness tends to reproduce itself in aggravated form, and to grow steadily stronger. This, of course, is part of the general workings of karmic law, and emphasises how fatal a bar to progress is persistence in the fault of selfishness. For nature's severest penalty is always deprivation of the opportunity for progress, just as her highest reward is the offering of such opportunity.

When a man rises to a level somewhat higher than that of the ordinary man, and his principal activity becomes mental, there is danger lest he should identify himself with the mind. He should therefore strive to identify himself with the ego, and make the ego the strongest point of his consciousness, thus merging the personality in the individuality.

The student should strive to realise that the mind is *not* the knower, but the instrument that the Knower uses to obtain knowledge. To identify the mind with the Knower is similar to identifying the chisel with the sculptor who wields it. The mind limits the Knower, who, as self-consciousness develops, finds himself hampered by it on every side. As a man may put on thick gloves and find that he thereby loses a great deal in delicacy of touch, so it is with the Knower when he puts on the mind. The hand is within the glove, but its capacities are greatly lessened; so the Knower is present within the mind, but his powers are limited in their expression.

As we saw in a previous chapter, the mental body possesses the characteristic of actually shaping a portion of itself into a likeness of the object presented to it. When it is thus modified, the man is said to *know* the object. What he knows, however, is not the object itself, but the image produced by the object in his own mental body. This image, moreover, for reasons which we have already discussed [see p. 56] is not a perfect reproduction of the object, but is liable to be coloured and distorted by the characteristics of the particular mind in which it is formed.

These considerations bring home to us that, in our minds or mental bodies, we do not know "things in themselves", but only the images of them which are produced in our consciousness. Meditation on these ideas will help the student to

realise ever more and more fully that he himself, the true individuality, is *not* the personality which he, as the ego, has temporarily assumed for this one earth-life.

The existence of an evil quality in the personality implies a lack of the corresponding good quality in the ego or individuality. An ego may be imperfect, but he cannot be evil; nor, in any ordinary circumstances, can evil of any kind manifest through the causal body.

The mechanical reason for this has been explained previously. Evil qualities can be expressed only in the four lower subdivisions of astral matter. These reflect their influence in the mental plane only on its four lower sub-divisions; hence they cannot affect the ego at all. The only emotions that can appear in the three higher astral sub-planes are good ones, such as love, sympathy and devotion. These affect the ego in the causal body, since he resides on the corresponding sub-planes of the mental world.

The utmost result that is brought about in the causal body by long continued lives of a low type is a certain incapacity to receive the opposite good impression for a very considerable period afterwards, a kind of numbness or paralysis of the causal matter; an unconsciousness which resists impressions of the good of the opposite kind.

The qualities which the ego develops thus cannot be other than good qualities. When they are well-defined, they show themselves in each of his numerous personalities, and consequently those personalities can never be guilty of the vices opposite to such qualities.

But where there is a gap in the ego, there is nothing inherent in the personality to check the growth of the opposite vice; and since others in the world about him already possess that vice, and since man is an imitative animal, it is quite probable that the vice will speedily manifest in him. The vice, however, as we have seen, belongs to the vehicles of the personality, *not* to the man inside them. In these vehicles its repetition may set up a momentum which is difficult to conquer; but if the ego bestirs himself to create in himself the opposite virtue, then the vice is cut off at its root, and can no longer exist, neither in this life nor in all the lives to come. In other words, the principle to be applied in practical life is, that to rid oneself of an evil quality in such a way that it can never reappear, is to fill the gap in the ego by developing the opposite virtue. Many modern schools of psychology and education now advocate this method rather than that attacking an evil quality in a more direct fashion. "Nerve us with constant affirmatives," said Emerson, with great insight.

The personality is a mere fragment of the ego, the ego projecting but a minute portion of himself into the mental, astral, and physical bodies. This tiny fragment of consciousness can be seen by clairvoyants moving about within man. Sometimes it is seen as "the golden man the size of a thumb," who dwells in the

heart. Others see it as a brilliant star of light .

A man may keep this Star of Consciousness where he will, *i.e.*, in any one of the seven Chakrams of the body.

Which of these chakrams is most natural depends largely upon the type or "ray" of the man, and also, it seems, upon his race and sub-race. Thus men of the fifth sub-race of the Fifth Root-Race nearly always keep that consciousness in the brain, in the chakram dependent upon the pituitary body. There are however, men of other races who keep it habitually in the heart, the throat, or the solar plexus.

The Star of Consciousness is the representative of the ego in the lower planes, is in fact, what we know as the personality. But although, as we have seen, that personality is part of the ego, its only life and power being that of the ego, it nevertheless often forgets those facts and comes to regard itself as an entirely separate entity, and works for its own ends. In the case of ordinary people who have never studied these matters, the personality is to all intents and purposes the man, the ego manifesting himself only very rarely and partially.

There is always a line of communication between the personality and the ego; this is called *antahkarana*. Most people make no effort to use this line. In its earlier stages evolution consists in the opening up of this line of communication, so that the ego may be able increasingly to assert himself through it and finally to dominate the personality. When this is achieved, the personality has no separate thought or will, but becomes [as it should be] merely an expression of the ego on the lower planes.

The hold that the ego has over his lower vehicles is only very partial, and the *antahkarana* may be regarded as the arm stretched out between the little piece of the ego that is awakened, and the hand that is put down.

When the two are perfectly joined, this attenuated thread ceases to exist.

In Sanskrit, *antahkarana* means the inner organ or instrument, and its destruction would imply that the ego would no longer need an instrument, but would work directly on the personality. Thus the *antahkarana*, being the link between the higher and lower self, disappears when one will operates the two.

It must however, be understood that the ego, belonging as he does to an altogether higher plane, can never *fully* express himself in the lower planes. The most that can be expected is that the personality will contain nothing which is not intended by the ego, that it will express as much of him as can be expressed in the lower world.

A man completely untrained has practically no communication with the ego; the Initiate has full communication. [ NOTE –It would appear here that, as every other "step" on the occult path, Initiation confers the *possibility* of full communication

with the ego rather than its complete realisation; the Initiate must by his own efforts convert the possibility into an actuality. —A. E. Powell ] Between these two extremes there are, of course, men at all stages.

It must be born in mind that the ego himself is in process of development, and we therefore have to deal with egos in very different stages of advancement. In any case an ego is in many ways something enormously bigger than a personality can ever be.

Although the ego himself is but a fragment of the Monad, he is yet complete as an ego in his causal body even when his powers are undeveloped; whereas in the personality there is but a touch of the life of the ego.

It is obviously of great importance that the earnest student should do all in his power to make and keep active the connection between his personality and his ego. In order to do this he must *pay attention* to life, for the paying attention is the descent of the ego in order to look through his vehicles. Many men have fine mental bodies and good brains, but they make little use of them, because they do not pay attention to life. Thus the ego puts but little of himself down into the lower planes, and so the vehicles are left to run riot at their own will.

The cure for this, very briefly, is as follows: The ego should be given the conditions he desires; if this is done, he will promptly put himself down more fully and avail himself of the conditions offered. Thus, if he desires to develop affection, the personality must provide the opportunity for developing affection to the fullest extent on the lower planes. If he desires wisdom, then the personality must by study endeavour to make itself wise on the physical plane.

Pains should be taken to find out what the ego desires; then, if the necessary conditions are provided, he will appreciate the effort and be delighted to respond. The personality will have no cause to complain of the response which the ego will make. In other words, if the personality pays attention to the ego, the ego will pay attention to the personality.

The ego puts down a personality much as a fisherman makes a cast. He does not expect that every cast will be successful, and he is not deeply troubled if one proves a failure. To look after a personality is only one of his activities, so he may very well console himself with successes in other lines of activity. In any case, failure represents the loss of a day, and he can hope to do better with another day.

Often the personality would like more attention from the ego, and he may be sure he will receive it as soon as he deserves it, as soon as the ego finds it worth while.

In the Christian Church, the sacrament of Confirmation is intended to widen and

strengthen the link between the ego and the personality. After the preliminary widening of this channel, the divine power rushes through the ego of the bishop into the higher manas of the candidate. At the signing of the cross, it pushes upwards into the buddhic principle, and from there into the *âtmâ* or spirit. The effect upon *âtmâ* is reflected in the etheric double, that upon the buddhi is reproduced in the astral body, and what is done to the higher manas should be similarly mirrored in the lower mind. This result is not merely temporary, for the opening up of the connections made a wider channel through which a constant flow can be kept going. The general effect, as said, is to make it easier for the ego to act on and through his vehicles.

The various vehicles of man, looked at from below, give the impression of being one above the other, although they are not, of course, really separated in space, and also of being joined by innumerable fine wires or lines of fire. Every action which works against evolution puts an unequal strain upon these, twisting and entangling them. When a man goes badly wrong in any way, the confusion between the higher and lower bodies is seriously impeded; he is no longer his real self, and only the lower side of his character is able to manifest itself fully.

The Christian Church provides a method of assisting man more rapidly to regain uniformity. For one of the powers specially conferred upon a priest at ordination is that of straightening out this triangle in higher matter; this is the truth behind "absolution", the co-operation of the man having been first obtained by "confession".

A break in the connection between the ego and his vehicles results in insanity. If we imagine each physical particle in the brain is to be joined to its corresponding astral particle by a small tube, each astral particle being similarly joined to its corresponding mental particle, and each mental particle to its corresponding causal particle, then so long as all these tubes are in perfect alignment there will be a clear communication between the ego and his brain. But if any of the sets of tubes be bent, closed, or knocked partially aside, it is obvious that the communication might be wholly or partially interrupted.

From the occult standpoint, the insane may be divided into four main classes, as follows:-

[1] Those who are insane from a defect in the physical brain. The brain may be too small, injured by some accident, pressed upon by a growth, or have its tissues softened.

[2] Those whose defect is in the etheric brain, so that the etheric particles do not correspond with the denser physical particles.

[3] Those in whom the astral body is defective, the tubes being out of alignment with either the etheric or mental particles.

[4] Those in whom the mental body is out of order.

Classes [1] and [2] are quite sane when out of the body in sleep, and of course after death.

Class [3] do not recover sanity until the heaven-world is reached.

Class [4] do not become sane until the causal body is reached, so that for this class the incarnation is a failure.

More than 90 percent of the insane belong to classes [1] and [2].

Obsession is caused by the ousting of the ego by some other entity. Only an ego who had a weak hold on his vehicles would permit obsession.

Although the hold of the ego upon his vehicles is less strong in childhood, yet adults are more likely to be obsessed than children, because the adult is far more likely to have in him qualities which attract undesirable entities and make obsession easy.

Briefly, the best way to prevent obsession is by the use of the will. If the lawful possessor of the body will confidently assert himself and use his will-power, no obsession can take place.

When obsession occurs, it is almost always because the victim has in the first place voluntarily yielded himself to the invading influence, and his first step, therefore, is to reverse the act of submission and determine strongly to resume control over his own property.

The relationship between the personality and the ego is so important that we may perhaps be pardoned for a little repetition, or recapitulation. A study of the inner vehicles of man should at least help us to understand that *it is the higher presentation which is the real man*, not the aggregation of physical matter in the midst of it, to which men are apt to attach such undue importance. The divine trinity within we may not yet see; but we can at least attain some idea of the causal body, which is perhaps the nearest to a conception of the true man as sight at the higher mental level can give us.

Looking at the man from the lower mental level, we can see *only so much of him* as can be expressed in his mental body; on the astral level we find that an additional veil has descended, whilst on the physical plane there is yet another barrier, so that the true man is more effectively hidden than ever.

Such knowledge should lead us to form a somewhat higher opinion of our fellows, since we realise that they are so much more than they seem to the

physical eye. In the background, there is always the higher possibility, and often an appeal to the better nature will arouse it from latency and bring it down into manifestation where we can see it.

Having thus studied man as he is, it becomes easier for us to pierce through the dense physical veil and image the reality which is behind. That which is behind all men is the divine nature; hence, grasping this principle, we should be able so to modify and readjust our attitude that we are able to help other men better than we could do without this knowledge.

We have already seen, in the chapter on Contemplation, that the consciousness of the ego may be reached by maintaining the mind in an attitude of attention, without the attention being directed to anything, the lower mind being stilled in order that consciousness of the higher mind may be experienced. By this means, ideas from the ego flash down into the lower mind with dazzling light, these being the inspirations of genius. "Behold in every manifestation of genius, when combined with virtue, the undeniable presence of the celestial exile, the divine Ego whose jailor thou art, O man of matter".

Genius is thus the momentary grasping of the brain by the larger consciousness of the ego, who is the real man; it is the putting down of the larger consciousness into an organism capable of vibrating in answer to its thrills. Flashes of genius are the voice of the living Spirit in man; they are the voice of the inner God, speaking in the body of man.

The phenomena included in the term "conscience" appear to be of two distinct kinds. Conscience is sometimes used to describe the voice of the ego, and at other times it is spoken of as the will in the domain of morality. Where it is the voice of the ego it should be recognised that it is not always infallible, but may often decide wrongly. For the ego cannot speak with certainty on problems with which it is unfamiliar, being dependent upon experience before he can judge correctly.

That form of conscience, however, which comes from the will does not tell us *what* to do, but rather commands us to follow that which we already know to be best, usually when the mind is trying to invent some excuse to do otherwise. It speaks with the authority of the spiritual will, determining our path in life.

But the will, which is undoubtedly a quality of the ego, must not be confused with the *desires* of the personality in the lower vehicles. Desire is the outgoing energy of the Thinker, determined in direction by the attraction of external objects; will is the outgoing energy of the thinker, determined in direction by conclusions drawn by reason from past experiences, or by the direct intuition of the Thinker himself. In other words: desire is guided from without; will from within.

In the early stages of evolution desire has complete sovereignty, and hurries a

man hither and thither; the man is ruled by his astral body; in the middle stages of evolution there is continual conflict between desire and will; the man struggles with kâma-manas; in the later stages of evolution desire dies, and will rules unopposed; the ego is in command.

Summarising, we may say that the voice of the ego or higher self speaking [1] from âtmâ, is true conscience; [2] from buddhi, is intuitive knowledge between right and wrong; [3] from higher manas, is inspiration; when inspiration becomes continuous enough to be normal, it is genius.

As was briefly mentioned in Chapter VI, genius which is of the ego, sees instead of arguing; true intuition is one of its faculties, as reason is the method of the lower mind. Intuition is simply insight; it may be described as the exercise of the eyes of the intelligence, the unerring recognition of a truth presented on the mental plane. It sees with certainty; but no reasoned proof of its certitude can be had, because it is beyond and above reason. But before the voice of the ego, speaking through intuition, can be recognised with certainty, careful and prolonged self-training are necessary.

It would appear, however, that the word intuition is used with significations that vary somewhat. Thus it has also been said that the attainment of reliable intuition in daily life means the opening of a direct channel between the buddhic and the astral bodies.

Incidentally, it may be mentioned that it works rather through the heart-centre or chakram, than through the mind. The consecration of a bishop has special reference to this centre and to the stimulation of the intuition.

We thus distinguish two distinct modes for the transmission of "intuition" from the higher to the lower consciousness. The one comes from the higher to the lower mental plane, the other direct from the buddhi to the astral body.

The intuition of the causal body has been described as the intuition which recognises the outer; that which comes from buddhi is intuition which recognises the inner. With buddhic intuition, one sees things from *inside*; with intellectual intuition, one recognises something outside oneself.

Which of these lines is the easier depends upon the method of individualisation. Those who individualised through deep understanding will receive their intuition as a conviction, requiring no reasoning to establish its truth at present, though it must have been understood in previous lives or out of the body in the lower mental plane.

Those who attained individualisation through a rush of devotion, will receive their intuition from the buddhic plane to the astral body.

In both cases, of course, the condition of receptivity to intuition is a steadiness of

the lower vehicles.

We need not shrink from the fact that there is frequently a psychological instability associated with genius, as expressed in the saying that madness is akin to genius, and in the statement of Lombroso and others that many of the saints were neuropaths.

Very often the saint and the visionary may have overstrained their brains, so that the physical mechanism is distorted and rendered unstable.

Furthermore, it is sometimes true that the instability is the condition of the inspiration. As Professor William James has said: "If there were such a thing as inspiration from a higher realm, it might well be that the neurotic temperament would furnish the chief condition of the requisite receptivity" [*Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 19]. Genius may thus have an unstable brain because the higher consciousness is pressing upon it in order to improve the mechanism; so the brain is kept in a state of tension, and under such circumstances it may easily go too far until the structure breaks down under the strain. But the abnormality is on the right, not on the wrong side, being on the very front of the crest of human evolution. It is the instability of growth, not of disease.

An attempt to stimulate the heart-centre is also made in the Christian Church at the time of the reading of the Gospel, the sign of the cross being made by the thumb over the heart-centre, as well as over those between the eyebrows and the throat. This use of the thumb corresponds to a pugnal pass in mesmerism, and seems to be employed when a small but powerful stream of force is required, as for the opening of centres.

The heart is the centre in the body for the higher triad, *âtmâ-buddhi-manas*. The head is the seat of the psycho-intellectual man, its various functions being in seven cavities, including the pituitary body and the pineal gland.

A man who can take his consciousness from the brain to the heart should be able to unite *kâma-manas* to higher manas, through lower manas, which, when pure, is the antahkarana; he will then be in a position to catch some of the promptings of the higher triad.

In the Indian methods of Yoga, steps are taken to prevent the dangers of hysteria in those who are coming into touch with the higher planes, insistence being made upon discipline and purification of the body, and control and training of the mind.

The ego frequently puts ideas into the lower consciousness in the form of symbols; each ego has his own system of symbols, though some forms seem general in dreams. Thus for example, it is said that to dream of water signifies trouble of some sort. Now while there may be no real connection between water and troubles, yet if the ego knew that the personality held that particular belief

with regard to water, he might very likely choose such a form of symbolism in order to warn the personality of some impending misfortune.

In some cases the ego may manifest himself in a curious external way. Thus, for example, Dr. Annie Besant has said that while she is speaking one sentence of a lecture she habitually sees the next sentence actually materialise in the air before her, in three different forms, from which she consciously selects that one which she thinks best. This must be the work of the ego, though it is a little difficult to understand why he takes this particular method of communication instead of impressing his ideas direct on the physical brain.

The relationship between the personality and the ego is graphically described in The Voice of The Silence: "Have perseverance as one who doth for evermore endure. Thy shadows [ie., personalities] live and vanish; that which in thee shall live forever, that which in *thee* knows, for it is knowledge, is not of fleeting fleeting life; it is the man that was, and will be, for whom the hour shall never strike."

A vivid description of the ego is given also by H. P. Blavatsky in The Key To Theosophy : "try to imagine a 'Spirit', a celestial being, whether we call it by one name or another, divine in its essential nature, yet not pure enough to be one with the ALL, and having, in order to achieve this, so to purify its nature as finally to gain that goal. It can do so only by passing, *individually* and *personally*, i.e., spiritually and physically, through every experience and feeling that exists in the manifold or differentiated universe. It has, therefore, after having gained such experience in the lower kingdoms, and having ascended higher and still higher with every rung of the ladder of being, to pass through every experience on the human planes. In its very essence it is Thought, and is, therefore, called in its plurality, *Manasaputra*, 'the Sons of [universal] Mind'. This *individualised* 'Thought' is what we Theosophists call the *real* human Ego, the thinking entity imprisoned in a case of flesh and bones. This is surely a spiritual entity, not *matter* [i.e., matter as we know it in the objective universe], and such entities are the incarnating Egos that inform the bundle of animal matter called mankind, and whose names are *Manasa* or minds".

The "ray" of lower manas is ever seeking to return to its source and parent, the higher manas. But while the duality persists, i.e., until the consciousness has been raised to the causal level, thereby "unifying the higher and lower selves," as the phrase goes, there is a continual yearning, which is felt by the noblest and purest natures as one of the most salient facts of the inner life. It is this yearning which clothes itself as prayer, as inspiration, as "seeking after God", as the longing for union with the divine. "My soul is athirst for God, for the living God", cries the eager Christian.

The occultist recognises in this cry the inextinguishable impulse of the lower self to the Higher Self, from which it is separated, but the attraction of which it vividly feels. Whether a man prays to the Buddha, to Vishnu, to Christ, to the Virgin, to the Father, matters little; these are questions of dialect, not of fact. In every

prayer the Higehr Manas, united to Buddhi and to Âtmâ, is the real objective, veiled under whatever name time or race may give. It is the ideal humanity, the "personal God", the "God-Man", found in all religions; it is the "God incarnate", the "Word made flesh", the Christ who must be "born" in each, with whom the believer must be made one.

Expressed rather more technically, the individualised "God" in each man, his Father in Heaven, is the monad, and as the ego is to the monad, so is the personality to the ego.

A warning hint, however, may here not be out of place. In the past such expressions as "looking up to the higher self", and "listening to the promptings of the higher self", have been used; and it has even been suggested that the higher self ought to take more interest in the unfortunate personality struggling on its behalf on the lower planes. Gradually the student should come to realise that the personality that we see on the lower planes is but a very small part of the real man, and that the higher self *is* the man. For there is only one consciousness, the lower being an imperfect representation of the higher, and in no way separate from it. Thus, instead of thinking of raising "ourselves" till we can unite with the glorified higher self, we should realise rather that the higher *is* the true self, and that to unite the higher to the lower really means to open out the lower, so that the higher may work more freely and fully in and through it.

A man should thus endeavour to become certain, beyond the possibility of doubt, that he is the spirit or higher self; he should develop confidence in his own powers as the ego, and courage to use those powers freely. Instead of looking upon his usual state of consciousness as natural and normal, and looking upwards towards the ego as a lofty being to be reached by continuous and tremendous effort, he should learn to look upon his ordinary state of consciousness as abnormal and unnatural, and upon the life of the spirit as his own true life, from which by continuous effort he keeps himself estranged.

Expressed in terms of form, when the lower vehicles are fully in harmony with the ego they form themselves in the likeness of the Augoeides [see p. 237]. They then change very little from life to life.

Similarly, when the ego is becoming a perfect reflection of the monad, he also changes but little, though he continues to grow.

Those who would deliberately undertake the task of bringing the higher consciousness into the brain may do so by a careful training of the lower mind and of the moral character, by steady and well directed effort. The habit of quiet, sustained, sequential thought, directed to non-worldly subjects, of meditation, of study, also develops the mental body and renders it a better instrument. The effort to cultivate abstract thinking is also useful, thus raising the lower mind towards the higher, as well as drawing into the mental body the subtlest materials of the lower mental levels.

This Diagram is an attempt to give some idea of the relationship between the ego and his lower vehicles. Of the powers, faculties, and knowledge of the ego on his own plane, only a small fraction can be transmitted to the mental body; from this again, still less penetrates to the astral body; and of this but a fragment reaches the consciousness in the physical body. One of the aims of the man should be, as we have seen, so to widen and strengthen the link between the ego and the lower bodies that more and more of the powers of the ego can find expression in the lower vehicles of the personality.

Above and beyond the ego resides the Monad, whose relationship to the ego is somewhat similar to that which exists between the ego and the personality.

## CHAPTER XXXII

### REBIRTH

We now take up the story of the ego and his vehicles at the point where, the period of life on the higher mental plane being ended, the time comes for a fresh incarnation to be undertaken.

It will be recollected that when the ego withdraws into the causal body, he takes with him his physical and astral permanent atoms, and his mental unit or molecule. These particles of matter, one only of each of the three lower planes, remain with the ego throughout the whole of his human incarnations. Whilst they are withdrawn into the causal body they are in a quiescent or latent condition.

When the time for reincarnation comes, the ego turns his attention outwards, whereupon a thrill of life from him arouses the mental unit and the life-web begins to unfold itself; this life-web consists of buddhic matter, and appears as shimmering gold of inconceivable fineness and delicate beauty; it is formed of a single thread, which is a prolongation of Sutrâtmâ. Into further details of these matters, however, we cannot enter here; the writer hopes to deal with them in a later volume.

The mental unit now resumes activity, because the ego seeking to express himself once more on the lower mental plane, so far as the plasticity of its matter will permit.

Accordingly, the mental unit acts as a magnet, drawing round itself mental matter and mental elemental essence, with vibratory powers resembling, or accordant with, its own, and thus fitted to express its latent mental qualities. The process is in a certain sense automatic, though devas of the Second Elemental Kingdom assist in the process by bringing suitable materials within reach of the mental unit.

The matter is first shaped into a loose cloud around the mental unit; it is *not* as

yet a mental body, but merely the materials out of which the new mental body will be built.

Neither are the qualities as yet in any way in action. They are simply the germs of qualities, and for the moment their only influence is to secure for themselves a possible field of manifestation, by providing matter suitable for their expression in the mental vehicle of the child.

The germs or seeds, brought over from the past, are known by the Buddhists as the Skandhas; they consist of material qualities, sensations, abstract ideas, tendencies of mind, mental powers. As we have seen, in the course of our study, the pure aroma of these passed with the Ego into devachan; all that was gross, base and evil, remained in the state of suspended animation spoken of. These are taken up by the Ego as he passes outwards towards terrestrial life, and are built into the new "man of flesh", which the true man is to inhabit.

The experiences of the past do not, of course exist as mental images in the new mental body; as mental images they perished long ago when the old mental body perished; only their essence, their effects on faculty, remain.

Precisely the same thing happens when the ego turns his attention to the astral permanent atom, and puts into it his will. Thus the mental unit and the astral permanent atom attract to themselves material capable of producing a mental and an astral body of exactly the same type as the man had at the end, respectively, of his last mental and astral lives. In other words, the man resumes his life in the mental and astral worlds just where he left it last time.

A man's mental and astral bodies, taken on for his new life-period, being thus the direct result of his past, form a most important part of his "ripe" or Prârabda karma.

The mental matter is at first evenly distributed throughout the ovoid. Only as the little physical form comes into existence are the mental and astral matter attracted to it; they then begin to mould themselves to its shape, and thereafter steadily grow along it. At the same time, with this change in arrangement, the mental and astral matter is called into activity, and emotion and thought appear.

It should be noted that the coarser the kinds of mental matter built into the mental body, the more intimate becomes the association between the mental and astral matter, thus strengthening the element of Kâma-Manas [see Chapter VI].

A young child thus cannot be said to have a definite mental or a definite astral body; but he has around and within him the matter out of which these bodies are to be constructed.

He possesses tendencies of all sorts, some good, some evil. Whether these

germs will develop once more in the new life into the same tendencies as in the last life will depend very largely upon the encouragement or otherwise given to them by the surroundings of the child during his early years. Any of them, good or bad, may be readily stimulated into activity, or, on the other hand, may be starved out for lack of that encouragement.

If stimulated, it becomes a more powerful factor in the man's life this time than it was in his previous existence; if starved out it remains merely as an unfructified germ, which presently atrophies and dies out, and does not make its appearance in the succeeding incarnation at all.

During his early years the ego has but little hold over his vehicles, and he therefore looks to his parents to help him to obtain a firmer grasp, and to provide him with suitable conditions. Hence the enormous responsibility resting upon parents.

It is impossible to exaggerate the plasticity of the child's unformed vehicles. Plastic and readily impressible as is the physical body of a young child, his astral and mental vehicles are far more so. They thrill in response to every vibration which they encounter, and are eagerly receptive with regard to all influences, whether good or evil, which emanate from those around them. As in the case of the physical body, whilst the mental and astral bodies are in early youth susceptible and easily moulded, they soon set and stiffen and acquire definite habits which, once firmly established, can be altered only with great difficulty.

To a far larger extent than is ever realised by even the fondest parents, the child's future is under their control.

If we can imagine our friends with all their good qualities enormously intensified, and all the less desirable features weeded out of their characters, then we can picture to ourselves the results which parents can produce in their children if they will do their full duty by them.

The extraordinary sensitiveness to the influence of his surroundings commences as soon as the ego descends upon the embryo, long before birth takes place; it continues, in most cases, up to about the period of maturity.

The mental body, or rather the material out of which the mental body will be built, becomes involved with the lower vehicles during the pre-natal life; the connection becomes more and more close until, at about the end of the seventh year, the lower vehicles are as closely in touch with the ego as the stage of evolution permits. The ego then, if sufficiently advanced, begins slightly to control his vehicles, what we call conscience being his monitory voice.

During the pre-natal period the ego broods over the human mother in whom his future body is building, but the ego can affect the embryo but little, save through

a feeble influence from the physical permanent atom; the embryo cannot respond to, and therefore does not share, the thoughts and emotions of the ego expressed in his causal body.

The Hindus had various ceremonies by which they surrounded with pure influences both mother and child before and after birth. The object was to create special conditions which warded off the lower influences and brought in the higher influences. Such ceremonies were very valuable.

The "seeds" of evil which are brought by a child in his permanent atoms have often been called "original sin" though they are wrongly connected with the fabled action of Adam and Eve. In the Christian Church the sacrament of baptism is intended specifically to help in reducing to a minimum the effects of the seeds of evil.

To this end magnetised or "holy" water is employed; by its means the priest is able to set strongly in vibration the etheric matter of the child's body, to stimulate the pituitary body, and through it affect the astral body and through that in turn the mental body. The force which is poured in rushes down and up again until, like water, it finds its own level.

The "exorcism" performed by the priest is intended to bind down the germs of evil in their present condition, and to prevent them being fed or encouraged in any way, so that eventually they atrophy and fall out.

In addition, in the ceremony as performed in the Liberal Catholic Church at least, the priest making the sign of the cross down the whole length of the front and back of the child's body, builds a thought-form or artificial elemental [which has given rise to the idea of the baptismal guardian angel], which is filled by the divine force, and which is also ensouled by a higher kind of nature-spirit known as a sylph. The thought-form is a kind of cuirass of white light before and behind the child. Incidentally, through association with the thought-form which is permeated by the life and thought of the Christ Himself, the sylph eventually individualises and becomes a seraph.

Even if the child dies almost immediately, the baptism may be of value to it on the other side of death. For it would be quite possible for the germs of evil to be stimulated into activity in the astral world, and the thought-form may be of assistance in preventing such action.

Thus, in baptism, not only are certain centres or chakrams in the child aroused and opened to spiritual influence, but also the germs of evil are to some extent repressed, and the child is endowed with what is practically a guardian angel, a new and powerful influence for good.

It may be added that the cross which is made on the forehead of the child with

the consecrated oil is visible in the etheric double all through the life of the person; it is the sign of the Christian, precisely as the tilaka spot, or caste-mark in the case of the Hindu, is the sign of Shiva or the trident of Vishnu.

The aura of a child is often a most beautiful object, pure and bright in colour, free from the clouds of sensuality, avarice, ill-will and selfishness which so frequently darken all the life of the adult. It is pathetic to perceive the change which almost invariably comes over the child-aura as the years pass on; to note how persistently evil tendencies are fostered and strengthened by his environment, and how entirely good ones are neglected. With such object-lessons before one, one ceases to wonder at the extraordinary slowness of human evolution, and the almost imperceptible progress which most egos make for life after life spent in the lower world.

The remedy lies with parents and teachers, the effect of whose personal character, behaviour and habits on the development of children is almost incalculable. It should be unnecessary, at this stage of our study, again to emphasise the great importance of the thoughts and emotions of parents and teachers on their charges. This subject is dealt with at length by C.W.Leadbeater in *The Hidden Side of Things*, Vol. II, p. 287-312.

In the Atlantean civilisation the importance of the office of the teacher was so fully recognised that none was permitted to hold it but a trained clairvoyant, who could see all the latent qualities and capabilities of his charges, and could therefore work intelligently with each, so as to develop the good and amend the evil. In the distant future of the Sixth Root-Race this principle will be applied even more completely.

With whatever care parents may surround a child, it is practically inevitable that the child will some day encounter evil influences in the world, which will tend to stimulate evil tendencies in himself. But it makes a vast difference whether the good or the evil tendencies are stimulated *first*. In most cases the evil is awakened into activity before the ego has any hold upon the vehicles, so that when he does grasp them he finds that he has to combat a strong predisposition to various evils. When the germs of good are tardily aroused they have to struggle to assert themselves against evil tendencies already firmly established. On the other hand, if the parents by exceeding care before birth, and for several years after it, have been able to excite only good tendencies, then, as the ego gains control, he finds it easy to express himself along those lines, a habit having been established. If then an evil excitation comes, it finds a strong momentum in the direction of good, which it strives in vain to overcome.

The ego, unless he is unusually advanced, has but little command over his vehicles at first; but it must be borne in mind that his will is always for good, because he desires to evolve himself by means of his vehicles, and such power as he is able to throw into the balance will always therefore be on the right side.

During the embryonic and infantile life the ego is carrying on his own wider, richer life, and, as said, gradually comes more and more closely into touch with the embryo.

We may note here that the relation of the Monad to the universe, in which his consciousness is evolving, is analogous to that of the ego in relation to his new physical body.

Since the mental body is a new one, it naturally cannot contain the memory of previous births, in which it had no part. Such memory clearly belongs to the ego, in the causal body, who, together with his permanent atoms, alone persists from one incarnation to another. Hence a man functioning in the physical world cannot remember his past lives, so long as he remembers only by means of his mental body.

In the development of the human body the gestation period corresponds to the downward course of the elemental kingdoms; from birth to the age of seven it is considered by many educationists that the child's physical nature should receive most attention ; up to the age of about fourteen the development of emotions should have chief consideration; up to the age of about twenty-one the teacher should appeal especially to the unfolding of the mind.

These last three ages may be taken to correspond to a certain extent to the mineral, vegetable and animal kingdoms. In the first, consciousness is on the physical plane; in the second, on the emotional plane; in the third, the lower mind gradually gains ground, and leads on to the stage when man becomes the true thinker. The long period of middle life is the real human career. The epoch of old age should bring wisdom; this is as yet imperfect in most people, being but an adumbration of the superhuman heights of future attainment.

It is necessary to mention here a curious eventuality which, in certain rare cases, may occur when a man is re-born. In Chapter VI we saw how, if a man leads a thoroughly degraded life, identifying himself entirely with the lower, animal nature, and neglecting the higher, the lower nature is severed wholly from the higher, and the incarnation is a total loss to the ego.

Under such conditions the ego has become so disgusted with his vehicles that, when death relieves him of the physical body, he casts the others aside also; in fact, he may even during physical life leave the desecrated temple.

After death, such an ego, having no astral or mental body, will reincarnate quickly. This being so, the old mental and astral vehicles may not yet have disintegrated, but may, by natural affinity, be drawn to the new mental and astral bodies; they then become the most terrible form of what is known as the "dweller on the threshold".

## CHAPTER XXXIII

### DISCIPLESHIP

The control, training and development of the mental body [as well, of course, as the astral] form an important part of the work of one who aims at becoming a pupil, or *chela*, of a Master and, later, an Initiate of the Great White Brotherhood.

The following is a table of the four well-known "Qualifications" for the Path which leads to Initiation. It will be seen that in practically all of these there is a mental element.

THE QUALIFICATIONS FOR THE PATH		
No.	Sanskrit	English
1	Viveka	Discrimination between the real and the unreal; also described as the opening of the doors of the mind.
2	Vairâgya	Indifference to the unreal, the transitory, and to the fruits of action: non-attachment
3	Shatsampati:-	Sixfold mental attributes: -
	-1-Shama	Control of thought
	-2-Dama	Control of action
	-3-Uparati	Tolerance
	-4-Titiksha	Endurance
	-5-Shraddhâ	Faith
	-6-Samâdhâna	Balance
4	Mumuksha	Desire for liberation

Volumes have been written on the Qualifications: here space will permit of the briefest description only. They are not expected in perfection, but they must be at least partially possessed before Initiation is possible.

*Vivekâ*: The aspirant must learn that the inner life, the life of and for the ego, is the real life; he must learn, as C.W.Leadbeater succinctly puts it, that "few things matter much: most things do not matter at all".

Needless to say, this does not mean that worldly duties and responsibilities, once undertaken, may or should be neglected; on the contrary, they should be performed by the occultist even more scrupulously and carefully than by other men. It is the spirit in which they are done which matters, the recognition of the aspect of them which is important, and those aspects which are not important.

This "opening of the doors of the mind", or "conversion" as it has been called, is

precisely that which is spoken of in the bible: "Set your affection on things above and not on things of the earth...for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal."

Discrimination is much stimulated by the rapidly changing circumstances into which the disciple is generally thrown, with a view to impressing on him the instability of all external things. The life of a disciple is generally one of storm and stress, in order that qualities and faculties may be forced into swift growth and speedily brought to perfection.

*Vairagyâ*: From a recognition of the instability and unsatisfying nature of external things, indifference to them naturally follows. The aspirant becomes indifferent to things that come and go, and more and more he fixes his attention on the changeless reality that is ever present.

*Shama*: The need for control of thought has already been amply emphasised in this present volume.

The pupil must reduce the chaos of his emotions and thoughts to order ; he must eliminate the host of minor interests, and control wandering thoughts. Whilst he still lives in the world, the difficulty of the undertaking is multiplied manyfold by the ceaseless pressure of disturbing waves of emotion and thought, which give him no rest, no opportunity to collect his forces in order to make a real effort.

Steady, daily practice in concentration and meditation is a method that many find suitable. The aspirant must work with great energy and perseverance to reduce the mental rebel to order and discipline, knowing that the great increase in thought-power which will accompany his rapid growth will prove a danger to others and to himself, unless the force be thoroughly under his control. Better give a child dynamite to play with, than place the creative powers of thought in the hands of the selfish and the ambitious.

*Dama*: To inner control must be added the control of outer actions. As the mind obeys the soul so must the lower nature obey the mind. Carelessness in the lower part of human activity must be eliminated.

*Uparati* : The sublime and far-reaching virtue of tolerance means the quiet acceptance of each man, each form of existence , as it is, without demand that it should be something different, shaped more to one's own liking. Respect for the individuality of others is one of the marks of the disciple.

*Titiksha*: Endurance means an attitude of mind that cheerfully bears all and resents nothing, going straight onwards unswervingly to the goal. The aspirant knows that nothing can come to him but by the Law, and the Law is good. He must realise that as he is paying in a few short lives the karmic obligations accumulated during the past, the payments must be correspondingly heavy.

*Shraddhâ*: The very struggles, in which the aspirant is plunged, develop in him faith in his Master, and in himself, a serene, strong confidence that is unshakeable.

*Sâmadhâna*: Balance, or equilibrium, grows to some extent without conscious effort during the striving after the previous five qualifications. The soul gradually disentangles itself from ties that knit it to the world of sense, the objects in which "turn away from abstemious dweller in the body", and soon lose all power to disturb his balance. Balance amid mental troubles of every kind is also necessary, this balance being further taught by the swift changes, mentioned above, through which his life is guided by the ever-watchful care of his Master.

*Mumuksha*: The deep, intense longing for liberation, that yearning of the soul towards union with the Divine, follows on the attainment of the other Qualifications. This adds the last touch to the readiness to enter into full discipleship. Once the longing has definitely asserted itself, the soul that has felt it can never again quench its thirst at earthly fountains.

The attainment of this stage makes the man ready for Initiation, an Adhikari, ready to "enter the stream" that cuts him off forever from the interests of earthly life, save as he can serve his Master in them and help forward the evolution of humanity.

This hunger for the things of the spirit appears to be represented in Freemasonry by the inner attitude of the Candidate in "humbly soliciting to be admitted to the mysteries and privileges of Ancient Freemasonry". In this attitude, as every Freemason knows, the emphasis is on the urge from within the Candidate himself; no man can tread the occult path on the inspiration of another.

In the Buddhist system the names given to the stage are somewhat different, though the qualifications themselves are the same in effect. The following is the Pali nomenclature:-

1. Manodvâravajjana. The opening of the doors of the mind, or perhaps escaping by the doors of the mind. A conviction of the impermanence and worthlessness of mere earthly aims.
2. Parikamma. Preparation for action. Doing right for right's sake, with complete indifference to the enjoyment of the fruit of action.
3. Upacharo. Attention or conduct.

----[1] Samo. Quietude of thought that comes from control of mind.

----[2] Damo. Subjugation; mastery over words and actions.

----[3] Uparati. Cessation from bigotry or belief in the necessity of ceremonies.

Hence, independence of thought and tolerance.

-----[4] Titikshâ. Endurance or forbearance, including complete absence of resentment.

-----[5] Samadhana. Intentness, one-pointedness, involving the incapability of being turned aside by temptation.

-----[6] Saddha. Faith; confidence in one's Master and one's self.

4. Anuloma. Direct order of succession, signifying that it follows naturally from the other three; intense desire for liberation.

5. Gotrabhû. The condition of fitness for Initiation.

The student will readily perceive that these Qualifications necessarily follow from ego-consciousness. For if we can look on life from the world of the ego, we see it in true perspective, i.e., with discrimination; and the ego-consciousness being disentangled from the lower bodies, desirelessness is inevitable. Further, since conduct will be that of the ego himself, instead of that of the bodies, shatsampatti or control of conduct will necessarily follow. And, as the world of the ego is the world of unity, of love in its widest sense, ego-consciousness implies love, a word which is sometimes used to designate, from a somewhat different angle, the last of the four qualities, Mumuksha, or longing for liberation.

When a man appears to be reasonably near the possession of the necessary qualifications, a Master may take him upon "probation". This means that the man will remain for a period under very close observation. During the period of probation, the pupil is not in any sense in any kind of direct communication with the Master; he is little likely to hear or to see anything of him. Nor as a general rule are any special trials or difficulties put in his way. He is simply carefully watched in his attitude towards all the little daily troubles of life.

For convenience of observation, the Master makes what is called a "living image" of the probationary pupil, that is to say an exact duplicate of the man's etheric, astral, and causal bodies. This image He keeps in a place where He can easily reach it, and He places it in magnetic *rapport* with the man himself, so that every modification of thought or feeling in the man's own vehicles is faithfully reproduced in the image.

These images are examined daily by the Master, who in this way obtains with a minimum of trouble a perfectly accurate record of His prospective pupil's thoughts and feelings, from which He is able to decide when He can take him into the far closer relationship of the Accepted pupil, which relationship we shall describe presently.

There is not generally much ceremony in this step. The master gives a few words

of advice, tells the new pupil what will be expected of him, and often, in His gracious way, he may find some reason to congratulate the pupil on the work that he has already accomplished.

The living image records not only defects or disturbances; it mirrors the whole condition of the pupil's consciousness. It must be remembered that the pupil must achieve not only a passive, but also an active goodness, as a pre-requisite for advancement.

If a pupil on probation does something unusually good, for the moment the Master flashes a little more attention on him, and may even send a wave of encouragement of some sort, or he may put some work in the pupil's way, and see how he does it. Generally however, He delegates that to some of His senior pupils.

Thus the link between the pupil and his Master is chiefly one of observation, and perhaps occasional use of the pupil. It is not the custom of the adepts to employ special or sensational tests; the pupil is usually left to follow the ordinary course of his life, the living image affording sufficient indication of his character and progress.

The average time for probation is said to be seven years; but it may be indefinitely lengthened, or on the other hand it may be very much shortened. It has been known to extend for thirty years, and it has been known to be reduced to a few weeks.

On the probationary path, the man's highest consciousness works upon the higher mental plane.

When a pupil is "accepted", he is taken into his Master's consciousness to so great an extent that whatever he sees or hears is within the knowledge of his Master. Not that the Master sees or hears it at the same moment, though that often happens, but that it lies within the Master's memory, exactly as it lies within the memory of the pupil, so that He could recollect it at any time that He chose to do so. Whatever the pupil feels or thinks is thus within the astral and mental bodies of his Master.

The master in this way blends the aura of the pupil with His own, so that His forces may be constantly acting, without special attention on His part, through the pupil.

It must not be thought that a mere unconscious channel is required; on the contrary, the pupil must become a keenly intelligent co-operator.

If, unfortunately, it should happen that there comes into the mind of the pupil some thought which is not fit to be harboured by the Master, as soon as He feels it, he at once erects a barrier, and shuts off from himself that vibration. To do this

of course diverts His attention for a moment from His other work, and takes a certain amount of energy.

The union between the pupil and the Master, that begins with Acceptance, is permanent, so that the higher vehicles of the pupil are always vibrating in common with those of his Master. The whole time he is being tuned up, thus growing more and more like the Master. At all times the thoughts of the pupil are largely preoccupied with thoughts of his Master and His influence, so that, while he is sensitively open to Him, he is to a considerable extent closed to lower influences.

It is not, however, expected that a pupil shall be actively thinking of nothing else but his Master; but it is expected that the form of the Master shall always be in the background of his mind, always within the immediate reach, always there when needed in the vicissitudes of life. Whilst reasonable relaxation and change of thought are necessary to mental health, the pupil should, of course, be scrupulously careful to permit no thought, even for a moment, which he would be ashamed for his Master to see.

The process of attuning can take place only slowly; a living being is being moulded, and it is essential that the slow growth from within should adapt the form to the outside influence, much as a gardener gradually directs the limbs of a tree.

Although the Master is working upon thousands of people simultaneously, as well as doing other and much higher work, yet the effect is as though He were watching the pupil and thinking of no one else, for the attention that He can give to one among hundreds is greater than ours when we concentrate it entirely upon one. The Master often leaves to some of His older pupils the work of tuning the lower bodies, though He Himself is allowing a constant flow between His vehicles and those of the pupil. It is in this way that he does most for His pupils, without their necessarily knowing anything about it.

The accepted pupil thus becomes an outpost of the Master's consciousness, so that whatever is done in his presence is done in the Master's presence. Although the Master may be unconscious of such events at the time when they happen, nevertheless they are, as said, in His memory afterwards. The experiences of the pupil are thus in the master's mind among His own knowledge, as soon as He turns His attention to the subject concerned.

Even purely physical things, such as a slight shock or noise, in the consciousness of the pupil, are also in the consciousness of the Master. A wise pupil, therefore, tries to avoid any kind of shock, and for that reason he is usually a gentle and quiet sort of person.

A pupil is always connected with His Master by a constant current of thought and influence, which expresses itself on the mental plane as a great ray or stream of

dazzling light of all colours, violet and gold and blue.

When however, the pupil sends a thought of devotion to his Master, the result is a sudden intensification of the colours of this bar of light, and a distinct flow of spiritual influence from the Master *towards the pupil*. The reason for this is that the Master's power is flowing outwards always and in all directions like the sunlight. The touch of the pupil's thought vivifies his connection with the Master and simply gives a wider opening through which the great ocean of the Master's love can find vent.

So intimate is the union between the consciousness of the pupil and his Master that [as mentioned in Chapter XI] the pupil can at any time see what His Master's thought is upon any given subject, and in that way often save himself from error.

This privilege must not be misused. It is a power of ultimate reference in questions of great difficulty; it is not intended that the pupil should save himself the trouble of thinking, or of deciding ordinary matters which he is quite competent to determine for himself.

In a similar manner, at a higher level, the Initiate may place his thought beside that of the Brotherhood, and draw into himself just as much of that tremendous consciousness as he, at his level, is able to respond to. The Initiate, similarly, must strive never to introduce anything discordant into that mighty consciousness, which is acting as a whole.

We may repeat here what was said in Chapter XI, viz., that the Master can at any moment send a thought through the pupil, either in the form of a suggestion or a message, e.g., when the pupil is writing a letter or delivering a lecture. In earlier stages the pupil is often unconscious of this, but he very soon learns to recognise the thought of the Master. In fact, it is eminently necessary that he should learn to recognise it, because there are many other entities on the astral and mental planes who may make similar suggestions, and it is well that the pupil should learn to distinguish from whom they came.

The use by a Master of His pupil's body is entirely different from what is ordinarily understood by mediumship. The mechanism and rationale of mediumship has already been explained in The Etheric Double and The Astral Body, together with the objections to it. To the use by a Master of a pupil's body there can, of course, be no objections.

The influence of a Master is so powerful that it may well shine through to almost any extent, and a sensitive person might be conscious of His presence even to the extent of seeing His features or hearing His voice instead of those of the pupil. It is improbable that there will be any purely physical change, though this of course frequently happens in mediumship.

Neither is the relationship between Master and pupil in any way one of coercion, or one in which the pupil's individuality is submerged in the flood of power from the Master. On the contrary, the Master's influence is not a hypnotic force from without, but an inexpressibly wonderful illumination from within, irresistible because so deeply felt as in perfect accord with the pupil's highest aspiration, and as the self-revelation of his own spiritual nature. The Master being Himself in fullest measure a channel of the Divine life, that which flows from Him awakens into activity the seed of Divinity within the pupil. The process is somewhat analogous to that of electrical induction. It is because of the *identity* of nature in the two that the influence of the Master stimulates in the highest degree all the noblest and highest qualities in the pupil. The love of the Master for a disciple may be likened to the sunshine which opens the lotus bud to the morning air; it may in truth be said that one smile from the Master will call forth from the pupil such an outburst of affection as would be gained only by months of scholastic meditation on the virtue of love.

From the above it is clear that any disturbance in the lower bodies of the pupil will affect also those of the Master. Should such disturbance occur, the Master drops a veil that shuts the pupil off from Himself, lest there be interference with His own work. Such an unfortunate incident does not usually last longer than forty-eight hours, but in extreme, and very rare, cases, it may endure for years, or even for the remainder of that incarnation.

Practically all ordinary people turn their forces inward upon themselves, and thus become a jangling mass of self-centred forces. One who would become an accepted pupil must learn to turn himself outwards, concentrating his attention and strength upon others, pouring out helpful thoughts and good wishes upon his fellow-men.

Thus the disciple, and even the aspirant for discipleship, is taught to hold all powers entirely for the service of the world. The sharing by the lower consciousness of the knowledge of the higher is determined mainly by the needs of the work that is being done.

Whilst it is necessary that the disciple should have the full use of his vehicles on the higher planes, the conveyance of a knowledge of that work to the physical body [which is in no way concerned with it] is usually a matter of no importance. The strain upon the physical body, when the higher consciousness compels it to vibrate responsively, is very great, at the present stage of evolution, and unless external circumstances are very favourable, this strain is apt to cause nervous disturbance and hyper-sensitiveness, with its attendant evils. Hence most of those whose higher vehicles are developed, and whose most important work is done out of the physical body, remain apart from the busy haunts of men, thus preserving the sensitive physical body from the rough usage and clamour of ordinary life.

Furthermore, as soon as a pupil shows any signs of psychic faculty, full instructions are always given to him as to the limitations which are placed on its use.

Briefly, these restrictions are that such faculty shall not be used [1] to satisfy mere curiosity, [2] for selfish purposes, [3] in order to display phenomena. That is to say, the same considerations which govern the actions of a man of right feeling on the physical plane are expected to apply also on the astral and mental planes; the pupil is never under any circumstances to use his additional power to promote his own worldly advantage, or in connection with gain in any way; and he is never to give what is called in spiritualistic circles a "test" i.e., any indisputable physical plane proof of abnormal power.

There is always a gentle radiation of the Master's influence flowing through the pupil, even though the pupil be not conscious of it. At certain times the pupil may feel a greatly increased flow of force, although he may not know where it is going. With a little careful attention he can learn in which direction it is going, and a little later he can follow it more definitely with his consciousness and trace it to the actual people who are being affected by it. The pupil, however, cannot direct it, being simply a channel. Later, the Master may tell the pupil to seek out a person and give him some of the force. As the pupil increases in usefulness, more and more of the work is placed in his hands, thus relieving, even only in small degree, the strain upon the Master. Occasionally a pupil may even be given a definite message to deliver to a particular person.

It is possible to obtain constant contact with the Master in another way. Just as images of persons made by a man in devachan are filled with life by the egos of the persons concerned, so the Master fills with His real presence the thought-form produced by His pupil. Through that form real inspiration and sometimes instruction may be given. An example of this was that of a Hindu yogi in the Madras Presidency, who claimed to be a pupil of the Master Morya. Having met his Master physically and become His pupil, the yogi claimed that he did not lose his Master after he went away, for he used frequently to appear to him and instruct him through a centre within himself.

There is yet a third stage of even more intimate union, when a pupil becomes the "son" of the Master. The link is such that not only the lower mind, but also the ego in the causal body of the pupil, is enfolded within that of the Master; the Master can then no longer draw a veil to cut off the pupil, so as to separate the consciousness even for a moment.

An accepted pupil has the right, and the duty, to bless in the name of the Master, and a splendid outpouring of the Master's power will assuredly follow his effort to do so. The Son of the Master can give the very touch of the Master's intimate presence. He who is a Son of the Master either is or soon will be a member of the great White Brotherhood also; that, of course, confers the power of blessing

in the name of the Brotherhood.

In the Greater Mysteries, celebrated principally at Eleusis, the initiates were named *epoptai*, that is "those whose eyes were opened". Their emblem was the golden fleece of Jason, the symbol of the mental body. The pupil was shown the effect in the heaven-world of a certain line of life, study and aspiration on earth; he was also taught the whole history of the evolution of the world and of man, in its deeper aspect.

The pupil further received not only teachings about the conditions of the mental plane, but also instruction as to the development of the mental body as a vehicle.

Freemasons will be interested to note that an ear of corn was shown to the aspirant as symbolical of the supreme mystery at Eleusis, and is probably connected with the fact that a sheaf of corn is often carved on the chair of the S.W. in a Masonic Lodge.

When a man is Initiated, the influence to which he has tuned himself on higher planes rushes through every part of his being. Though there is little effect in the solids, liquids, and gases of the physical plane, there is a great deal of radiation from the etheric double, and from his astral and mental bodies, and this is felt both by the kingdom of nature, and by such men as are in a condition to respond.

A very great expansion and development of the mental body takes place in connection with the Second Initiation, but it is usually some years before the effects can show themselves in the physical brain. They unquestionably put a great strain on the brain, as it cannot be instantaneously tuned to the necessary pitch.

The period after the Second Initiation is in many ways the most dangerous anywhere on the Path, the danger in nearly all cases coming through pride. When a man gets a glimpse of what his intellect will be in the future, he must guard against and kill out every trace of pride, selfishness and prejudice.

This danger-point in the life of the Initiate is indicated in the Gospel story by the temptation in the wilderness, which followed the Baptism of Christ by John. The forty days in the wilderness symbolise the period during which the expansion of the mental body is being worked down into the physical brain, though for the ordinary candidate some forty years might well be required for its accomplishment.

The "I-making" faculty, the Ahamkâra [see p. 266] which is generally described as mâna, pride, since pride is the subtlest manifestation of the "I" as distinct from others, is the last fetter of separateness which the Arhat casts off before he takes the Fifth Initiation and becomes a Master, an Asekha. Ahamkara was born with the soul, is the essence of individuality, and persists till all that is valuable in it is

worked into the Monad; it is finally dropped on the threshold of liberation.

In that survival of the Ancient Mysteries known as Freemasonry, the E.A. corresponds to the stage of the Probationary pupil, and is required to practise the three qualities of discrimination, desirelessness, and good conduct or self-control [Viveka, Vairâgya and Shatsampatti]. Discrimination will give him mental power; desirelessness emotional power; self-control will-power.

Discrimination enables the candidate to pass unscathed through the lower regions of the astral world, represented [in Co-Masonry] in the First Symbolical Journey.

Desirelessness enables him to pass through the allurements of the higher astral world, represented in the Second Symbolical Journey.

Good conduct will enable him to master the highest part of the astral world, on the very borders of the heaven-world, represented in the Third Symbolical Journey.

The g... of the First Degree indicates the necessity of conquering the desire nature.

The general effect of the First Degree is to widen somewhat the channel of connection between the ego and the personality of the candidate.

The master-colour of the First Degree is crimson.

The E.A. in Freemasonry corresponds to the Sub-Deacon in the Christian Church.

The p ... g... between the First and the Second Degree indicates the necessity of conquering that peculiar entanglement of the lower mind in the meshes of desire which we know as Kâma-Manas.

In the Second Degree, the idea of illumination is put before the candidate, the special object being the development of the intellectual, artistic and psychic faculties, and the control of the lower mind. The effect of the Degree is a more decided widening of the link between the ego and the personality.

The g... of the Second Degree indicates the need of full control of the lower mind.

The master-colour of the Second Degree is yellow.

The F.C. in Freemasonry corresponds to the order of deacon in the Christian Church, for just as the F.C. is preparing himself for the work of the M.M., so is the

deacon preparing himself for the work of the Priesthood.

The p...g... between the Second and the Third Degree indicates the necessity of gaining some mastery over the strange intermediate tract beyond the lower mind which in a certain school of thought, is denominated the subliminal consciousness.

In the Third degree, the work is principally on the higher mental plane. The predominant colour is a blue tinge. The M.M. corresponds to the Priest in the Church.

In the First Degree, the Idâ, or feminine aspect of the etheric force, is stimulated, thus making it easier for the man to control passion and emotion. The Idâ starts from the base of the spine on the left of a man, and the right of a woman, and ends in the medulla oblongata. It is crimson in colour.

In the Second degree, the Pingalâ or masculine aspect of the force is strengthened, thus facilitating the control of mind. Pingalâ starts from the base of the spine on the right of a man, and the left of a woman, ending in the medulla oblongata. It is yellow in colour.

In the Third degree, the Sushumnâ, the central energy itself, is aroused, thus opening the way for the influence of the pure spirit from on high. It is deep blue in colour.

The E.A., as a *personality*, should organise his physical life for higher use; as an ego he should be developing active intelligence in his causal body. For this he must use his will, the First Person of the Trinity, the power of Shiva [to employ the Hindu terminology], reflected by his outward-turned power, or shakti, Devî Girijâ or Parvatî, who gives self-control, and who blesses the physical body and makes its powers holy.

The F.C., as a *personality*, is organising his emotional life; as an ego he is unfolding intuitive love in his buddhic body. This he does with the power of the Second Person of the Trinity, the love that comes from Vishnu, through Lakshmi, who fulfils desires and makes life rich and full, sanctifying material prosperity and transmuting the passions of the astral body.

The M.M., as a *personality*, is arranging his mental life; as an ego he is strengthening his spiritual will –âtmâ. To conquer the wavering mind he must use the power of thought, or kriyâshakti, the divine activity of the Third Person of the Trinity, Brahmî, reflected by Saraswati, the patroness of learning and practical wisdom.

At the same time, the E.A. should also be learning to control his emotions, the

F.C. should be mastering his mind, and the M.M. should be developing on higher planes.

For the convenience of the student, most of the above facts, together with some further ones, are tabulated as follows : -

<b>ITEM</b>	<b>E.A.</b>	<b>F.C.</b>	<b>M.M.</b>
<b>Work as Personality</b>	Organisation of physical life, and learning to control emotion	Organisation of emotional life, and learning to master mind	Organisation of mental life, and development on higher plane
<b>Work as Ego</b>	Development of active intelligence in causal body	Development of Intuitional love in buddhic body	Development of Atmâ or will
<b>Under influence of Trinity</b>			
--English	First Person	Second Person	Third Person
--Sanskrit	Shiva	Vishnu	Brahmâ
<b>Whose outward-turned power, Shakti, or Devi, is:-</b>			
--English	Will	Love	Activity
--Sanskrit	Girijâ or Parvati	Lakshmi	Sarawati
<b>Whose function is</b>	to give self-control, to bless the physical body	to confer material prosperity	to confer knowledge
<b>Assisted by</b>	J.W.	S.W.	W.M.
-Who are represented by	Moon	Sun	Fire
<b>Chakram used</b>	Throat	Heart	Navel
<b>Etheric force, or Nadi stimulated</b>	Idâ	Pingalâ	Sushumnâ
<b>Aspect</b>	Feminine	Maxculine	Pure spirit
<b>Position</b>			
<b>Men</b>	Left	Right	Centre
<b>Women</b>	Right	Left	Centre
<b>Colour</b>	Crimson	Yellow	Deep blue
<b>Path of</b>	Ordinary man	Occult aspirant	Ascension

<b>Corresponds to</b>	<b>Probationary Pupil</b>	<b>Pupil on the Path</b>	<b>Fourth Initiation (Arhat)</b>
<b>Corresponds in Christian Church</b>	<b>Sub-Deacon</b>	<b>Deacon</b>	<b>Priest</b>
<b>Re-birth</b>	<b>After interval</b>	<b>After short interval, or none</b>	<b>Voluntarily only</b>

In the various Degrees in Freemasonry, not only is the link between the personality and ego widened, but also a link is formed between certain principles of the candidate and the corresponding vehicles of the H.O.A.T.F. The changes induced are somewhat of the same nature as those that occur in the Christian Church, as will be mentioned presently.

The Lord Buddha was once asked by a disciple to sum up the whole of His teaching in one verse. He replied:-

- Cease to do evil
- Learn to do well
- Cleanse your own heart;
- This is the religion of the Buddha

The student will recognise here a correspondence with the Masonic system, as well indeed as with other systems. The teaching of the First Degree is that of purification. The Second Degree instructs him to acquire knowledge. The Third degree instructs the man to rise to a higher level and to consider not merely the outward action, but also the inner condition of which all outer manifestation should be an expression.

For purposes of reference and comparison the student may like to examine the following table, which sets out the main features of the system in Christianity, as followed in the Liberal Catholic Church:-

<b>Minor Orders</b>	<b>Symbols</b>	<b>Application of Symbols</b>	<b>Ceremony acts principally upon</b>
<b>Cleric</b>	<b>Surplice</b>	<b>Control of physical body</b>	<b>Etheric Double</b>
<b>Doorkeeper</b>	<b>Key and Bell</b>	<b>Control of emotion</b>	<b>Astral Body</b>
<b>Reader</b>	<b>Book</b>	<b>Control of mind</b>	<b>Mental Body</b>
<b>Exorcist</b>	<b>Sword and Book</b>	<b>Development of will and fuller control by ego of vehicles</b>	<b>Causal Body</b>
<b>Acolyte</b>	<b>Lighted</b>	<b>Development of</b>	<b>Buddhic Body</b>

	Candle Cruet	intuition	
Sub-Deacon	Amice Maniple  Tunicle Chalice and Paten Book of Epistles	Control of speech Love of service; diligence in good works Spirit of joy and gladness	General purpose is to enable the ego to express himself more fully through the personality
Deacon	Dalmatic: White Stole (over left shoulder) Book of Gospels		Widens link between ego and personality (antakana), thickening and hardening walls so as to hold them more firmly in their new form. Carries process a little further so as to strengthen buddhi (intuition). Higher Manas is connected with corresponding principle of the Christ
Priest	White Stole (over both shoulders) Chasuble Chalice Wine  Water Paten Waver		Link between Atmâ- Buddhi-Manas opened up and greatly widened Ego more definitely awakened so that he can act upon others at the causal level, and express himself more fully through buddhi. Whole aura expanded prodigiously Way cleared between higher principles and physical brain. Every atom shaken as its spirillae are aroused Buddhi connected with corresponding principle of the Christ Atmâ stimulated by sympathetic vibration

Bishop	Crosier Pectoral Cross Ring Book of Gospels Mitre Gloves		Atmâ connected with corresponding principle of the Christ
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## CHAPTER XXXIV

### CONCLUSION

Few words are necessary in bringing to a close this study of man's mental body and the lower mental plane. It may, however, be useful to look back over the ground we have covered and endeavour to obtain a perspective view of the relative importance and significance of our subject matter, its setting amongst the totality of our knowledge of modern Theosophy.

The student cannot help being struck by the great difference between the "atmosphere" of the mental world and that of the astral world –let alone that of the physical. By comparison with the mental world, the astral world is heavy, crude, turgid, and unsatisfying, even at its loftiest levels. However pure and refined the state of feeling to which it may raise us, we feel that we are still far from our true home. The dignity of man's soul demands more than feeling, however pure and unselfish.

The mental plane –even its four lower levels - conveys the impression that we are distinctly nearer "home". Here there is more of freedom; we feel that we are more the masters of our own consciousness, less the servants of our vehicles. The mental world seems a cleaner and more wholesome world, where we can shape our destiny nearer to our will than seems possible in the worlds we have left below us. Consciousness is freer to roam where it will, far less restricted by the limitations of space and time.

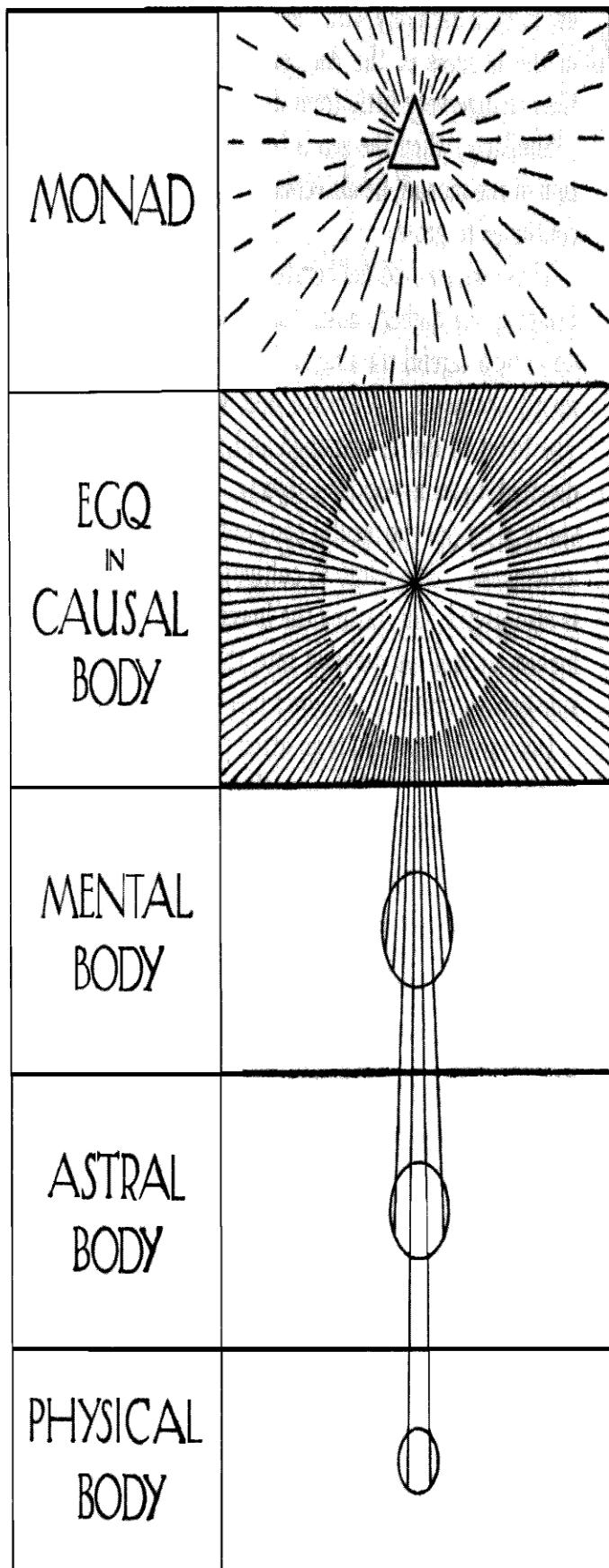
Nevertheless, mastery of even the lower mental world, of the totality of concrete thinking, leaves us still unsatisfied, for through it and beyond it we can plainly sense that there are yet fresh and greater worlds to conquer.

This world of concrete thought is as far as we can go while we still belong to the lower planes. To plant our feet firmly on this thought-world, and reach upwards to the very abstractions of thought - his surely will bring us to the threshold of a world higher and purer, not only in *degree*, but in *kind*, than any of the lower worlds.

Through those abstractions we shall rise to the world of the spirit, and draw appreciably nearer to the God-consciousness from which we feel and know ourselves to be temporarily exiled.

But we must not minimise the vast importance of the lower mental world, especially at the present juncture in man's psychological history. Let us, therefore, recapitulate in briefest form the outstanding features which emphasise the importance of mind, and of the mental world, to men in their evolution.

In the Scheme of seven Chains, to which we belong, every Chain has globes on the lower mental plane, while six of the seven Chains have also globes on the higher mental plane. Of the forty-nine globes in all, twenty-four, or practically half, are on the mental plane. The following diagram sets out these facts clearly, the mental globes being blacked-in solid, in order to emphasise the points mentioned.



The habitat of the ego, the Thinker, the one who endures throughout all reincarnations, is on the higher mental plane.

The mental plane is the meeting-ground between the Higher and the Lower Selves. The "Ray", which the higher or divine part of man projects into the lower worlds in order to carry out the purposes of evolution, is a ray of lower mind, emerging from the higher mind.

The battleground of life to-day, for most men, is kâma-manas, the intermingling of mind with desire.

The consciousness of most men to-day is centred in their feelings, in the astral body. Hence, the next immediate step for them is to learn to master feelings, to control the astral body; and this, as we have seen, can be achieved only from the plane above, from the mind

The next step will be to raise the centre of consciousness from the astral to the mental world.

The very name "man" means the thinker, the being possessing mind.

Man, in Occultism, has been defined as that being in the universe, in whatever part of the universe he may be, in whom highest Spirit and lowest Matter are joined together by *Intelligence*.

The development of mind in man has been expedited a whole Round by the influence of the Lords of the Flame. In the next Round, the Fifth, the progress to be made in mental development must clearly be prodigious, and, to our limited minds as at present developed, in the nature of things inconceivably lofty.

These few considerations, it is submitted, constitute a formidable array, and scarcely call for further comment; they are their own emphasis of the crucial importance to man, at his present stage, of the mind and the mental body - not indeed as a final achievement, but as a necessary stepping-stone to that future of man which, in the words of a Master, "*is the future of a thing whose growth and splendour have no limit.*"

Nevertheless, whilst emphasizing one aspect of our work, and that an aspect unquestionably of great importance, it is necessary to preserve a careful sense of proportion and balance, giving to each element its due weight, and no more.

Hence, as Annie Besant, and C.W.Leadbeater have written, so far as the Theosophical Society is concerned, its great object is not so much to provide mental development as to raise those who are ready into responsiveness to buddhic influences, to re-awaken the sensitiveness of its members on a higher turn of the spiral, and to prepare them for the new race, now starting on its way in the world.

The Society "does not deprecate mental development - far from it - but it prepares for the next stage, when intuitional love will produce harmony and brotherhood, and will employ the developed intellect to build a new civilisation, based on those ideals."

# THE CAUSAL BODY AND THE EGO ΔΔ

By

Arthur E. Powell

A publication of The Theosophical Society

## PART 1 OF 2

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### DEDICATION

This book, like its three predecessors, is dedicated with gratitude and appreciation to those whose painstaking labour and researches have provided the materials out of which it has been fashioned

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### **INTRODUCTION**

This book forms the fourth, and last, of the series of compilations dealing with the bodies of man. Throughout the series the same plan has been adopted.

Approximately forty volumes mostly those written by Annie Besant and by C.W. Leadbeater, have been thoroughly searched, the material thus found has been sorted, arranged and classified into its appropriate departments, so as to present to the student of modern Theosophy a coherent and sequential account of the finer bodies of man.

In addition, there has been incorporated a considerable amount of information regarding the planes, or worlds, associated with these four bodies of man. It is therefore, probably near the truth to say that the gist of nearly everything that has been published by the two principle pioneers into the mysteries and complexities of the Ancient Wisdom, with the exception of certain clearly marked specialities [such as Occult Chemistry, for example] is to be found in these four books.

The compiler thus hopes that the intensive labour, which has occupied him for about three years and a half years, will serve to make a little easier the path of those who desire to obtain a comprehensive grasp of what may be termed the technical aspects of modern Theosophy.

In view of the fact that our occult knowledge, of planes finer than the physical, is likely to be enormously increased in the near future, it has seemed desirable to undertake the not inconsiderable task of arranging, in textbook form, such data as are already in our possession, before the total mass becomes too unwieldy to be handled in this manner. Moreover, by such orderly arrangement of our materials, we construct for ourselves an outline, or skeleton into which further

information can be built, as it becomes available.

As in the previous volumes, references to the sources of the information have throughout been given in the margin (when using the book) , so that any student who so desires, may verify for himself every statement made, at its original source. In the few cases where the compiler has stated his own unsupported views, the initials A.E.P. have been printed in the margin. About two thirds of the diagrams are original, the remainder having been taken, sometimes with slight modifications, from the works of C.W.Leadbeater, and a few from *A Study In Consciousness*, by Annie Besant.

A further department of Theosophical knowledge, to a great extent self-contained, and therefore specialised, is that of the Scheme of Evolution in which man evolves: this includes Globes [ such as the Earth] Rounds, Chains, Races, Sub-Races, and so forth. The writer hopes to compile a volume dealing with this section of technical Theosophy, in the near future.

A.E.Powell

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## CHAPTER I

### GENERAL DESCRIPTION

In the three preceding volumes of this series, viz., *The Etheric double*, *The Astral Body*, and *The Mental Body*, the life history of each of the three lower vehicles of man has been studied. In these studies, it has been sufficient for us to take each of the three vehicles as we find it actually existing in man, and to examine its methods of functioning, the laws of its growth, its death, and then the formation , from the nucleus provided by the permanent atoms and mental unit, of new vehicles of the same kind, in order that man's evolution on the three lower planes can be continued.

When we come to study the causal body of man, we enter upon a new phase of our work, and must take a far wider sweep in our purview of man's evolution. The reason for this is, that whilst the etheric, astral and mental bodies exist for one human incarnation only, i.e., are distinctly *mortal*, the causal body persists throughout the whole of man's evolution, through many incarnations, and is therefore relatively *immortal*. We say *relatively immortal* advisedly because, as will be seen in due course, there is a point where a man, having completed his purely *normal* human evolution, commences his supernormal human evolution, and actually loses the causal body in which he has lived and evolved during the past ages of his growth.

Hence, in dealing with man's causal body, we are no longer standing within the personality , looking upon any vehicle of that personality, and seeing from its own

standpoint how it is serving the evolution of the real man who uses it, but instead we must take up our stand by the side of the man himself, looking from above on the vehicles of the personality, and regarding them as so many temporary instruments fashioned for the use of the man himself, and discarded, as a broken tool is discarded, when they have served their purpose.

Furthermore, in order to make our study comprehensive, and to round it off in a manner that will be intellectually satisfactory, we must discover and study the origin and birth of the causal body, *i.e.*, how it has formed in the first instance. Finding that it *had* a beginning, we see at once, not only that it must have an end, but also that there must be some other form of consciousness which uses the causal body, much as the ego in the causal body uses the vehicles of the personality. This other form of consciousness is, of course, the human Monad. Hence, in order that we may fully comprehend the part that the causal body plays in the tremendous story of human evolution, we must study also the human Monad.

Reverting to the birth or formation of the causal body, we are at once plunged into a consideration of the somewhat intricate subject of Group-Souls, with which we shall have to deal. Tracing the origin of Group-Souls, we are led back, step by step, to the Three Great Outpourings of the Divine Life, from which all forms of manifested life arise. Whilst studying the Three Outpourings, we must necessarily consider to some extent the formation of the material world into which the Outpourings are projected.

Thus in order that our study of the Causal Body may be a comprehensive one, we must describe, though in brief outline only, the formation of the field of evolution, the flow into that field of the great streams of life, the coming forth of the Monads, the building of the many kingdoms of life, and the plunging of the Monads, with the assistance of the permanent atoms, into the material universe, and the gradual development of the life in the Group Souls until eventually, after aeons of existence, the point of Individualisation is reached, when the causal body for the first time appears.

Thereafter, our study will follow much the same lines as in the previous books of this series. We shall have to deal in turn with the functions of the Causal Body: its composition and structure; the nature of causal thought; the development and faculties of the causal body; the portion of life after death spent in the causal body in the higher heaven worlds.

Then we must pass to a fuller examination of the entity, the ego to wit, who inhabits and uses the causal body, projecting from it personality after personality into the cycle of reincarnation. We must examine what is known as Trishna, the "thirst", which is the true cause of reincarnation; the permanent atoms and the mechanism of reincarnation; the attitude which the ego takes toward the whole process of reincarnation and to the personalities which he projects into the lower worlds.

The whole relationship of the ego to the personality, his link with it, and the way in which he uses it, must be carefully examined. A special chapter will be devoted to certain Sacramental aids towards strengthening and improving the link between the ego and the personality, and another chapter to the rationale of the memory of past lives.

Then we pass to describe, so far as is possible, the life of the ego on his own plane. This leads us on to Initiation into the Great White Brotherhood, when the causal body vanishes for a time. Some description of the buddhic consciousness must be attempted, and a succinct epitome of such facts as are known regarding the Second and Higher Initiations.

Finally, we conclude our long history with the relation of the ego to his "Father in Heaven", the Monad.

The field which this book attempts to cover is thus, as already said, a far greater one than that covered in any of the three preceding volumes of the series. The book will, it is hoped, enable the student of Theosophy to obtain a broad grasp of the wonderful panorama of human evolution, and to see in true perspective the part played by each of the four subtler bodies of man - the etheric, the astral, the mental and the causal.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **THE FIELD OF EVOLUTION**

By the "field of evolution" we mean the material universe in which Evolution is to take place. Strictly speaking, life or Spirit, and matter are not in reality, separate and distinct existences, but rather are opposite poles of one noumenon; but for purposes of intellectual analysis and study it is convenient to consider these two aspects or poles almost as though they were separate and distinct, much in the same way that a builder, for example considers, more or less separately, plans and sections of his buildings, although these plans and sections are merely abstractions, from the one entity - the building itself.

The field of evolution in our solar system consists of seven planes or worlds; these may be regarded as making up three groups: [1] the Field of Logoic manifestation only; [2] the field of supernormal evolution [3] the field of normal human, animal, vegetable mineral and elemental evolution. These facts may be tabulated as shown on page 5.

The Adi and Anupadaka planes may be conceived as existing before the solar system is formed. The Adi plane may be imagined as consisting of so much of the matter of space, symbolised by points, as the Logos marks out to form the material basis of the system He is about to produce.

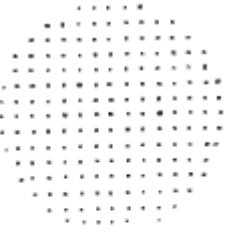
The Anupadaka plane, symbolised by lines, we may imagine as consisting of this same matter, modified or coloured by His individual life, His all ensouling consciousness, thus differing in some way from the corresponding plane in another solar system. These ideas may be roughly symbolised thus:

The Fields of Evolution (Diagram -1-)				
Number		Name		Field of Evolution
Group	Serial	Sanskrit	English	
I	1	Adi	(a)	Logoic
	2	Anupadaka	(b)	
II	3	Atma	Spirit	Super-normal human, i.e., "Initiates".
	4	Buddhi	Intuition	
III	5	Manas	Mind	Normal human, animal, vegetable, mineral and elemental entities.
	6	Kama	Emotions	
	7	Sthula	Physical Activity	

**Notes:**

(a) No English equivalent exists: Adi means literally "first"

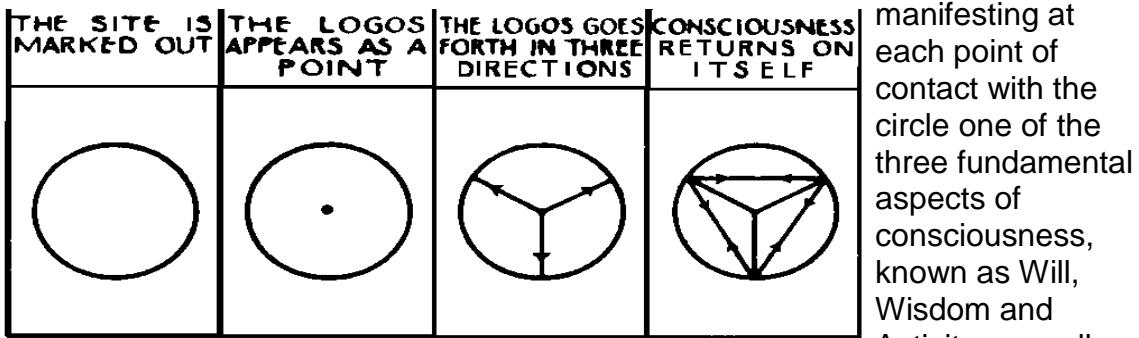
(b) No English equivalent exists: Anupadaka means literally "without vesture".

First Stage	The Logos marks out His Universe on the Adi plane	
Second Stage	The Logos modifies this matter with His own individual life, on the Anupadaka plane	

This preparatory work may be illustrated in another way by two sets of symbols, one showing the threefold manifestation of the consciousness of the Logos, the other the threefold change in matter corresponding to the threefold change in consciousness.

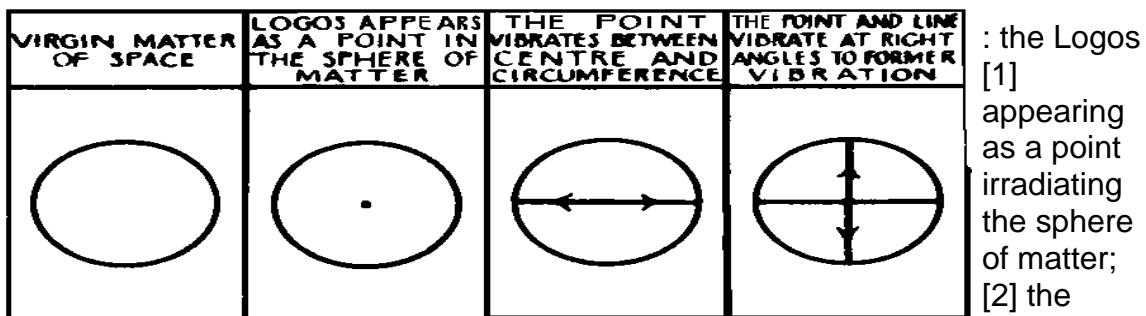
Taking first the manifestation of consciousness, the site of the universe having been marked out [see diagram II] : [1] the Logos Himself appears as a point within the sphere; [2] the Logos goes forth from that point in three directions to the circumference of that sphere or circle of matter; [ 3 ] the consciousness, of the Logos returns on Itself,

Diagram II



by other terms. The joining of the three aspects, or phases of manifestation, at their outer points of contact with the circle, gives the basic triangle of contact with matter. This triangle, together with the three triangles formed by the lines traced by the point, yields the "divine tetractys", sometimes called the Kosmic Quaternary.

Taking now the changes set up in Universal matter, corresponding to the manifestations of consciousness, we have, in the sphere of primordial substance, the virgin matter of space [see Diagram III ]



**DIAGRAM III.—The Response of Matter.**

between centre and circumference, thus making the line which marks the drawing apart from spirit and matter; [ 3 ] the point, with the line revolving with it, vibrating at right angles to the former vibration, and forming the primordial Cross within the Circle.

The Cross is thus said to "proceed" from the Father [the point] and the Son [the diameter] and represents the third Logos, the creative mind, the Divine activity ready to manifest as Creator.

## CHAPTER III

### THE COMING FORTH OF THE MONADS

Before considering the creative activity of the Third Logos, and the detailed preparation of the field of evolution, we must note the origination of the Monads or units of consciousness, for whose evolution in matter the field of a universe is prepared. We shall return to their fuller consideration in a later chapter.

The Myriads of these units, who are to be developed in the coming universe, are generated within the divine life, before the field for their evolution is formed. Of this forthgoing it has been written : "That willed: I shall multiply and be born" [Chhandopanishat VI.ii, 3] : thus the Many arise in the One by that act of will. The act of will is that of the First Logos, the undivided Lord, the Father.

The Monads are described as sparks of the Supreme Fire, as "Divine fragments". The Occult Catechism , quoted in the *Secret Doctrine* . I., 145, says: "Lift thy head, O Lanoo; dost thou see one, or countless, lights above thee, burning in the midnight sky?" 'I sense One Flame, O Gurudeva; I see countless, undetached sparks shining in it.' The Flame is Ishvara, in His manifestation, as the First Logos; the undetached sparks are the Monads, human and other. The word "undetached" should be especially noted, as signifying that the Monads are the Logos Himself.

A Monad may thus be defined as a fragment of the divine life, separated off as an individual entity by rarest film of matter, matter so rare that, while it gives, a separate form to each, it offers no obstacle to the free intercommunication, of a life, thus encased, with the surrounding similar lives.

A Monad is thus not pure consciousness, pure Self, *samvit*. That is an abstraction. In the concrete universe there are always the Self and his sheaths, however tenuous the sheaths may be, so that a unit of consciousness is inseparable from matter. Hence a Monad is consciousness *plus* matter.

The Monad of Theosophy, is the Jivatma of Indian Philosophy, the Purusha of the Samkya, the particularised Self of the Vedanta.

The life of the Monads being thus of the First Logos, they may be described as Sons of the Father, just as the Second Logos Himself is the Son of the Father; but the Monads are but younger Sons, with none of their divine powers, capable of acting in matter denser than that of their own plane – the Anupadaka; while the Second Logos, with ages of evolution behind Him, stands ready to exercise His divine powers, "the first-born " among many brethren.

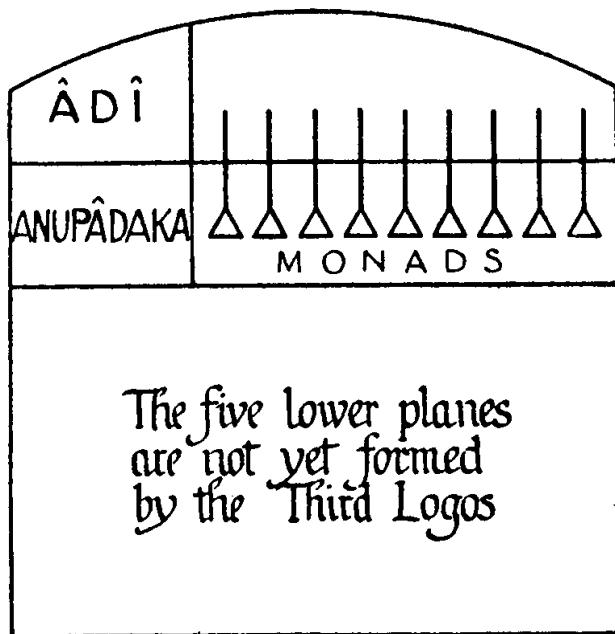
Whilst the roots of their life are in the Adi plane, the Monads themselves dwell, on the Anupadaka Plane, as yet without vehicles in which they can express, themselves, awaiting the day of "manifestation" of the Sons of God". There they remain, while the Third Logos begins the external work of manifestation, shaping the matter of the objective universe. This work will be described, in the next chapter.

Diagram IV indicates the Monads, waiting on their own plane whilst the world, in which they are to develop is being fashioned.

These units of Consciousness, known as Monads, are described as the Sons, abiding from the beginning of a creative age, in the "bosom of the Father", who

have not yet been –"made perfect through suffering". Each of them, is truly "equal to the Father as touching his Godhead, but inferior to the Father as touching his manhood"----in the words of the Athanasian Creed. Each of them is to go forth into matter in order "to render all things subject to himself" [ 1 Corinthians xv. 28]. He is to be "sown in weakness" that he may be "raised in power" [ibid.xv.43]. From a static condition unfolding all divine potentialities, he is to become dynamic, unfolding all divine powers.

Whilst omniscient, omnipresent, on his own plane –the Anupadaka –he is unconscious- "senseless"-, on all others; he is to veil his glory in matter that blinds him, in order that he may become omniscient, omnipresent, on all planes able to answer to all divine vibrations in the universe, instead of only those of the highest levels.



**DIAGRAM IV.—The Coming Forth of the Monads.**

towards the light, in the bud bursting its prison and expanding In the sunshine. It is the creative genius in the painter, the sculptor, the poet, the musician, the craftsman. The subtlest pleasure, the keenest savour of exquisite, delight derives from this urge, from within, to create. All things feel most alive when multiplying themselves by creation. To expand to increase, results from the Will-to-live: the fruition is the Bliss of living, the joy of being alive.

As the Monads derive their being from the First Logos, His will to manifest is also their will. Hence, the whole process of the evolution of the individual "I" is an activity chosen by the Monads themselves. We are here in the worlds of matter, because, we as Monads willed to live: we are Self-moved, Self determined.

This divine impulse, striving ever after fuller manifestation of life, is seen every where in nature, and has often been spoken of as the Will-to-live. It appears in the seed, which pushes its growing point up

## CHAPTER IV

### THE FORMATION OF THE FIVE PLANES

Continuing now with the creative process, The Third Logos, the Universal Mind, works on the Matter of space - Mula-prakriti, the Celestial Virgin Mary throwing its three qualities of Tamas [Inertia], Rajas [Mobility], and Sattva[Rhythm] out of stable into unstable equilibrium, and therefore into continual motion in relation to each other.

The Third Logos thus creates the atoms of the five lower planes—Atma, Buddhi, Manas, Kama, and Sthula: "Fohat electrifies into life and separates primordial stuff, or pre-genetic matter into atoms."

We may note, parenthetically, that there are three stages in the formation of these atoms:-

[1] the fixing of the limit within which the life of the Logos shall vibrate, this being known as the "divine measure" or "Tanmatra", literally "the measure of "That", "That" being the divine Spirit.

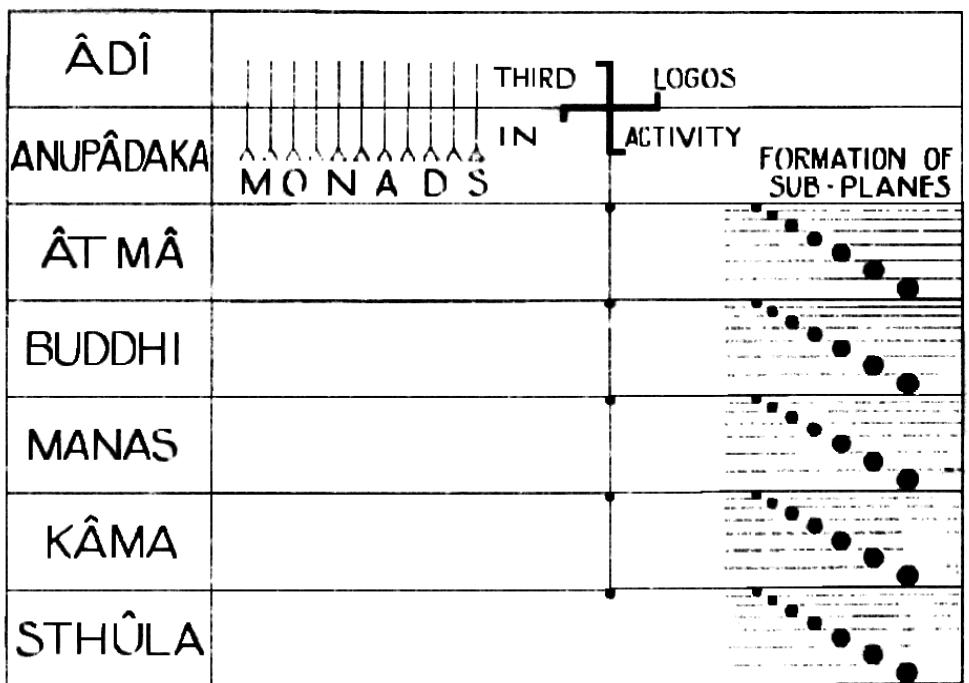
[2] The marking out of the axes of growth of the atom, the lines which determine, its shape; these correspond to the axes of crystals.

[3] From the measurement of the vibration, and the angular relation of the axes with each other, the surface or wall of the atom is determined.

Under the directive activity of the Third Logos, the atoms of each plane are awakened to new powers and possibilities of attraction and repulsion, so that they aggregate into molecules, and simpler molecules into complex ones, until, on each of the five planes six lower sub-planes are formed, making, in all seven sub-planes on each plane.

The matter of the sub-planes so formed, however, is not that now existing: it is the more strongly attractive or cohesive energies of the Second Logos, the aspect of Wisdom or Love, which brings about the further integrations into the forms of matter with which we are acquainted.

Furthermore, the whirling currents in the atoms, known as spirillae, are *not* made by the Third Logos, but by the Monads , with whom we shall deal presently. The spirillae are developed into full activity in the course of evolution, normally one in each Round. Many of the practices of Yoga are directed to bring about the more rapid development of the spirillae.



**DIAGRAM V.—The Formation of the Five Lower Planes**

Thus in every atom lie involved innumerable possibilities of response to the three aspects of consciousness, and these possibilities are developed in the atom in the course of evolution.

This work of the Third Logos is usually spoken of as the First Life Wave, or First Outpouring.

DIAGRAM V illustrates this work of the Third Logos or First Outpouring. We shall consider the matter a little further, and the ascent of the First Outpouring, in the next and later chapters after we have dealt with the Second Outpouring.

## CHAPTER V

### THE KINGDOMS OF LIFE

Into matter vivified by the Third Logos, the second great wave of the divine life descends, coming from the Second Logos or Second Person of the Trinity,: this is usually known as the Second Outpouring. The Second Person of the Trinity thus takes form, not of the "virgin" or unproductive matter alone, but of the matter which is already instinct with the life of the Third Person, so that both the life and the matter surround Him as a vesture. It is thus an accurate statement that He is "incarnate of the Holy Ghost and the Virgin Mary", which is the true rendering of a prominent passage in the Christian Creed.

Slowly and gradually this restless flood of life pours down through the various, planes and kingdoms, spending in each of them a period equal in duration, to one entire incarnation of a planetary chain, and covering many millions, of years. [NOTE: A planetary Chain consists of seven globes of matter, of various grades, round which the stream of evolving lives passes seven complete times.]

At various stages of its descent, the life of the Second Outpouring is known by various names. As a whole, it is often spoken of as a monadic essence, though this term is better confided to that portion of it which is clothed only in the *atomic* matter of the various planes. This name was originally given to it because it has become fit to provide permanent atoms to Monads.

When it ensouls matter of the lower sub-planes of each plane, *i.e.*, all the sub-planes below the atomic, which consist of molecular matter, it is known as Elemental Essence. This name is borrowed from the writings of mediaeval occultists, it having been bestowed by them on the matter of which the bodies, of nature spirits were composed: for they spoke of these as "Elementals", dividing them into classes belonging to the elements of Fire, Air, Water and Earth.

When the Outpouring, or wave of the Divine Life - which in some previous aeon, has finished its downward evolution through the buddhic plane—pours down into the highest level of the mental plane, it ensouls great masses of atomic mental matter. In this its simplest condition, it does not combine the atoms into molecules in order to form a body for itself, but simply applies by its attraction an immense compressing force to them.

We may imagine the force, on first reaching this plane on its downward swoop, to be entirely unaccustomed to its vibrations, and unable at first to respond to them. During the aeon which it will spend on this level, its evolution will consist in accustoming itself to vibrate at all rates which are possible there, so that at any moment it can ensoul and use any combination of the matter of that plane. During this long period of evolution it will have taken upon, itself all possible combinations of the matter of the three arupa [formless] or causal levels, but at the end of the time it returns to the atomic level - not, of course as it was before, but bearing latent within it all the powers which it has gained.

The Wave of Life, then, having drawn together the matter of the Causal Plane, combines it into what at that level corresponds to substances, and of these substances builds forms which it inhabits. This is called the First Elemental, Kingdom.

As we are here dealing with the Monadic essence on its *downward* arc, progress for it means descent into matter instead of as with us, ascent towards, higher planes. Hence this essence, even on the causal plane, is less evolved than we are, not more so: but it would perhaps be more accurate to say that it is less involved, as its e-volution, in the strict sense of that term has not yet commenced.

There are seven subdivisions in the First Elemental Kingdom: the highest corresponds with the first sub-plane; the second, third and fourth correspond with the second sub-plane; the fifth, and sixth and seventh correspond with the third sub-plane.

After spending a whole chain period evolving through different forms at that level, the wave of life, which is all the time pressing steadily downwards identifies itself so fully with these forms that, instead of occupying them and withdrawing from them periodically, it is able to hold them permanently and make them part of itself. When that stage is reached, it can proceed to the temporary occupation of forms at a still lower level. Accordingly it takes forms on the lower mental, or rupa [form] levels of the mental plane, and is known then as the Second, Elemental Kingdom. The student should note that the ensouling life resides on the higher mental or causal level, while the vehicles through which it manifests are on the lower mental plane.

The Second Elemental Kingdom is divided into seven subdivisions: the highest subdivision corresponds with the fourth sub-plane; the second and third divisions with the fifth sub-plane; the fourth and fifth subdivision with the sixth sub-plane; the sixth and seventh divisions with the seventh sub-plane.

For convenience of reference, the subdivisions of the First and Second Elemental Kingdoms are tabulated thus:---

Plane	Sub-Planes	Elemental	
		Sub-Divisions	Kingdoms
Higher Mental	1	1	First
	2	2 : 3 : 4	
	3	5 : 6 : 7	
Lower Mental	4	1	Second
	5	2 : 3	
	6	4 : 5	
	7	6 : 7	

After spending a whole chain-period at this stage, the continuous downward pressure has caused the process to repeat itself. Once more the life has identified itself with its forms, and has taken up its residence on the lower mental levels. Then it takes for itself forms of astral matter, and becomes the Third Elemental Kingdom.

As we saw in *The Astral Body* and *The Mental Body*, both mental and astral elemental essences are very intimately connected with man, entering largely into the composition of his vehicles.

After spending a whole chain-period in the Third Elemental Kingdom, the life again identifies itself with those forms, and so is able to ensoul the etheric part of the mineral kingdom, becoming the life which vivifies that kingdom.

In the course of the mineral evolution, the downward pressure again causes the life to identify itself with the etheric forms, and from those forms to ensoul, the denser matter of such minerals as are perceptible to our senses.

What we know as the mineral kingdom includes, of course, not only what are usually called minerals, but also liquids, gases, and many etheric substances, as yet unknown to Western orthodox science.

When in the mineral kingdom, the life is sometimes called the "mineral monad", just as at later stages it has been named "the vegetable monad", and the "animal monad". These titles, however, are somewhat misleading, because, they seem to suggest that one great monad animates the entire kingdom, which is not the case, because even when the monadic essence first appears before us as the First Elemental Kingdom, it is already not one monad, but very many monads: not one great life-stream, but many parallel streams, each possessing characteristics of its own.

When the Outpouring has reached the central point of the mineral kingdom, the downward pressure ceases, and is replaced by an upward tendency. The "outbreathing", has ceased, and the "inbreathing" or indrawing has begun.

It will be noted that, if there were but one Outpouring of life, which passed from one kingdom to the next, there would be in existence at any given time one kingdom only. This, however as we know, is not the case: the reason is that the Logos sends out a constant succession of waves of life, so that at any given time we find a number of them in operation. Thus we ourselves represent one such wave; the wave that immediately followed our wave now ensouls the animal kingdom; the wave behind that is now in the vegetable kingdom; a fourth is in the mineral stage; whilst a fifth, sixth and seventh are represented by the Three Elemental Kingdoms. All are successive, ripples of the same great Outpouring from the Second Aspect of the Logos.

The whole scheme tends increasingly towards differentiation, the streams as they descend from kingdom to kingdom dividing and subdividing more and more. It may be that before all this evolution takes place there is a point at which we may think of the Great Outpouring as homogeneous, but of that, nothing is known.

The process of subdivision continues until, at the end of the first great stage of evolution, it is finally divided into individualities, *i.e.*, into men, each man being a separate and distinct soul, though at first, of course, an undeveloped soul.

Looking at the work of the Second Life Waves, or Second Outpouring, -as a whole, we may fairly regard its downward sweep as concerned with the making of primary tissues, out of which in due time, subtle and dense bodies will be formed. In certain ancient scriptures this process has been aptly called "weaving".

The materials which are prepared by the Third Logos, are woven by the Second Logos into threads and fabrics out of which future garments - *i.e.*, bodies—will be made.

The Third Logos may be thought of as a Chemist, working as in a laboratory; the Second Logos we may regard as the Weaver, working as in manufactory, Materialistic as are these similes, they are useful as crutches for the understanding.

The Second Logos thus "weaves" various kinds of cloth, *i.e.*, of material, out of which will later be made the causal and mental bodies of men; out of the cloth of astral matter, of desire stuff, will later be made the astral bodies of men.

Thus are fashioned the materials of the mechanism of consciousness, the characteristics of each class of material being determined by the nature of the aggregations of particles - texture, colour, density, and so forth.

All this downward sweep of the life-wave through the planes, giving qualities to the many grades of matter, is a preparation for evolution and is often and more properly, called *involution*.

After the lowest stage of immersion in matter is reached both the first and the second outpouring turn upwards and begin their long ascent through the planes: this is evolution properly so called.

**DIAGRAM VI** is an attempt to illustrate graphically the First Outpouring from the Third Logos, forming the matter of the five lower planes, and The Second Outpouring which, taking the matter vivified by the Third Logos, moulds and ensouls it so as to produce the three Elemental Kingdoms, and the Mineral Kingdom, and in due succession, the vegetable, and animal kingdoms.

There is indicated also on the diagram the Third Outpouring, from the First Logos, the Outpouring from which results the formation of individual entities, or human beings. With this however, we shall deal more fully at a later stage of our study.

The student should take careful note of the exact position of the figures in Diagram VI, representing each kingdom. Thus the mineral is shown of full width in the denser part of the physical plane, showing that the life there, such as it is, has full control over the dense physical matter. But the band grows steadily narrower as it mounts up through the etheric sub-planes, indicating that control over etheric matter is not yet perfectly developed.

The small point penetrating into the astral plane indicates that a little consciousness, works through astral matter. This consciousness is the beginning, of desire, expressed in the mineral kingdom as chemical affinity, etc. We shall refer to this again when we come to the Mineral Group-Souls.

The band representing the vegetable kingdom has full width in the whole of the physical plane, dense as well as etheric. The portion representing astral consciousness is, of course, much larger, because desire is much more fully developed in the vegetable than in the mineral kingdom. Students of plant life will

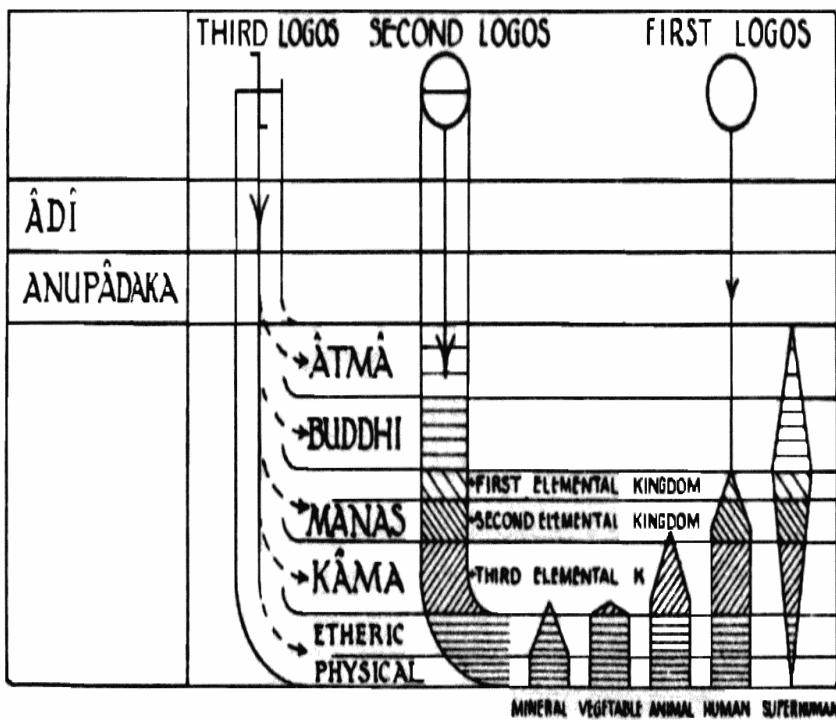


DIAGRAM VI—The Kingdoms of Life

know that many members of the vegetable kingdom exhibit a great deal of ingenuity and sagacity in attaining their ends, limited though those ends seem to us, regarded from our point of view. The student is recommended in this connection to such books as *The Sagacity, and Morality of Plants*, by J.E. Taylor.

In the animal kingdom the band shows that there is full development in the lowest astral sub-plane, showing that the animal is capable of experiencing to the fullest possible extent the lower desires; but the narrowing of the band through the higher sub-planes shows that his capacity, for the higher desires is much more limited. Nevertheless it does exist so that it happens, in exceptional cases, that he may manifest an exceedingly high quality of affection and devotion.

The band representing the animal, shows also that there is already a development, of intelligence, which needs mental matter for its expression. It is now generally admitted that some animals, both domestic and wild, undoubtedly, exercise the power of reasoning from cause to effect, although the lines along which their reason can work are naturally few and limited, not is the faculty powerful yet.

As the band is intended to represent the average animal, the point pierces only into the lowest sub-plane of the mental plane; with the highly developed domestic animal the point might readily extend even to the highest of the four lower levels,

though of course it would remain only a point, and by no means the full width of the band.

As we are considering here the relative degrees of consciousness in the various kingdoms, we may as well anticipate somewhat, and indicate the stage at which man has arrived. The band representing the human kingdom, is seen to be of full width up to the lowest level of the mental plane indicating that up to that level his reasoning faculty is fully developed. In the higher subdivisions of the lower mental plane, the faculty of reason is not yet fully developed, as indicated by the narrowing of the band.

An entirely new factor, however, is introduced by the point on the higher mental or causal plane, because man possesses a causal body and a permanent reincarnating ego.

In the case of the great majority of men, the consciousness does not rise beyond the third mental sub-plane. Gradually only, as his development proceeds, the ego is able to raise his consciousness to the second or the first of the mental sub-planes.

The band on the extreme right hand side represents—a man much in advance of the ordinary man. Here we have the consciousness, of a highly spiritual man, whose consciousness has evolved beyond that of the causal body, so that he can function freely on the plane of buddhi, and also has consciousness - at least when out of the body-on the plane of atma.

It will be noted that the centre of his consciousness indicated by the widest part of the band, is not, as in the case of most men, on the physical and astral, planes but between the higher mental and the buddhic planes. The higher mental and higher astral are much more developed than are their lower parts, and although he still retains his physical body, yet this is indicated, merely by a point, the explanation being that he holds it solely for the convenience of working in it, and not in any way because his thoughts and desires are fixed there. Such a man has transcended all karma which could bind him to incarnation, so that he takes the lower vehicles solely in order that through them he may be able to work for the good of humanity and to pour out at those levels those forces which otherwise could not descend, so far.

After this necessary digression, in order to explain the relative degrees of consciousness attained by each of the kingdoms of nature, it is important to note that the evolutionary process, which leads into expression the involved, consciousness, has to begin by contacts received by its *outermost* vehicle, i.e., it must begin on the physical plane. The consciousness can become aware of an outside only by impacts on its own outside. Until then, it dreams within itself, as the faint inner thrillings ever outwelling from the Monad cause slight pressure in the Jivatma [Atma-Buddhis-Manas] like a spring of water beneath the earth, seeking an outlet.

With this process of ascent, and the Third Outpouring, which results in the formation of the causal body of the man, we shall deal in succeeding chapters, in due course.

Reverting to the Second Outpouring, we must note that it not only divides itself to an almost infinite degree, but also appears to differentiate itself, so that it comes through countless, millions of channels on every plane and sub-plane. Thus, on the Buddhic Plane it appears as the Christ-Principle in man; in Man's mental and astral bodies it vivifies various layers of matter, appearing in the higher part of the astral as a noble emotion, in the lower part as a mere rush of life-force energising the matter of the body. In its lowest embodiment, it rushes from the astral body into the etheric chakrams or force centres, where it meets the Kundalini welling up from the interior of the human body.

We may also note here, parenthetically, that Kundalini, or the serpent-fire, which wells up from the interior of the human body, belongs to the First Outpouring, and exists on all planes of which we know anything. This force of Kundalini is, of course quite distinct from Prana or Vitality, which belongs to the Second Outpouring, and also from Fohat, i.e., from all forms of physical energy such as electricity, light, heat, etc.[*vide The Etheric Double, The Astral Body and The Mental Body, passim*].

Kundalini in the human body comes from that "laboratory of the Holy Ghost" deep down in the earth, where are still being manufactured new chemical elements, showing increasing complexity of form, and more and more energetic, internal life and activity.

But Kundalini is *not* that portion of the First Outpouring engaged in the work of building chemical elements: it is more of the nature of a further development of the force which is in the living centre of such elements as radium. Kundalini is part of the First Outpouring *after* it has reached its lowest immersion, in matter, and is once more ascending towards the heights from which it came.

It has already been mentioned that, speaking generally, the Life-Wave which descends through the worlds of matter, on its downward sweep, causes ever increasing differentiation; on its upward return, however, it brings about reintegration, into unity.

## CHAPTER VI

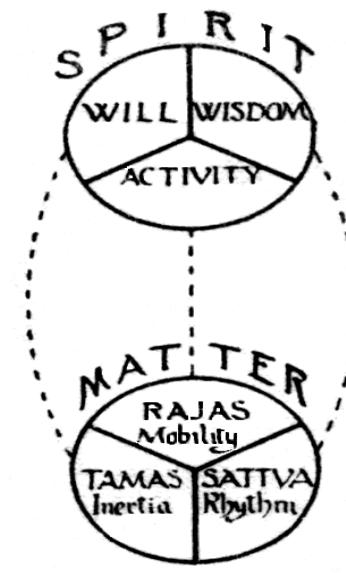
### THE ATTACHMENT OF THE ATOMS:

#### I. HIGHER TRIAD

The Second Outpouring not only, as we saw in the proceeding chapter, streams, forth into the five planes, thereby bringing into existence the elemental and other kingdoms of life, but it brings also with it into activity the Monads, who while

ready to begin their evolution, have been waiting on the Anupadaka, plane until the matter of the planes was prepared for them.

To say that the Monads "go forth" would be somewhat inaccurate. It is rather that they shine forth, sending out their rays of life. They themselves remain ever "in the bosom of the Father", while their life-rays stream out into the ocean of matter, appropriating there, as we shall see in full detail presently the materials necessary for their evolution in the lower planes.



**DIAGRAM VII.—The Aspects of Consciousness and the Qualities of Matter.**

The shining forth of the Monads has been graphically described by H.P. Blavatsky, thus: "The primordial triangle [i.e., The three faced Monad of Will, Wisdom, and Activity] as soon as it has reflected itself in the "Heavenly Man" [i.e., Atma, Buddhi, Manas] the highest of the lower seven - disappears, returning, into "Silence and Darkness".

The Monads themselves, therefore remain ever beyond the fivefold universe, and in that sense are spectators. They dwell beyond the five planes of matter. They are the Self, standing Self-conscious, and Self determined. They reign in changeless peace and live in eternity. But, as we have seen, they appropriate matter, taking to themselves atoms of various planes.

The Monads are of seven types or "rays" just as matter also is of seven types or rays. The process by which the seven types arise is as follows: The three aspects of consciousness of the Logos or Universal Self, are Will [Ichchha], Wisdom [Jnanam], and Activity [Kriya]. The three corresponding qualities in matter are Inertia [Tamas], Mobility [Rajas] and Rhythm, [Sattva].

These are related as follows: The Aspect of Will imposes on matter the quality of Inertia or Tamas, the power of resistance, stability, quietude.

The Aspect of Activity gives to matter its responsiveness to action, Mobility, or Rajas.

The Aspect of Wisdom gives to matter Rhythm or Sattva, harmony. **DIAGRAM VII** shows these correspondences.

Now every Monad has these three aspects of consciousness, the proportions, of which may vary in different Monads in seven ways: thus:-

Predominant Aspect	Secondary Aspect	Tertiary Aspect
Will	Wisdom	Activity
Will	Activity	Wisdom

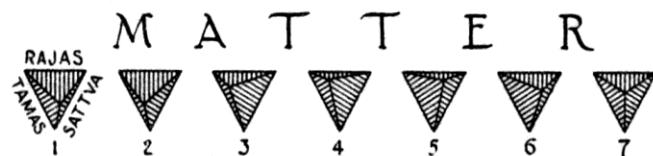
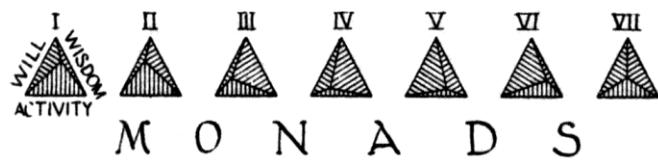
<b>Wisdom</b>	<b>Will</b>	<b>Activity</b>
<b>Wisdom</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Will</b>
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Will</b>	<b>Wisdom</b>
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Wisdom</b>	<b>Will</b>

The seventh variety is that in which the three aspect are equal.

The seven types of matter are similarly formed, by the varying proportions of the three qualities Tamas, Rajas, and Sattva. The stream of life known as the Second Outpouring, in fact, is composed of seven streams , one of the seven types of matter-combinations being found in each of the seven streams.

**DIAGRAM VIII** is an attempt to show the seven types of monads with the seven corresponding types of matter.

Another way of expressing the same truth, *viz.*, that each Monad belongs to one or other of the seven Rays, is to say that he came forth originally through one or other of the Seven Planetary Logoi, who may be regarded as centres of force within the Solar Logos, channels through which the force of the Solar Logos is poured out.



**DIAGRAM VIII.—The Seven Types of Monads and the Seven Types of Matter.**

Nevertheless, although as has been said, each Monad belongs fundamentally, to one Ray, yet he has within himself something of *all* the Rays . There is in him no ounce of force, no grain of matter, which is not actually part of one or other of the Seven Planetary Logoi. He is literally compacted of Their very substance, not of one, but of all, though always one predominates. Therefore, no

slightest movement of any of these great Star Angels can occur without affecting to some extent every Monad, because they are bone of Their bone, flesh of Their flesh, Spirit of Their Spirit. This fact is, of course, the real basis of astrology.

Furthermore, the bodies of those Monads, which originally came forth through, a given Planetary Logos, will continue all through their evolution to have more of the particles of that Logos than of any other, and in this way men can be distinguished as primarily belonging to one or other of the seven Rays or Logoi.

Whilst the ordinary rule is that a Monad remains on the same Ray throughout the whole of his evolution, so that he eventually returns through the same Planetary Angel as that through which he first came forth, yet there are comparatively, rare exceptions. For it is possible for a Monad to change his Ray so that he will return

through a Planetary Angel other than that through which he first emerged. Such transfers are usually to the First and Second Rays there being relatively few persons on those two Rays at the lower levels of evolution.

Before we can proceed to describe the method by which the atoms are attached, to the Monads, there is still another factor with which we must first deal.

The Second Outpouring , in addition to its work of forming the Elemental and other Kingdoms, also brings with it evolved beings, at various stages of development, who form the normal and typical inhabitants of the Three Elemental Kingdoms. These beings have been brought over by the Logos from a preceding evolution. They are now sent forth to inhabit the plane for which their development fits them; they co-operate with the work of the Logos, and later with man, in the general scheme of evolution. From them, man derives his perishable bodies.

They are known in some religions as Angels, to Hindus as Devas—meaning literally, Shining Ones. Plato speaks of them as "Minor Gods". It is the translation of the word "Deva" as "Gods" which has led to much misapprehension of Eastern thought. The "thirty-three crores [330 millions] of Gods", are not Gods in the Western sense of the term, but are Devas or Shining Ones.

Of these there are many grades, including representatives on each of the five lower planes, i.e., those of Atma, Buddhi, Manas, Kama, and the etheric part of the physical plane.

Their bodies are formed of the Elemental Essence of the Kingdom to which they belong, and are flashing and many-hued, changing form at the will of the entity Himself. They form a vast host, ever actively at work, labouring at the Elemental Essence to improve its quality, taking it to form their own bodies, throwing it off again and taking other portions, so as to render it more sensitive.

In the First Elemental Kingdom, on the higher mental or causal plane, they make materials ready to clothe abstract thoughts. In the Second Elemental Kingdom, on the lower mental plane, they make materials ready to clothe concrete thoughts. In the Third Elemental Kingdom, on the astral plane, they prepare materials for the clothing of desires.

At the stage which we are now considering, this work of improving the Elemental Essence, is the only work there is for them to do. Later on, they are also constantly busied in the shaping of forms, in aiding human egos on the way to incarnation in building their new bodies, bringing materials of the kind required and helping in its arrangements. The less advanced the ego, the greater the directive work of the Devas. With animals they do almost all the work, and practically all with the vegetables and minerals. They are the active, agents of the Logos, carrying out all details of His world-plan, and aiding, the countless evolving lives to find materials they need for their clothing and use. Included with

them are the vast numbers of the fairy kingdom, known as nature spirits, trolls, gnomes, and by countless other names.

Some description of these hosts of beings is given in *The Astral Body* and *The Mental Body*, so that there is no need to describe them further here. All we are really concerned with at the moment is their origin, and the part they play in helping the Monads to commence their evolution in the lower planes.

The term Deva is, strictly speaking, not wide enough to cover *all* the living agencies which are employed in the work connected with the Monads and their long pilgrimage through the lower worlds. This work is carried out by no less than seven orders of beings, known collectively as Creative Hierarchies, the Monads, themselves, curiously enough, being one of the seven.

For our present purposes, however, in order not to make the description too complicated and involved, we shall denote all these agencies by the single term Devas. In a later and separate chapter we shall to some extent go over the ground again more in detail, and give the names and functions [so far as these are known] of the seven Creative Hierarchies.

Thus we see that before any embodied consciousness, save that of the Logos and His Creative Hierarchies, could appear, or do anything at all, a vast preliminary work had to be accomplished, preparing the "form-side" of the field of evolution.

We have now the three factors needed to enable us to consider the attachment, of the atoms to the Monads: these three are:

- [1] the atoms of the various, planes;
- [2] the readiness of the Monads themselves on the Anupadaka plane;
- [3] the assistance of the Devas, without whom the Monads by themselves, would be powerless to carry out their evolution.

A Monad, as we have seen, possesses three aspects of consciousness, each of which, when the time comes for evolutionary process to begin, sets up what may be termed a vibratory wave, thus causing to vibrate the atomic matter of the planes of Atma, Buddhi, and Manas, which surrounds him.

Devas from a previous universe, who have themselves passed through a similar, experience before, guide the vibratory wave from the Will-aspect of the Monad, to an atom of Atma, which thus becomes "attached" to the Monad, and is its Atmic permanent atom, so called because it remains with the Monad throughout the whole process of evolution.

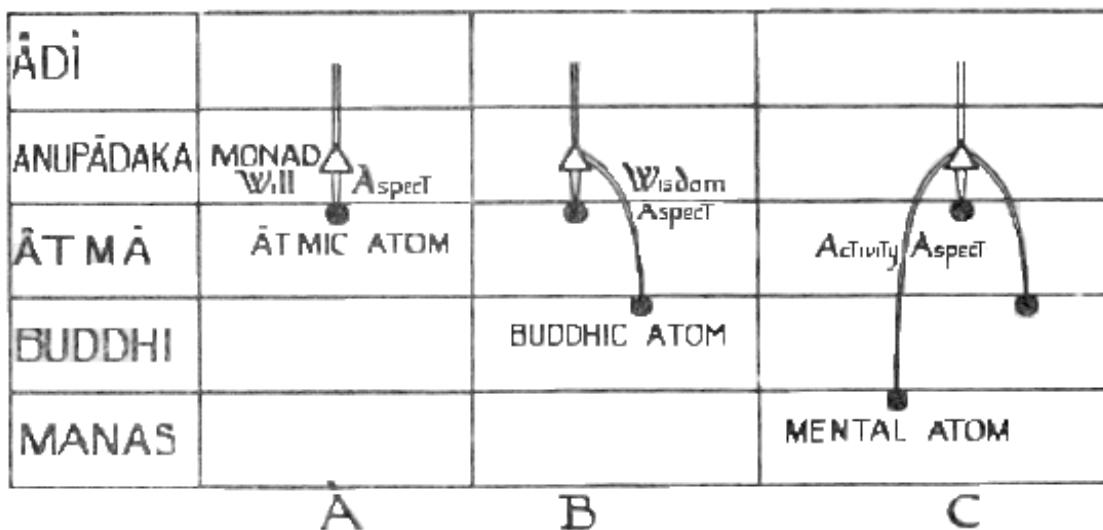
Similarly, the vibratory wave from the Wisdom aspect of the Monad is guided, by Devas to an atom of Buddhi, which becomes the Buddhic permanent, atom.

Similarly, also, the vibratory wave from the Activity-aspect of the Monad is guided by Devas and attached to an atom of Manas, which becomes the third

permanent atom. Thus is formed Atma-Buddhi-Manas, often called the Ray of the Monad.

**DIAGRAM IX** illustrates the process just described.

A graphic description of the process is as follows: from the luminous ocean of Atma a tiny thread of light is separated off from the rest by a film of buddhic matter, and from this hangs a spark which becomes enclosed in an egg-like casing of matter belonging, to the formless levels of the mental plane. "The spark hangs from the flame by the finest thread of Fohat". [*The Book of Dzyan*, vii,5.]

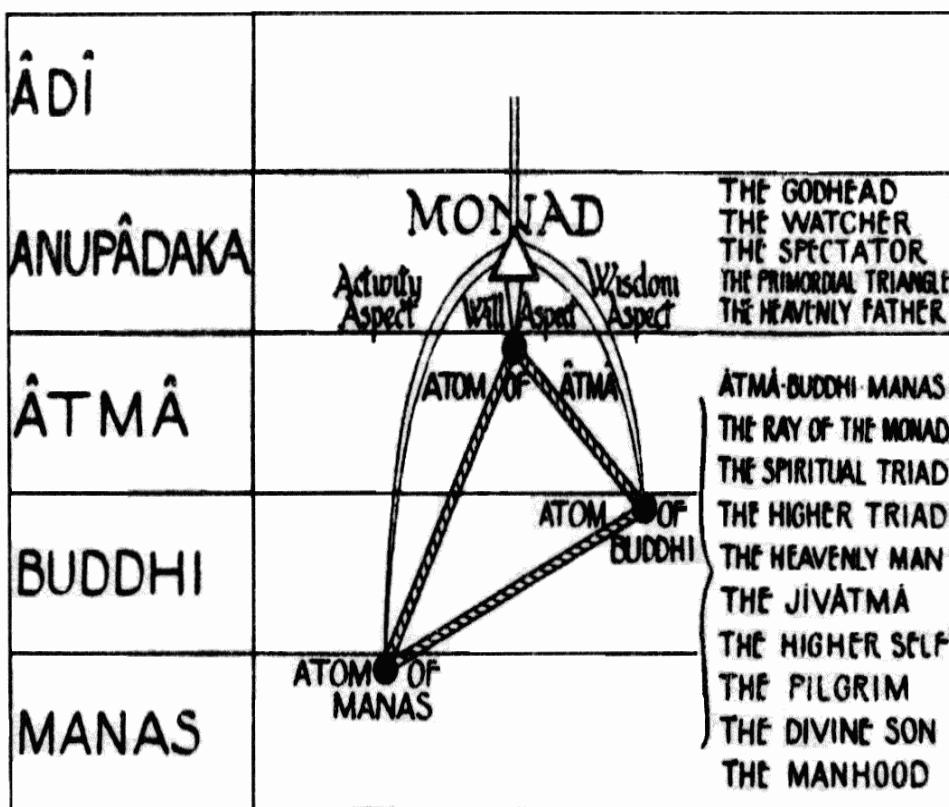


**DIAGRAM IX.—Attachment of the Atmic, Buddbic and Mental Permanent Atoms.**

As said, those atoms which are attached to Monads become, and are called, "permanent atoms"; H.P. Blavatsky spoke of them as "life atoms" [ *The Secret Doctrine*, II,709]. The remainder of the atoms of the various planes, which are *not* attached to Monads, remain and continue to be called the Monadic Essence of each plane. The term is perhaps a little misleading, but it was given in the first instance, because [as mentioned in chapter V] the essence at this stage is *suitable* to be attached to Monads as permanent atoms, though by no means all of it does actually become attached.

Atma-Buddhi-Manas, the Ray of the Monad, is known also by many other names; such as the Heavenly Man, the Spiritual or Higher Triad, the Higher Self, the separated Self, and so on. The term Jivatma is also sometimes applied to it, though Jivatma, which may be rendered literally Life-Self, is of course equally applicable to the Monad. It is known also as the "manhood" of the Divine Son of the First Logos, animated by the "Godhead," *i.e.*, by the Monad. It may be regarded also as a vessel into which the Monad pours His life.

Here we have the mystery of the Watcher, the Spectator, or, the actionless Atma, i.e., The Monad, who abides ever in his highest nature on his own plane, and lives in



**DIAGRAM X.—The Monad and the Higher Triad**

the world by his Ray [Atma-Buddhi-Manas], which in turn animates, his "shadows", the lives or incarnations of the lower self on earth.

**DIAGRAM X** illustrates the Monad and his Higher Triad.

It is important to remember that Atma-Buddhi-Manas, the Higher Triad, is identical in nature with the Monad, in fact is the Monad, though lessened in force by the veils of matter round it. This lessening of power must not blind us to the identity of nature, for it must ever be born in mind that human consciousness is a unit, though its manifestations vary owing to the predominance of one or other of its aspects and to the relative density of the materials in which an aspect is working at any given moment.

The Monad having thus appropriated for his own use these three atoms, has begun his work. He himself in his own nature, cannot descend below the Anupadaka plane; hence he is said to be in "Silence and Darkness", i.e., unmanifest. But he lives and works in and by means of the atoms he has appropriated.

Although the Monad *on his own plane*, the Anupadaka, so far as his *internal*, life is concerned, is strong, conscious, capable, yet on the lower planes in their time and space limitations, he is a mere germ, an embryo, powerless, senseless,

helpless. Although at first the matter of the lower planes enslaves him, he will slowly, surely, mould it for Self-expression. In this he is watched over and aided by the all sustaining and preserving life of the Second Logos, until eventually he can live in the lower worlds as fully as he lives above, and become in his turn a creative Logos, and bring forth out of himself, a universe. For a Logos does not create out of nothing: He evolves all from Himself.

The full manifestation of the three aspects of consciousness expressed by the Monad takes place in the same order as the manifestation of the Triple Logos in the universe. The third aspect, Activity, revealed as the creative mind, as the gatherer of knowledge, is the first to perfect its vehicles. The second aspect, Wisdom, revealed as the Pure and Compassionate Reason, or Intuition, is the second to shine forth: this is the Krishna, the Christ in man. The third aspect, Will, the Divine Power of the Self, the Atma is the last to reveal itself.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE ATTACHMENT OF THE ATOMS

#### II LOWER TRIAD

The spiritual Triad, Atma-Buddhi-Manas, having been formed, the warmth of the stream of Logoic life arouses within it faint thrillings of responsive life. After long preparation, a tiny thread, like a minute rootlet, a golden coloured thread of life sheathed in buddhic matter, proceeds from the Triad.

This thread is sometimes called the Sutratma, literally the Thread-Self, because, the permanent particles will be threaded on it like beads on a string. The term however, is used in various ways, but always to denote the idea of a thread connecting separate particles. Thus it is applied to the reincarnating Ego, as the thread on which many separate, lives are strung: to the Second Logos, as the thread on which beings in His Universe are strung; and so on. It thus denotes a function, rather than a special entity or class of entities.

From each spiritual Triad appears one of these threads, which at first wave vaguely in the seven great streams of life. Then , each of them is anchored, just as happened in the case of the Higher Triad, by the agency of the Devas to a mental molecule, or unit as it is usually called, this being a particle of the fourth mental sub-plane, i.e., The highest level of mental plane.

Around this mental unit, are gathered temporary aggregations of elemental essence of the Second Elemental Kingdom, scattering and regathering, over and over again. The vibrations of the essence gradually awaken the mental unit into faint responses, these again thrilling feebly upwards to the seed of consciousness in the Triad, producing, therein vaguest internal movements.

The mental unit cannot be said to have always round it a form of its own, for there may be several of many mental units plunged into a given aggregation of

essence, whilst other aggregations of essence may have only one mental unit in them, or none at all.

Thus, with inconceivable slowness, the mental units become possessors of certain qualities: i.e., they acquire the power of vibrating in certain ways, which, are connected with thinking, and will at a later stage make thoughts possible.

In this, they are helped by the Devas of the Second Elemental Kingdom, who direct upon them the vibrations to which they gradually begin to respond, and surround them with the elemental essence they, the Devas, throw off from their own bodies.

Furthermore, each of the seven typical groups is separated from the others by a delicate wall of monadic essence - atomic matter ensouled by the life of the Second Logos—the beginning of the wall of the future Group-Soul.

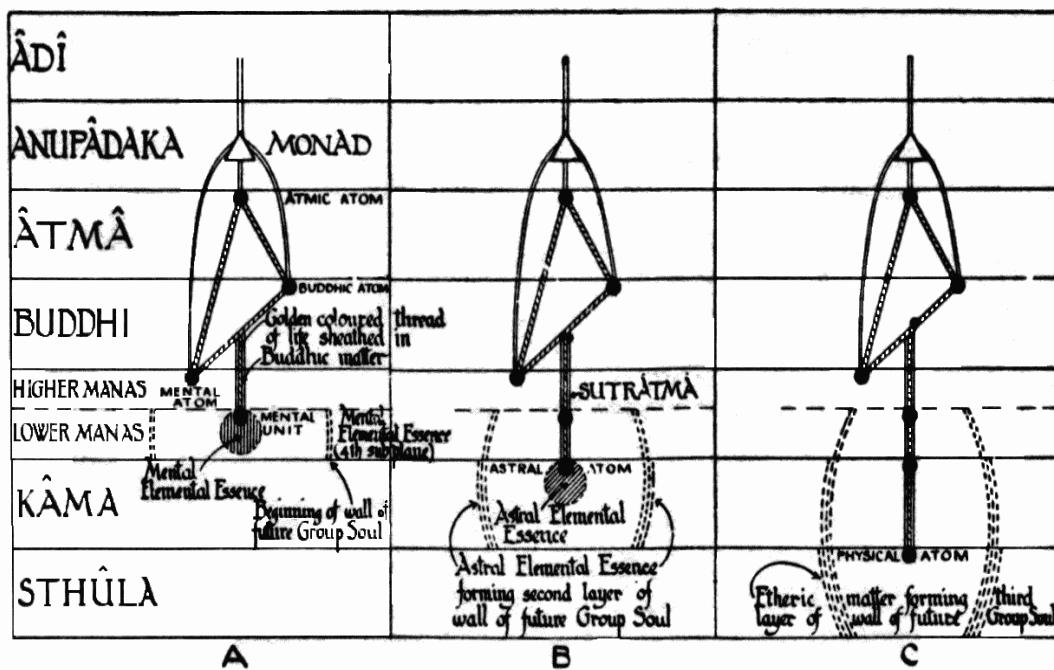
**Diagram XI A**, illustrates the process just described.

The whole process is then repeated at the next lower level [vide Diagram XI B]. The thread of life ensheathed in buddhic matter, with the mental unit attached, pushes outward to the astral plane, where, by identically similar means, an astral atom is attached. Round this astral permanent atom gather temporary aggregations of elemental essence of the Third Elemental Kingdom, scattering and regathering, as before.

Similar results follow, the astral atoms being gradually awakened to faint responses, these being passed upwards to the seed of consciousness, producing therein, once more, vaguest internal movements. Thus the astral permanent, atoms acquire the power of vibrating in certain ways, connected with sensation, which will at a later stage make sensation possible. As before the work is helped by the action of the Devas, of the Third Elemental Kingdom.

The separating wall of each of the seven groups now acquires a second layer, formed of astral monadic essence, thus approaching a stage nearer to the wall of the future Group-Soul.

Yet once more is the process repeated [vide **Diagram XI C**] when the great wave of life has passed onwards to the physical plane. The thread of life, sheathed in buddhic matter, with its attached mental unit and astral permanent, atom, pushes outwards, and annexes a physical permanent atom. Round this atom etheric matter gathers, as before. .The heavier physical matter, however, is more coherent than the subtler matter of the higher planes, and consequently a much longer term of life is observed.



**DIAGRAM XI.—Attachment of Mental Unit and Astral and Physical Permanent Atoms**

Then, as the etheric types of the proto-metals, and later proto-metals, metals, non-metals, and minerals are formed, the Devas of the etheric sub-planes submerge the physical permanent atoms into one or other of the seven etheric types to which they belong. Thus is begun the long physical evolution of the permanent atom.

Again, on the atomic sub-plane of the physical, a third layer is added to the separating wall which will form the envelope of the future Group-Soul.

In this manner is formed what is often called the Lower Triad, consisting of a mental unit, an astral permanent atom, and a physical permanent atom.

**Diagram XII** shows the stage which we have now reached, the Monad, with His three Aspects, having been provided with a Higher Triad of Atma-Buddhi-Manas, and the Higher Triad in its turn having been furnished with a Lower Triad of Lower-Manas-Kama-Sthula.

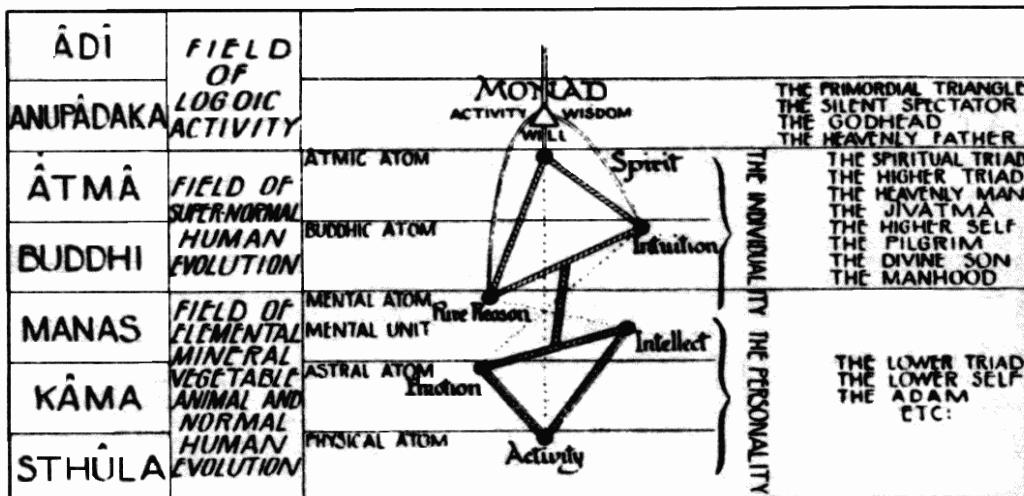


DIAGRAM XII.—The Monad and His Atoms.

It will be remembered that the matter of each plane is of seven fundamental types, according to the dominance of one or other of the three great attributes, of matter - Tamas, Rajas, and Sattva. Hence the permanent atoms may be chosen from any one of these types. It appears however, that each Monad chooses all his permanent atoms from the same type of matter. The choice is made by the Monad, although, as we have seen, the actual attachment is done by the Devas.

The Monad himself belongs, of course, to one of the seven fundamental types of Monads, and this is his first great determining characteristic, his fundamental "colour", "keynote", or "temperament".

The Monad may choose to use his new pilgrimage for the strengthening and increasing of this special characteristic, in which case, the Devas will attach to his Sutratma permanent atoms belonging to the group or type of matter corresponding to the type of the Monad. Such a choice would result in the secondary colour - that of the permanent atoms - emphasising and strengthening the first: in the later evolution, the powers and weaknesses of that doubled temperament would show themselves, with great force.

On the other hand, the Monad may choose to use his new pilgrimage for the unfolding of another aspect of his nature. Then the Devas will attach to his Sutratma atoms belonging to another matter-group, in which the aspect the Monad wishes to develop is predominant. This choice would result in the secondary "keynote" or "temperament" modifying, the first, with corresponding results in later evolution. This latter choice is obviously by far more frequent, and it tends to greater complexity of character, especially in the final stages of human evolution, when the influence, of the Monad makes itself felt more strongly.

Whilst the permanent atoms of both the Higher and the Lower Triads belong to the same type, the bodies of the Higher Triad, being, once formed, relatively, permanent, reproduce definitely the keynote of their permanent atoms. But in the

case of the bodies of the Lower Triad, various other causes operate, in the determination of the choice of materials for these bodies.

The Monad can exert no *direct* action on the permanent atoms: nor could there be such direct action until the Higher Triad has reached a high stage of evolution. But the Monad can and does affect the Higher Triad, and through that exerts an *indirect* and continual action on the permanent atoms.

The Higher Triad draws most of his energy, and all his directive capacity, from the Second Logos. But his own special activity does not concern itself with the shaping and building work of the Second Logos, being directed rather, to the evolution of the atoms themselves, in association with the Third Logos. This energy from the Higher Triad confines itself to the atomic sub-planes, and until the Fourth Round, appears to spend itself chiefly on the permanent atoms.

The use of the permanent atoms is of course, to preserve within themselves, as powers of vibration, the results of all the experiences through which they have passed. We may take the physical permanent atom as illustrating this process.

A physical impact of any kind will set up, in the physical body it strikes, vibrations corresponding to its own. These vibrations will be transmitted, by direct, concussion if they are violent, and in all cases by the buddhic life-web to the physical permanent atom.

Such a vibration , forced on the atom from the outside, becomes in the atom a vibratory power, a tendency to repeat the vibration. Thus through the whole life of the physical body, every impact leaves an impression on the physical permanent atom. At the end of the life of the physical body, the physical permanent atom has in this way stored up innumerable powers of vibration.

The same process takes place in the case of the permanent atom or unit in each of the bodies of man. Moreover, the student will by now be familiar with the fact that the permanent atoms - as their name implies – remain permanently with a human entity throughout the whole of his many incarnations, being, in fact, the *only* portions of his various bodies which survive and remain permanently with the evolving ego in the causal body.

The vortex, which is the atom, is the life of the Third Logos; the wall of the atom, gradually formed on the surface of this vortex, is made by the descent of the life of the Second Logos. But the Second Logos only faintly traces the outline of the spirillae, as filmy channels: He does not vivify them.

It is the life of the Monad which, flowing down, vivifies the first of the spirillae,making it a working part of the atom. This takes place in the First Round. Similarly, in each successive Round, another of the spirillae is vivified and brought into activity.

The first set of spirillae is used by the prana which affects the dense body; the second set with the prana used by the etheric double; the third set by the prana affecting the astral body, thus developing the power of sensation; the fourth set is used by the prana of kama manas, making it fit to be used for the building of a brain as the instrument of thought.

As we are now in the Fourth Round, the normal number of spirillae at work is four, both in the permanent atoms, and in the ordinary unattached atoms. But in the case of a highly evolved man, the permanent atom may have five spirillae at work, or even six. The fifth set of spirillae will in the normal course, be developed in the Fifth Round; but advanced people, as said, can by certain Yoga practices evolve even now both the fifth and sixth sets of spirillae.

In addition to the permanent atoms themselves, the Monad also begins to work in a similar fashion on other atoms that are drawn round the permanent atom. Such vivification, however, is temporary only, as, when the physical body is broken up, these atoms return to the general store of atomic matter. They may then be taken up and used by some other Monad, being, of course, now more easily vivified again, on account of their former experience.

This work takes place with all the permanent atoms of the Monad, such atoms, thus evolving more rapidly than they would otherwise do, owing to their association with the monad.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE CREATIVE HIERARCHIES

As promised in Chapter VI, we now come to describe more in detail the hierarchies of beings, of various grades of power and intelligence, who build the universe, and help the Monads to undertake their vast pilgrimage through the worlds of matter.

The information at present available is somewhat fragmentary and ill defined whilst recognising that this is so, we must endeavour to make the most of such few facts at our disposal.

We have already seen that the One Existence, the Supreme, from Whom all manifested life proceeds, expresses Himself in a threefold manner, as the Trimurti, the Trinity. This of course, is recognised in practically every religion, under many names: e.g., Sat, Chit, Ananda: Brahma, Vishnou, Shiva: Ichchha, Jnana, Kriya: Cochma, Binah, Kepher: Father, Son and Holy Spirit: Power, Wisdom, Love: Will, Wisdom and Activity, etc.etc.

Around the primary Trinity, in the light coming forth from Them, we find Those who are called the Seven. The Hindu speaks of the seven sons of Aditi: they have been called the Seven Spirits in the Sun: in Egypt They were known as the

seven Mystery Gods: in Zoroastrianism they are named the seven Amshaspends,: in Judaism they are the seven Sephiroth: among Christians and Muhammedans, they are the seven Archangels, the seven Spirits before the Throne. In Theosophy they are usually termed the seven Planetary Logoi, each administering, His own department of the solar-system. They have ever been identified with the seven sacred planets, the planets being their physical bodies.

Round the Seven, is a wider circle, there come the Creative Hierarchies, as they are called: the Twelve Creative Orders of the Universe. These are headed by the Twelve Great Gods, that appear in ancient stories, and that are symbolised in the familiar Signs of the Zodiac. For the Zodiac is a very ancient symbolic conception, in which the plane of the solar system is written.

When it is said that a planet "rules" or is Lord of, one of the Signs of the Zodiac, the meaning is that the Planetary Spirit or Logos has dominion over one of the twelve Creative Hierarchies which, under His control and direction build up, His Kingdom, and help the Monads to evolve.

The Twelve Creative Hierarchies are thus intimately concerned with the building, of the universe. These Hierarchies of Intelligence have, in past kalpas or universes, completed their own evolution, and thus become co-workers with the One Will, with Ishvara, in the shaping of a new universe, or Brahmanda. They are the Architects, the Builders of the solar systems. They fill our solar system, and to them, we human beings owe our evolution spiritual, intellectual and physical. It is they who awaken the consciousness of the Monad and his Ray to the "dim sense of others", and of "I", and with this, a thrill of longing for a more clearly defined sense of the "I" and of "others", this being the "individual Will-to-live", which leads them forth into the denser worlds, wherein alone such sharper definition is possible.

At the present stage of evolution, out of the Twelve Creative Hierarchies, four have passed onward into liberation, and one is touching the thresh hold of liberation. Thus five have passed away from the ken of even the greatest and most developed Teachers of our world. There remain, therefore, seven only, with whom we have to deal.

Part of the work which some of them do, *viz.*, the attaching of the permanent atoms , has already been described in Chapters VI and VII. This will now be repeated for the sake of completeness, with such few further particulars as are available, the whole work being classified into the departments for which each of the remaining seven Hierarchies is responsible.

#### A- THE ARUPA CREATIVE ORDERS

1. The First of the Arupa, or Formless, Creative Orders, is described by words connected with fire. They are known as Formless Fiery Breaths, Lords of Fire, Divine Flames, Divine Fires, Fiery Lions, Lions of Life. They are described also as the Life and Heart of the universe, the Atma, the Kosmic Will.

Through them comes the divine Ray of Paramatma, that awakens Atma in the Monads.

2. The Second Order is twofold in its nature, and is known as the "twofold units", representing Fire and Ether. They stand for Kosmic Buddhi, the Wisdom of the system, manifested Reason.

Their function is to arouse Buddhi in the Monads.

3. The Third Order is known as "the Triads", representing Fire, Ether and Water. They stand for Mahat, the Kosmic Manas or Activity.

Their function is to awaken Manas in the Monads

## **B- THE RUPA CREATIVE ORDERS**

4. The Fourth Creative Hierarchy consists of the Monads themselves.

At first sight, it may appear curious that the Monads themselves should be classed with the other Orders, but a little thought will show that the classification, is a proper one , the Monads clearly having a great deal to do with their own evolution. It is by no means outer agencies alone that determine their involution and evolution. Let us briefly recapitulate some of the factors due to the Monads themselves.

[1] Being of the First Logos, His will to manifest is also their will: they are self-moved

[2] It is the Monads who "shine forth" sending out their life, which builds the Ray or Higher Triad, and works through it.

[3] It is the Monads who choose the type of permanent atoms which are to be attached to them.

[4] The Third Outpouring, resulting from which the Causal Body is formed, comes through the Monads themselves.

[5] The Monads themselves pour down their life into and vivify the spirillae In the atoms, both permanent and other.

[6] The Monads, as evolution proceeds, steadily pour down more and more of their lives, gradually getting more closely into touch with their Rays—the Individuality, and also through the Individuality, with the personality.

5. The Fifth Creative Hierarchy is named that of Makara, and has for its symbol, the pentagon. In them the dual spiritual and dual physical aspects of nature appear, the positive and negative, at war with each other. They are the "rebels" of many myths and legends. Some of them are known as Asuras, and were the

fruits of the First Chain. They are beings of great spiritual power and knowledge. Deep within themselves they hide the germ of Ahamkara, the I-making faculty which is necessary for human evolution.

The Fifth Hierarchy guides the vibratory wave from the Aspect of Atma of the Monad to an atom of Atma, which it attaches as a permanent atom.

6. The Sixth Creative Hierarchy contains some who are known as Agnishvattas, and also as the "sixfold Dhyanis". They are the fruit of the Second Planetary Chain.

This Hierarchy includes also great hosts of Devas.

They guide the vibratory wave from the Wisdom aspect of the Monad to the Buddhic permanent atom.

Further they give to man *all* but the Atma and the physical body, and so are called the "givers of the five middle principles". They guide the Monad in obtaining the permanent atoms [including of course the mental unit] connected with these principles, i.e., Buddhi, Manas, Lower Manas, Kama, and the Etheric Double.

They have especially to deal with the intellectual evolution of man.

7. The Seventh Creative Hierarchy contains those known as Lunar Pitris, or Barhishad Pitris,: these are the fruit of the Third Chain.

They have to do with the physical evolution of man.

Also belonging to the Seventh Hierarchy, are vast hosts of Devas, the lower Nature Spirits, who have to do with the actual building of the body of man.

For the convenience of the student, a tabular statement of the Creative Hierarchies is appended.

THE SEVEN CREATIVE HIERARCHIES				
Class	No.	Name	Function of evolution in monads	Notes
ARUPA	1	Fiery breathes	Awaken Atma	
	2	Twofold Units	Awaken Buddhi	
	3	Triads	Awaken Manas	
RUPA	4	Monads	Will to Manifest. Shine forth and build Ray. Choose type of permanent atoms. Channels for Third Outpouring Vivify spirillae of atoms. Influence Individuality and	

		Personality	
5	Makara(including Asuras)	Attach atom of Atma	Asuras were Fruit of First Chain
6	Agnishvatas	Give 5 "Middle principles". Attach 4 permanent atoms and mental unit Concerned with intellectual evolution of man	Fruit of Second Chain
7	Barhishads	Concerned with physical evolution of man	Fruit of Third Chain

## CHAPTER IX

### GROUP SOULS

We have now arrived at the stage where each Monad is provided with a Higher Triad, consisting of a permanent atom of the planes of Atma, Buddhi and Manas, and a Lower Triad consisting of a mental unit, an astral and a physical permanent atom. These particles of matter are, of course, merely nuclei which enable the Monad, through his "ray", to come into touch with the various planes, and to build bodies or vehicles through which he can gather experiences from, and learn to express himself on, those planes of existence.

In order to understand the mechanism by which these results are achieved, we must next study the phenomena known as Group-Souls.

We have already seen that as the atoms of the Lower Triad are attached to the Sutratma, or life-thread, thin films of matter come into existence, separating, the seven main types of triads from one another. Thus are formed the seven primary groups or "rays" of triads which, by repeated division and subdivision, will give rise to large numbers of Group-Souls in the various kingdoms of life.

These seven great types or "rays" of Group-Souls remain separate and distinct, throughout all the vicissitudes of their evolution: that is to say, the seven types evolve in parallel streams, the streams never uniting or merging into one another. The seven types are clearly distinguishable in all kingdoms, the successive forms taken by anyone of them making a connected series of elementals, minerals, vegetables, or animals, as the case may be.

These seven primary Group-Souls appear as vague, filmy forms, floating in the great ocean of matter as balloons might float in the sea. They are seen first on the mental plane, becoming more clearly outlined on the astral plane, and still more so on the physical plane.

They float, one in each of the seven main streams of the Second Life Wave.

Within each Primary Group-Soul there are, of course, innumerable Lower Triads, each connected by the radiant golden thread to its Higher Triad, these again

depending from the overhanging Monad. As yet no golden life web appears round the Triads; this will not come into existence until the mineral kingdom is reached.

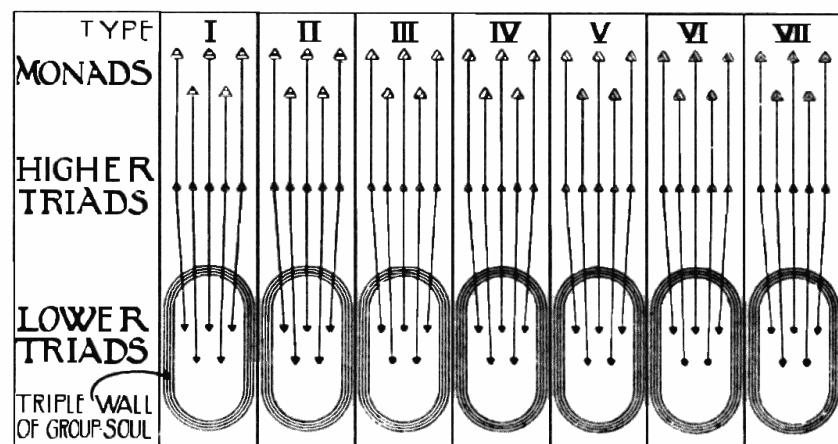


DIAGRAM XIII.—The Seven Primary Group-Souls.

DIAGRAM XIII roughly illustrates the stage now reached. The very small number of Triads, which the limitations of space make it possible to show in the seven Group-Souls, must be considered as representing vastly larger numbers, with, of course, their connected higher

Triads and Monads.

The stage shown in the diagram is that at which the thin film or veil separating, the seven Primary Group-Souls, has received its three layers: these consist of mental essence, astral monadic essence and atomic matter of the physical plane. As already stated, these films or veils will eventually form the containing walls or envelopes of the Group-Souls proper.

It should be noted that these envelopes are formed of matter of the same Matter-group as that to which the Triads themselves belong.

The general plan of the evolutionary process—more strictly the *involutionary* process—is, as we have seen, a gradual differentiation of the great stream of divine life, until, after repeated division and subdivision, definite individualisation as a human being is attained, after which no further subdivision is possible, a human entity being an indivisible unit or "soul".

Group-Souls, which exist in the mineral, vegetable, and animal kingdoms thus represent intermediate stages leading up to complete differentiation into separate human entities or units. Hence in the three kingdoms mentioned, we do not find one soul in a block of mineral, or a plant or an animal. Instead of this, we find one block of life - it we may use such a term - ensouling , a vast quantity of mineral substance, a large number of plants or trees, or a number of animals. Into the details of these we will enter later, confining ourselves for the moment to a consideration of the general function and purpose of the Group-Souls.

The best physical analogy of a Group-Soul is perhaps the oriental one of water in a bucket. If a glassful of water be taken from the bucket, it represents, the soul—or portion of soul—of say , a single plant or animal. For the time being, the water

in the glass is quite separate from that in the bucket, and, moreover, it takes the shape of the glass which contains it.

So may a portion of a Group-Soul occupy and vivify a vegetable or animal form.

An animal, during its life on the physical plane, and for some time after that in the astral world - has a soul, just as separate as a man's; but when the animal comes to the end of its astral life, that soul does not reincarnate in a single body, but returns to the group-soul, which is a kind of reservoir of soul-matter.

The death of the animal would thus, in our analogy, be represented by pouring water from the glass back into the bucket. Just as the water from the glass becomes thoroughly mixed and united with the water in the bucket, so does the portion of the soul from the particular animal become mixed and incorporated, with the total soul in the Group-Soul. And just as it would not be possible, to take again from the bucket another glassful consisting of the same molecules of water, so is it not possible for the same portion of the total soul in the Group Soul to inhabit another particular animal form.

Continuing the analogy further, it is clear that we could fill many glasses with water from the bucket at the same time: equally is it possible for many animal forms to be ensouled and vivified by the same Group-Soul.

Further, if we suppose that any given glassful of water becomes coloured with a distinctive hue of its own, then, when the water is poured back into the bucket , that colouring matter will be distributed throughout the whole of the water in the bucket, the colour of all the water in the bucket being thereby to some extent modified.

If we consider the colouring matter to represent experiences or qualities acquired by a particular animal, then, when the portion of soul vivifying that animal returns to its parent Group-Soul, those experiences or qualities will become part of the general stock of the whole Group-Soul and be shared by every other part of it equally, though in a lesser degree than that in which the experience existed in the particular animal to whom it occurred; *i.e.*, we may say that the experiences concentrated in a particular animal are spread, in a diluted form, over the whole Group-Soul to which the animal is attached.

There is an exact resemblance between the Group-Soul in the Mineral, Vegetable, and Animal Kingdoms, and a human child in its prenatal life. Just as the human child is nourished by the life-stream of the mother, so does the protective envelope of the Group-Soul nourish the lives within it, receiving and distributing the experiences gathered in it.

The circulating life is that of the parent: the young plants or animals are not yet ready for individual life, but must depend on the parent for nourishment. Thus the germinating lives of mineral, vegetable, and animal are nourished by the envelope of elemental and monadic essence, thrilling with Logioic life.

The evolution of lives in these early stages in the Group-Soul, depends upon three factors:

- [a] first, and chiefly, the cherishing life of the Logos;
- [b] the co-operating, guidance of the Devas;
- [c] their own blind pressure against the limits of the enclosing form.

The general mechanism of the process by which, through these three agencies, the vibratory powers of the atoms in the Lower triads are awakened, is as follows:

The Second Logos, acting in the envelope of the Group-Soul, energises the physical permanent atoms. These are plunged, by the action of the devas, into the various conditions offered by the mineral kingdom, where each atom is attached to many mineral particles. The experiences - consisting of heat, cold, blows, pressure, shaking, etc. - through which the mineral substances pass, are conveyed to the attached physical permanent atoms, thus arousing vague answers of sympathetic vibration from the deeply slumbering consciousness within.

When any permanent atom has reached a certain responsiveness, or when a mineral form, *i.e.*, The particles to which the permanent atom is attached, is broken up, the Group-Soul withdraws that atom into itself.

The experiences acquired by that atom—*i.e.*, The vibrations it has been forced to execute - remain in it as powers of vibrating in particular ways, as vibratory powers in short. Then the permanent atom, having lost its embodiment in the mineral form, remains, as we might say, naked in its Group-Soul: here it continues to repeat the vibrations it has learnt, repeating its life experiences, and thus setting up pulses which run through the envelope of the Group-Soul, and are thereby conveyed to the other permanent atoms contained in that Group-Soul. Thus each permanent atom affects and helps all others.

Now another important phenomenon arises. It is clear that those permanent atoms which have had experiences similar in character will be affected more strongly by each other, than will be those whose experiences have been different,. Thus a certain segregation will take place within the Group-Soul, and presently a filmy separating wall will grow inwards from the envelope, dividing these segregated groups from each other.

Reverting to the simile of the water in the bucket, we may conceive of a scarcely perceptible film forming itself across the bucket. At first the water filters through this barrier to some extent: but nevertheless the glasses of water taken out from one side of that barrier are always returned to the same side, so that by degrees the water on one side becomes differentiated from the water on the other side. Then the barrier gradually densifies, and becomes, impenetrable, so that eventually there are two distinct portions of water instead of one.

In similar fashion, the Group-Soul after a time divides itself by fission, and forms two Group-Souls. The process is repeated over and over again, producing, an ever-increasing number of Group-Souls, with contents showing a correspondingly ever-increasing distinction of consciousness, while of course, still sharing certain fundamental characteristics .

The laws according to which permanent atoms in a Group-Soul are plunged into the kingdoms of nature are as yet by no means clear. There are indications, that the evolution of the mineral, vegetable and the lowest part of the animal kingdom belongs rather to the evolution of the earth itself than to that of the Triads, representing the Monads, who are evolving in the solar system and who come, in due course, to the earth to pursue their evolution by utilising, the conditions it affords.

Thus, grass and small plants of every kind seem to be related to the earth itself much as man's hairs are related to his body, and not to be connected with the Monads and their Triads. The life in grass, etc., appears to be that of the Second Logos, which holds them together as forms, whilst the life in the atoms and molecules composing them is, of course that of the Third Logos, modified not only by the Planetary Logos of our system of Chains, but also by a somewhat obscure entity known as the Spirit of the Earth. Thus these kingdoms, while offering a field for the evolution of Monads and their Triads, do not appear to exist by any means solely for that purpose.

Hence we find permanent atoms scattered through the vegetable and mineral kingdoms, though we do not as yet understand the reasons governing their distribution. A permanent atom, for example, may be found in a pearl, a ruby, or a diamond; many will be found scattered through veins of ore and so on. But on the other hand, much mineral substance does not seem to contain any permanent atoms.

Similarly, with short-lived plants. But in plants of long continuance, such as trees, permanent atoms are constantly found. But here again, the life of the tree seems to be more closely related to the Deva evolution than to the evolution of the consciousness to which the permanent atom is attached.

It is, therefore, rather as though advantage were taken of the evolution of life and consciousness in the tree for the benefit of the permanent atom. The permanent atom may thus be said to be there more as a parasite, profiting by the more highly evolved life in which it is bathed. The student must recognise that at the moment our knowledge on these matters is extremely fragmentary.

Having now studied the general nature and functions of Group-Souls, we can pass on to consider more in detail Mineral, Vegetable and Animal Group-Souls, commencing with the Mineral Group-Soul.

## CHAPTER X

### MINERAL GROUP SOULS

**DIAGRAM XIV** is an attempt to illustrate a Mineral Group-Soul. It will be seen that the wall or envelope of the Group-Soul has three layers: the outermost is composed of physical atomic matter; the central one of astral monadic essence; the innermost one of mental elemental essence, *i.e.*, matter of the fourth mental sub-plane.

A mineral Group-Soul may thus be defined as a collection of Triads, enclosed in a triple envelope consisting of mental elemental essence, astral monadic essence, and physical atomic matter.

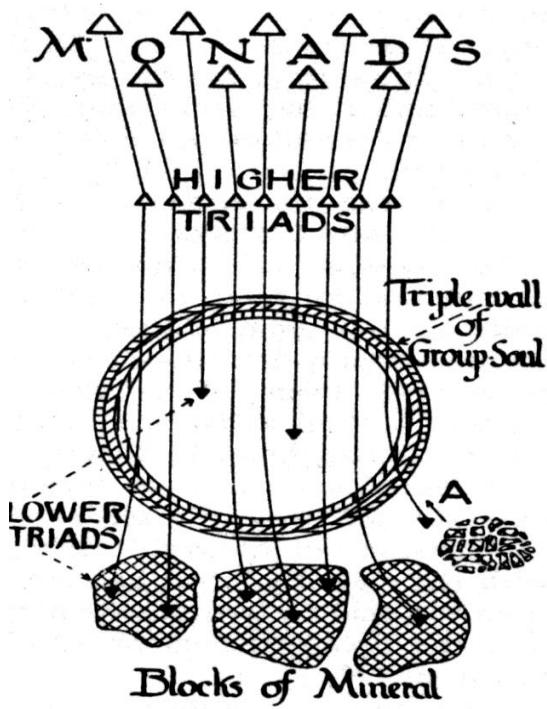
Within the Group-Soul are shown some Lower Triads, attached of course, to their respective Higher Triads, these again being linked to their overshadowing Monads. These Triads within the Group-Soul are not at the moment plunged into any mineral substance.

Below the Group-Soul are shown a number of irregular shapes, which are intended to represent groups or blocks of mineral substances. Within some of these blocks are to be seen some Lower Triads, the lines rising upwards from these indicating that they belong to their parent Group-Soul hovering over them .

On the extreme right of the diagram is shown a block of mineral substance which is supposed to have been in some way shattered, so that it is broken up into fragments . The Lower Triad, which previously was immersed in it, is shown in the act of withdrawal towards its parent Group-Soul, [as described on page 49 of the book ]

The habitat of the Mineral Group-Soul may be said to be that of its densest envelope, *i.e.*, the physical in other words, the most active working of the Mineral Group-Soul is on the physical plane.

Every Lower Triad has to pass through the mineral kingdom, this being the place where matter reaches its grossest form, and where the great Life-Wave reaches the limit of its descent, and turns to begin its upward climbing.



Furthermore, it is physical consciousness that is the first to be awakened: it is on the physical plane that life must turn definitely outwards and recognise contacts with the external world. The consciousness gradually learns to recognise the impacts from without, to refer them to the outer world, and to realise as its own the changes which it undergoes in consequence of those impacts. In other words, it is on the

**DIAGRAM XIV.—A Mineral Group-Soul.**

physical plane that consciousness first becomes Self-consciousness.

By prolonged experiences, the consciousness feels the pleasure or pain arising, from the impacts, identifies itself with that pleasure or pain, and begins to regard as not itself that which touches its external surface. Thus is formed, the first rough distinction between "Not-I" and "I".

As experiences accumulate, the "I" will retreat ever inwards, throughout the whole of its future evolution, one veil of matter after another being relegated outwards as belonging to the "Not-I". But, while its -----connotations steadily change, the fundamental distinction between subject and object ever remains. "I" is the consciousness which wills, thinks, feels, acts; "Not-I" is that *about* which the consciousness wills, thinks, feels, or acts.

Consciousness thus awakens on the physical plane, as we have said, and its expression is through the physical permanent atom. In this atom lies sleeping : "It sleeps in the mineral," according to a well known aphorism; and therein some degree of awakening must take place, so that it may be roused, out of this dreamless sleep, and become sufficiently active to pass on into the next stage - that of the vegetable kingdom, where it is destined to "dream".

The responses of consciousness to external stimuli in the mineral kingdom are far greater than many may quite realise, some of these responses indicating, that there is even a dawning of consciousness in the astral permanent atom. Thus chemical elements exhibit distinct mutual attractions, and chemical compounds are continually being broken up, when another element intrudes. Two elements, forming a silver salt, for example, will suddenly separate from one another, in the presence of hydrochloric acid, the silver uniting with the chlorine from the acid, leaving the hydrogen from the acid to form a new partnership or compound with the discarded element, which formerly was united to silver.

When such active interchanges take place, there is a slight stir in the astral atom, in consequence of the violent physical vibrations set up by the formation of, and a wrenching apart of, intimate ties.

Thus astral consciousness is slowly aroused from the physical, a little cloud of astral matter being drawn round the astral permanent atom by these slight thrillings. This astral matter is, however, very loosely held, and seems to be quite unorganised.

At this stage, there does not seem to be any vibration in the mental unit.

No detailed list has as yet been made of minerals, plants or animals, of the Seven Rays or types; but the following list of jewels and minerals is a beginning of the classification which will no doubt some day be made.

RAY	Jewel at head of Ray	Other jewels on same Ray
1	Diamond	Rock Crystal

<b>2</b>	<b>Sapphire</b>	<b>Lapis Lazuli, Turquoise, Sodalite</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Emerald</b>	<b>Aquamarine, Jade, Malachite</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Jasper</b>	<b>Chalcedony, Agate, Serpentine</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Topaz</b>	<b>Citrine, Steatite</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Ruby</b>	<b>Tourmaline, Garnet, Carnelian, Carbuncle, Thulite, Rhodonite</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Amethyst</b>	<b>Porphyry, Violane</b>

## CHAPTER XI

### VEGETABLE GROUP SOULS

A VEGETABLE Group-Soul is illustrated in **DIAGRAM XV**. It will be observed that the wall of the Group-Soul has now two layers only; the outer one is composed of astral monadic essence, i.e., of astral atomic matter; the inner one of mental elemental essence, of matter of the fourth mental sub-plane. The physical layer, which the envelope of the Mineral Group-Soul possessed, has thus disappeared, as though absorbed, by the contents of the Group-Soul, for the strengthening of their own etheric bodies.

Within the Group-Soul are shown some Lower Triads, attached to their respective Higher Triads, these being again linked with their overshadowing Monads. The Lower Triads within the Group-Soul are not at the moment directly associated with any plant life.

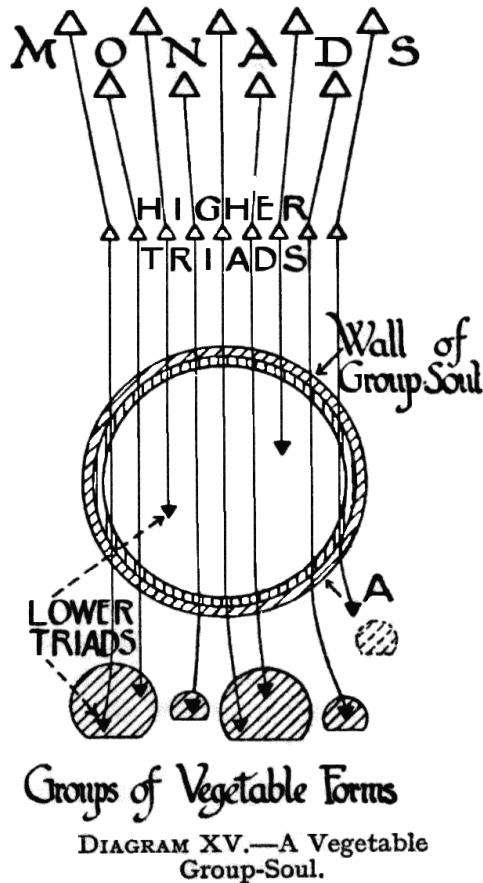
Below the Group-Soul are shown a number of forms which are intended to indicate groups of plants or vegetable lives. Within some of these are found some Lower Triads, the lines between these and the Group-Soul indicating that they belong to the parent Group-Soul which hovers over them.

As in the case of the Mineral Group-Soul, at A, on the extreme right of the diagram, there is shown a plant form which is supposed to have been destroyed as an organism; the Lower Triad, which was embedded in it, is released, on the destruction of the form, the Group-Soul then withdrawing it back into itself, as indicated by the arrow in the diagram.

The activity of the Group-Soul is now transferred from the physical to the astral, plane, its work being the nourishment of the astral bodies of the lives it contains.

Precisely as in the case of the Mineral Group-Souls, we may repeat that it is not to be supposed that every blade of grass, every plant, every tree, has a permanent atom within it, evolving to humanity during the life of our system. It is rather that the vegetable kingdom, which exists on its own account, and for other purposes, also affords the field of evolution for these permanent atoms, the Devas guiding the permanent atoms to one plant form after another, so that they may experience the vibrations that affect the vegetable world and again store up

these as vibratory powers in themselves as they did whilst, they were embedded in the mineral kingdom.



The method of interchange of vibrations, and consequently of segregation, continue as before. The Group-Souls therefore constantly divide and subdivide, becoming thus not only more numerous, but also more different from one another in their leading characteristics.

During the time that is spent in the vegetable kingdom, there is more activity, perceptible in the astral permanent atom, than was the case during the period spent in the mineral kingdom. In consequence, the astral permanent atom attracts round itself astral matter, which is arranged by the Devas in a rather more definite way. In the long life of a forest tree, the growing aggregation of astral matter develops itself in all directions as the astral form of the tree. That astral form experiences vibrations, which cause "massive" pleasure or discomfort, set up in the physical tree by sunshine and storm, wind and rain, heat and cold, etc., these experiences being passed on, to some extent, to the permanent atom embedded in that particular tree. As stated before, when

the tree-form perishes as a tree, the permanent atom retreats within the Group-Soul taking with it its rich store of experiences, which it shares in the manner previously described, with the other Triads in the Group-Soul.

Furthermore, as the consciousness becomes more responsive in the astral, it sends little thrills down to the physical plane; these give rise to feeling which, though really derived from the astral, are yet felt as though in the physical.

When there has been a long separate life, as, for example, in a tree, there will be a slight arousing of the mental unit, which will gather round it a little cloud of mental matter; on this the recurrence of seasons, etc., will slowly impress itself as a faint memory, which becomes a dim anticipation.

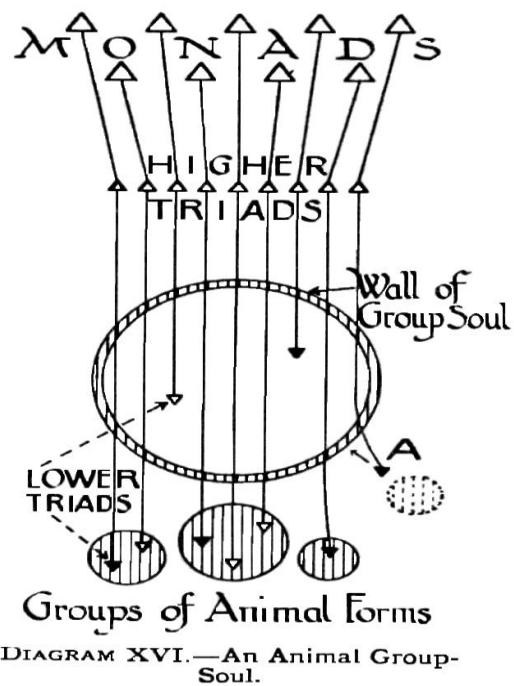
As a general rule, in fact, it appears that each Lower Triad, during the later stages of its evolution in the vegetable world, will have a prolonged experience, in a single form, in order that some thrills of mental life may be experienced, and the Lower Triad thus be prepared to profit, in due time, by the wandering life of an animal. The rule however, is not universal, for it also appears that, in some cases, the passage into the animal kingdom is made at an earlier stage, so that the first thrill in the mental unit occurs in some of stationary forms of animal life,

and in very lowly animal organisms. For conditions, similar to those described as existing in the mineral and kingdoms, appear to prevail also in the lowest types of animals. In other words, the kingdoms appear to overlap to some extent.

## CHAPTER XII

### ANIMAL GROUP SOULS

An animal Group-Soul is illustrated in DIAGRAM XVI. As will be seen from the diagram, the envelope of the Group-Soul now has but a single layer, consisting of elemental essence of the fourth mental sub-plane. The astral layer, which the Vegetable Group-Soul possessed, has been absorbed for the strengthening of the vague astral bodies of the Triads within the Group-Soul.



The activity of the Group-Soul is now transferred a plane higher to the lower mental plane, and it nourishes the inchoate mental bodies of the contained Triads thus gradually strengthening these into outlines less vague.

**DIAGRAM XVI** is on lines exactly similar to those of **DIAGRAMS XIV** and **XV**. At "A" is an animal form which, as a form, has been destroyed. Consequently, the Lower Triad from it is being withdrawn into the Group-Soul as indicated by the arrow in the diagram.

Just as in the earlier kingdoms, the Devas guide the Triads into animal forms. Also, as in the mineral and vegetable kingdoms, the lower forms of animal life, such as

microbes, amoebae, hydrae, etc., show a permanent atom only as a visitor, now and again, and obviously in no way depend upon it for their own life and growth, nor do they break up when the permanent atom, is withdrawn. These animal forms are thus merely hosts, which from time, to time receive permanent atoms as passing guests: in no sense are they bodies formed round a permanent atom.

In fact, before the Devas, at a much later stage, build forms round these permanent atoms, the atoms in the animal kingdom must have received and stored up many experiences.

Moreover, it is noteworthy at this stage, that the golden life-web in no way represents the organisation of the body of the host. The life-web seems rather, to act as rootlets act in soil, attaching to

themselves particles of soil and sucking from them the nourishment they require for the organism they serve.

Needless to say, in the animal kingdom, the permanent atoms receive far more varied vibrations than in the lower kingdoms: consequently, they differentiate more quickly. As this differentiation proceeds, the multiplication of Group-Souls goes on with increasing rapidity, the number of Lower Triads in any one Group-Soul of course steadily diminishing.

DIAGRAM XVII illustrates the fission of an animal Group-Soul. Mineral and vegetable Group-Souls, as already described, also divide by a similar process of fission.

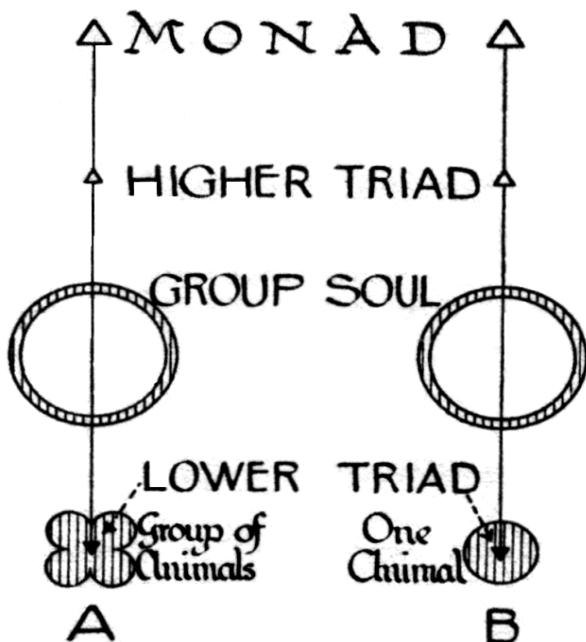


DIAGRAM XVII.—Fission of an Animal Group-Soul.

(A) Attached to a group of animals.  
(B) Attached to one animal.

Again and again the Group-Soul divides, until eventually each Lower Triad possesses its own separate envelope. The Triad is still within the enveloping case of elemental essence, which protects and nourishes it. It is drawing near to "Individualisation", and the term Group-Soul is no longer strictly applicable to it, because one Lower Triad clearly is not a "group". It is a single Lower Triad which has separated off from the "group" to which previously it belonged.

**DIAGRAM XVIIIA** shows the stage which has now been reached: in the Group-Soul envelope there is but one Lower Triad; but there are still several animal forms attached to the Group-Soul. The next stage is reached when there is only *one* animal form attached to the Group-Soul. This is indicated in Diagram XVIII-B. Large numbers of the higher domestic animals have reached this stage, and have really become separate entities, incarnating in a succession of animal bodies; although they have not as yet, of course, attained to the possession of a causal body - the true mark of individualisation.

Before passing on to describe the very interesting process of individualisation, we may here note an analogy between the animal, when it is approaching individualisation, and the human ante-natal life. The animal at this stage corresponds to the last two months of the human foetus.

Now it is known that a seven-months child may be born and may survive, but it will be stronger healthier, more vigorous, if it profits yet another two months by its mother's shielding and nourishing life. So is it also better, for the normal development of the ego, that it should not burst too soon the envelope of the Group-Soul, but should remain within it, still absorbing life through it, and strengthening from its constituents the finest part of its own mental body. When that mental body has reached the limit of growth possible, under these shielded conditions, then the time is ripe for individualisation to take place.

Knowledge of these facts has sometimes caused occultists to warn people, who are very fond of animals, not to be exaggerated in their affection, or to show it in unwise ways. For it is possible that the growth of the animal may be unhealthily forced—just as we know the development of a child may be unhealthily forced—and the individualisation of the animal thus be hastened out of due time. It is obviously far better to let an animal develop naturally, until, it is fully ready for individualisation, than to force it artificially, and cause it to become an individual before it is really ready to stand by itself, and live in the world as a separate human entity.

It must be recollected that we are at present little more than half way through the Fourth Round of the Fourth Chain, *i.e.*, a little more than half way through the evolution of this Chain of worlds, and that it is only at the end of this evolution, that the animal kingdom is expected to attain humanity. Hence, any animal which is now attaining, or even approaching individualisation, must be very remarkably in advance of the others, and the number of such cases is consequently very small. Nevertheless, they do occasionally occur. Close association with man is necessary to produce this result.

We may note two factors at work:

- 1] the emotions and thoughts of the man act constantly upon those of the animal, and tend to raise him to a higher level both emotionally and intellectually;
- 2] the animal, if kindly treated, develops, devoted affection for his human friend, and also unfolds his intellectual powers in trying to understand that friend and

anticipate his wishes.

It has been found that individualisation, which lifts an entity definitely from the animal kingdom into the human, can take place only for certain kinds of animals,--one for each of the seven great types or "rays". In fact, it is only among domesticated creatures, and by no means among all classes, even of these, that individualisation occurs. Of these classes, we already know certainly the elephant, the monkey, the dog and cat. The horse is possibly a fifth.

Up to each of these heads of types leads a long line of wild animals, which has not been fully investigated. It is known, however, that wolves, foxes, jackals, and all such creatures culminate in the dog: lions, tigers, leopards, jaguars and ocelots culminate in the domestic cat.

It should be noted also that an animal of any given type, that individualises into a human being, will become a man of that same type, and no other.

Both bees and ants [which together with wheat, were brought from Venus by the Lords of the Flame] live in a manner quite different from purely terrestrial creatures, in that with them a Group-Soul animates the entire ant or bee community, so that the community acts with a single will, and its different units are actually members of one body, in the sense in which hands and feet are members of the human frame. It might indeed be said of them that they have not only a Group-Soul, but a group-body also.

The investigations of M.Maeterlinck appear to confirm the above fully. He writes:-

--

"The population of the hive, the ant hill and the termitary, seems to be one individual, one single living creature, whose organs, composed of innumerable cells, are disseminated only in appearance, but remain always subject to the same energy or vital personality, the same central law. By virtue of this collective immortality, the decease of hundreds of termites that are immediately succeeded by others, does not affect or touch the central, being. For millions of years, the same insect has gone on living, with the result that not a single one of its experiences has been lost. There has been no interruption of its existence, or disappearance of its memories; an individual memory has remained, and this has never ceased to function or to centralise every acquisition of the collective soul. They bathe in the same vital fluid as the cells of our own being; but in their case this fluid would seem to be much more diffuse, more elastic, more subtle, more psychical, or more ethereal than that of our body. And this central unity is no doubt bound up with the universal soul of the bee, and probably with what is actually the universal soul". [ From the "Life of the white ant" by Maurice Maeterlink, pages 199-207 ]

With regard to the numbers of separate creatures attached to a Group-Soul, there may be quadrillions of flies and mosquitoes; hundreds and thousands of rabbits or sparrows; a few thousands of such animals as the lions and tiger,

leopard, deer, wolf, or wild boar. Among domesticated animals such as sheep and oxen the number is still smaller.

In the case of the seven animals from whom individualisation is possible, there are usually only a few hundred attached to each Group-Soul, and as their development continues, they break up rapidly. Whilst there may be a thousand pariah dogs attached to one Group-Soul, in the case of a really intelligent pet dog or cat there may be not more than ten or twelve bodies over which the Group-Soul hovers.

Animal Group-Souls are greatly affected and assisted by the influences which the Masters of Wisdom are continually pouring out, affecting to some extent everything within a wide radius.

## CHAPTER XIII

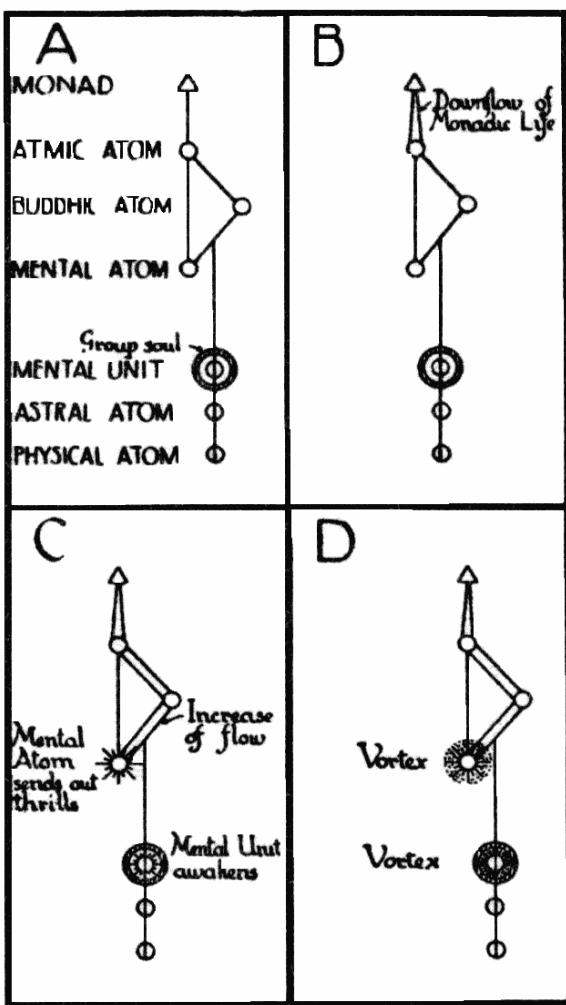
### INDIVIDUALISATION: ITS MECHANISM AND PURPOSE

We have now arrived at the stage where a change of vast importance to the evolving life is about to take place—viz., the individualisation of the animal the formation of the causal body, the entry into the human kingdom.

In order to understand the whole phenomenon, and to recognise its full significance, let us briefly recapitulate the stages already passed. We saw first that the Monads, which derive their being from the First Logos, come forth and dwell on the Anupadaka Plane during all ages over which we have glanced. With the help of Devas, each Monad has appropriated to himself the three permanent atoms which represent him as a Jivatma on the planes of Atma, Buddhi and Manas, these three forming the Higher Triad. In addition, to each Higher Triad has been attached also a Lower Triad, consisting of a Mental Unit, and an Astral and a Physical Permanent Atom.

The Lower Triad has been plunged successively into the earlier kingdoms of life, shielded and nourished by its Group-Soul. By repeated subdivision, brought about by differentiation of experience, each Lower Triad has now become possessed of an envelope or sac to itself, derived from the original Group-Soul. After a succession of experiences in a series of single animal forms, the Lower Triad is at length sufficiently awakened to warrant a further step being taken in the evolutionary scheme, a step which will bring to it a further instalment, if we may use such an expression, or aspect, of the Divine Life.

Just as the human foetus is nourished by the mother in her womb until such time as the child is strong enough to live its own independent existence in the outer world, so is the Triad, shielded and nourished by the Group-Soul, the medium by which the Second, Logos protects and nourishes His infant children, until the Triad is strong enough to be launched into the outer world as a self-contained unit of life, pursuing its own independent evolution.



**DIAGRAM XIX.—Individualisation**

Thus is reached the term of ante-natal life of the Jivatma [the Higher Triad of Atma,Buddhi,Manas] enclosing the life of the Monad, the time being now ripe, for his birth into the lower world. The mother-life of the Second Logos has built for him the bodies in which he can live as a separate entity in the world of forms, and he has to come into direct possession of those bodies and take up his human evolution.

Up to this point, all communication of the Monad with the lower planes has been brought through the Sutratma or thread-self, on which the permanent, atoms are strung [see **DIAGRAM XIX-A**] But now the time has come for a fuller communication than is represented by this delicate thread in its original form. The Sutratma accordingly widens out [ see **DIAGRAM XIX-B**] the Ray from the Monad glows and increases, assuming more the form of a funnel: "the thread between the Silent Watcher ---and his shadow becomes more strong and radiant" [*The Secret Doctrine*,Volume I,page 285].

This downflow of monadic life is accompanied by much increased flow, between the buddhic and manasic permanent atoms [see **DIAGRAM-XIX-C**]

The manasic permanent atom awakens, sending out thrills in every direction. Other manasic atoms and molecules gather round it [see **DIAGRAM XIX-D**], and a whirling vortex is formed on the three upper sub-planes of the mental plane. A similar whirling motion takes place in the cloudy mass surrounding the mental unit which, as we have seen, is enveloped in the Group-Soul.

The wall of the Group Soul is then torn asunder, and caught up into the vortex, above, [see **DIAGRAM XX-A**]. Here it is disintegrated, being resolved into matter of the third mental sub-plane, and, as the whirlpool subsides, it is formed into a delicate, filmy envelope, this being the causal body [see **DIAGRAM XX- B**].

In describing this process, the illustration usually given in the East is that of a waterspout. There we have a great cloud hovering above the sea, on the surface

of which waves are constantly forming and moving. Presently from the cloud is extended an inverted cone of violently,, whirling vapour, like a great finger.

Underneath this, a vortex is rapidly formed in the ocean; but instead of being, a depression in its surface, as in an ordinary whirlpool, it is a whirling cone rising above that surface.

Steadily the two draw closer and closer together, until they come so near that the power of attraction is strong enough to overleap the intervening space, and suddenly a great column of mingled water and vapour is formed where nothing of the kind existed before.

In just the same way, the animal Group-Souls are constantly throwing parts of themselves into incarnation, like the temporary waves on the surface of the sea. At last, after the process of differentiation has continued to the maximum possible, a time comes when one of the waves rises high enough to enable the hovering cloud to effect junction with it. Then it is drawn up into a new existence, neither in the cloud nor in the sea, but between the two, and partaking, of the nature of both. Thus it is separated from the Group-Soul, of which hitherto it has formed a part, and falls back again into the sea no more. Technically expressed, the life of the animal, working in lower mental matter, is whirled up to meet the downpouring life of the Monad, expressed through higher mental or causal matter.

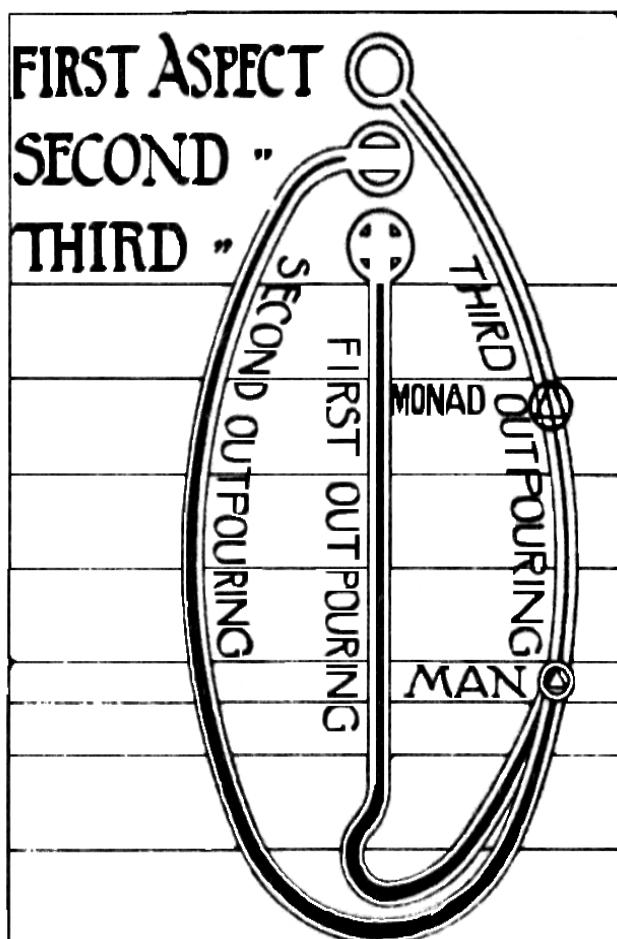


DIAGRAM XXI.—The Three Out-pourings.

own plane, while the lower bodies approach him, brooding over them through his own evolution. As he meets him, comes into union with it, fertilising it, the vehicle of the individual.

of the causal body, is known as derives from the First Logos, the so, as we have seen, the Monads

ng an individual human being isiram opposite page 38 in *Man 'hakras*. This diagram we have n accordance with the further *Masters and The Path*.

The explanation of **DIAGRAM XXI** is as follows:--

The First Life Wave or Outpouring, from the Third Logos or Aspect, plunges straight down into matter, the line in the drawing, indicating this, growing heavier and darker as it descends , showing how the Holy Spirit vivifies the matter of the various planes, first building the atoms, and then aggregating the atoms into elements [ as described in Chapter V ] .

Into that matter so vivified, the Second Life Wave, or Outpouring, from the Second Logos or Aspect, God the Son, descends through the First, Second, and Third Elemental Kingdoms, down to the mineral kingdom; then it ascends through the vegetable and animal to the human kingdom, where it meets the downward- reaching power of the First Logos—the Third Outpouring, from the First Logos, or Aspect.

Meanwhile the force of the Third Logos, the First Outpouring, from the Third Aspect, after touching its lowest point, also rises again. On this path of return, or ascent, it is Kundalini, and it works in the bodies of evolving creatures, in intimate contact with the Primary or Life- Force, the two acting together, to bring the creature to the point where it can receive the Outpouring, of the First Logos, and become an ego, a human being, and still carry on the vehicles even after that. Thus we may say that we draw God's mighty power from the earth beneath as well as from heaven above, and are children of the earth as well as the sun. The two forces meet in us, and work together for our evolution. We cannot have one without the other, but if one is greatly in excess there are serious dangers. Hence , incidentally, the risk of any development of the deeper layers of Kundalini before the life in man is pure and refined.

Whilst all three Outpourings are truly the actual Life of God Himself, yet there is a vital and important distinction between the First and Second Outpourings, on the one hand and the Third Outpouring on the other hand. For the First and Second Outpourings have come down slowly and gradually through all the sub-planes, drawing round themselves the matter of each of these, and enmeshing themselves in it so thoroughly that it is scarcely possible, to discern them for what they are, to recognise them as Divine Life at all.

But the Third Outpouring flashes straight down from its source without involving itself in any way in the intermediate matter. It is the pure white light uncontaminated by anything through which it has passed.

Furthermore, although in the diagram, as originally published, the Third Outpouring, was shown as coming forth *directly* from the Logos, yet it has in fact [as we saw in Chapter IV ] issued from Him long ago, and is hovering at an intermediate point, *i.e.*, On the second or Anupadaka plane, where we know it as the Monad. We have therefore, ventured to modify the original diagram by inserting the triangle, representative of the Monad, in its appropriate place in the stream of the Third Outpouring.

This – "monadic inflow"---resulting in the evolution of the Monad from the animal into the human kingdom, continued up to the middle of the Fourth Race [the Atlantean], the human population thus continually receiving fresh recruits. This point represents the middle of the scheme of evolution in our Planetary Chain, and after it has passed, very few animals attain individualisation. An animal who does succeed in individualising is as far in advance of his fellows, as is the human being who attains Adeptship in advance of the average, man. Both are doing, at the middle point of evolution, what they are expected to be able to do only at the end of it. Those who achieve only at the normal time, at the end of the Seventh round, will approach their goal so gradually that there will be little or no struggle.

The Secret Doctrine, Volume I, page 205, refers to this matter when it states that after the "central turning point", of the cycle of evolution, "no more Monads can enter the Human kingdom. The door is closed for this cycle".

The student will observe that the Third Outpouring differs from others in another important respect, in that whilst the First and Second Outpourings affect thousands or millions simultaneously, the Third Outpouring comes to each one individually, only as that one is ready to receive it.

The Third Outpouring, as we have seen, has already descended as far as the Buddhic world, but comes no farther until the upward leap is made by the soul of the animal from below. Then the two flash together, and form the ego as a permanent individuality, in the manner described.

Whilst we speak of the individuality of man as being permanent, it must be understood that such permanence is relative only, for at a far later stage in evolution the man transcends it, and reaches back to the divine unity from which he came. This matter will be dealt with in a later chapter.

Recapitulating briefly, we see that the Logos sends forth three mighty waves of His Life, through His three Aspects in succession: the first shapes and ensouls matter; the second imparts qualities and builds forms; the third carries down the human Monad to unite with the forms prepared by the second.

The student should note that previous to individualisation, the fragment of the Group-Soul has played the part of the ensouling force. After individualisation, however, that which was the Group-Soul is converted into the causal body, thus becoming the vehicle which is ensouled by the Divine Spark which has descended into it from the higher world.

Thus that which hitherto has been the ensouling life becomes in turn the ensouled, for it builds itself into a form, symbolised in ancient mythology by the Greek idea of the Crater or Cup, and by the mediaeval story of the Holy Grail. For the Grail or Cup is the perfected result of all that lower evolution, into which is poured the wine of the Divine Life, so that the soul of man may be born. Thus, as has been said, that which had previously been the animal *soul* becomes in the

case of man the causal *body*, occupied by the ego or human soul. All that has been learned in its evolution is thus transferred to this new centre of life.

Now that the causal body has been formed, the Higher or Spiritual Triad has a permanent vehicle for further evolution. When the consciousness in due time becomes able to function freely in this vehicle, the Higher Triad will be able to control and direct, far more effectively than before, the evolution, of the lower vehicles.

The earlier efforts at control are not, of course, of a very intelligent description, any more than the first movements of an infant are intelligent; although we know that there is an intelligence connected with them. The Monad is now quite literally, born on the physical plane; but he must be regarded as a baby there, a true Individuality, but an infant ego, and he will have to pass through an immense period of time before his power over the physical body will be anything but infantile.

The Soul or Ego we may consider as that which individualises the Universal, Spirit, which focusses the Universal Light into a single point; which is as it were, a receptacle into which is poured the Spirit; so that which in Itself is universal, poured into this receptacle *appears* as separate: always identical in its essence, but separated in its manifestation. The purpose of this separation is, as we have seen, that an individual may develop and grow; that there may be an individualised life potent on every plane of the Universe; that it may know on the physical and other planes as it knows on the spiritual planes, and have no break in consciousness; that it may make for itself the vehicles that it needs for acquiring consciousness beyond its own plane, and then may gradually purify them one by one until they no longer act as blinds or as hindrances, but as pure and translucent media through which all knowledge on every plane may come.

The process of individualisation, however, should not be conceived as merely the making of a form or receptacle, and then pouring something into it, so that that which is poured at once takes the definite outline and shape of the vessel. The real phenomenon is more analogous to the building of a solar system from a nebula. Out of the primeval matter of space, a slight mist appears too delicate almost to be called even a mist: the mist grows gradually denser as the particles aggregate more closely together; eventually shapes are formed within the mist, which, as time goes on, become more definite, until a system is formed, with a central sun and planets around it.

So is the coming of Spirit into individualisation. It is like the faint appearance of a shadow in the universal void; the shadow becomes a mist, which grows clearer and more definite, until eventually an individual comes into existence. The Soul, or individual, is thus not a thing complete at first, plunging like a diver into the ocean of matter: rather is it slowly densified and builded, until out of the Universal it becomes the individual, which ever grows as its evolution proceeds.

Thus the Third Outpouring makes within each man that distinctive "spirit of the man which goeth upward", in contradistinction to "the spirit of the beast which goeth downward"—which, being interpreted, means that while the soul of the animal pours back after death of the body into the Group-Soul to which it belongs, the divine spirit in man cannot so fall back again, but rises ever onward and upward towards the Divinity from Whom it came.

As has already been stated, the divine life represented by the Third Life Wave appears to be unable of itself to descend lower than the Buddhic plane, where it hovers like a mighty cloud, waiting for an opportunity of effecting, a junction with life of the Second Outpouring, which is rising to meet it.

Now although this cloud seems to exercise a constant attraction upon the essence below it, yet the effort which makes the union possible must be made from below. With the nature of this effort we shall deal in the next chapter.

The junction of the Third with the First and Second Outpourings is the beginning of the intellectual evolution, the coming of the Ego to take possession of his physical tabernacle, and to link to that tabernacle the Spirit which has brooded over it, which has by its subtle influence shaped and fashioned it.

Of this, H.P.Blavatsky says: "There exists in nature a triple evolutionary scheme, for the formation of the three periodical Upadhis; or rather three separate, schemes of evolution, which in our system are inextricably and inter blended at every point-----

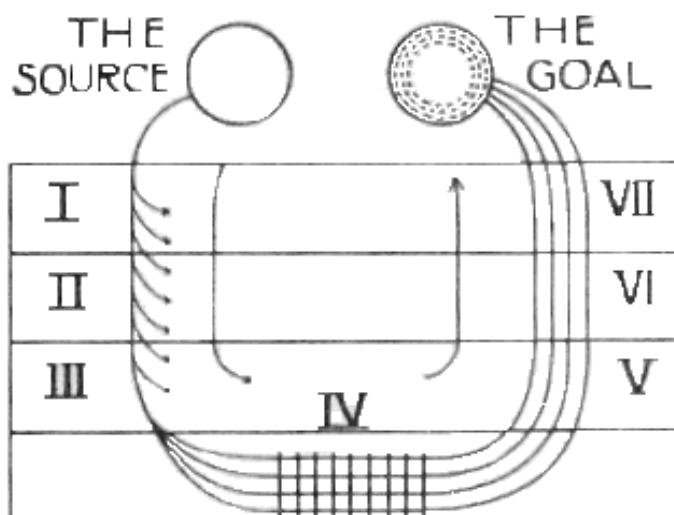
- I. The Monadic, as the name implies, is concerned with the growth and development into still higher phases of activity of the Monads, in conjunction with;
- II. The Intellectual, represented by the Manasa-Dhyans [ the Solar Devas, or the Agnishvatta Pitris ], the 'givers of intelligence and consciousness ' to man; and:
- III. The Physical represented, by the Chhayas of the Lunar Pitris, round which Nature has concreted the present physical body.....It is the union of these three streams in him, which makes him the complex being he now is" [ *The Secret Doctrine* ,Volume I ,pages 203-204.]

"Man " has well been defined in Occultism as that being in the universe, in whatever part of the universe he may be, in whom highest Spirit and lowest Matter are joined together by *intelligence*, thus ultimately making a manifested God, who will go forth to conquer through the illimitable future that stretches before him.

Man himself, the reincarnating ego, should preferably be considered as the *Thinker*, rather than as *Mind* ; for the word Thinker suggests an individual Entity, whereas the word Mind suggests rather a vague, diffused generality.

If we consider the phases of involution and evolution in broad outline, we may think of them as consisting of seven stages. During three the Spirit descends. As it descends, it broods over Matter, imparting qualities, powers and attributes. The fourth stage stands alone, for in it Matter, now imbued with various powers and attributes, comes into manifold relations with the informing Spirit, which now enters it. This is the great battle of the universe, the conflict between Spirit and Matter, the battle of Kurukshetra, of the vast hosts of the opposing armies. In this part of the field is the point of balance. The Spirit, coming into innumerable relations with Matter, is at first overpowered; then comes the point of balance, when neither has the advantage over the other; then slowly the Spirit begins to triumph over Matter, so that, when the fourth stage is over, Spirit is master of Matter, and is ready for his ascent through the three stages that complete the seven.

In these, the Spirit organises the Matter which he has mastered and ensouled, turns it to his own purposes, shapes it for his own expression, so that Matter may become the means whereby all the powers of the Spirit shall be made manifest and active. The last three stages are thus taken up by the spiritual ascent. In tabular form, the seven stages may be indicated thus:



**DIAGRAM XXII.—The seven Stages of Involution and Evolution.**

<b>The 7 Stages of Involution and Evolution</b>
During Stages I, II and III Spirit descends, imparting qualities (indicated by the arrows branching out laterally) to Matter.
During Stage IV Spirit and Matter are in conflict, indicated by the two opposing arrows, and by the cross-lines, symbolising the battleground of life.
During Stages V, VI and VII Spirit ascends, gradually attaining mastery over Matter.
The Diagram also attempts to portray the splitting up of the line of Spirit, multiplicity thus emerging from unity, and the return of Spirit to the level of its

**source, enriched by its experiences with, and mastery over, matter**

**DIAGRAM XXII** is an attempt to illustrate the same ideas in graphic form.

The principle of which this is a particular example, is one which recurs over and over again throughout the process of nature: for example, in the cycle of human reincarnation. The student is therefore recommended to grasp the principle clearly, as it should help him in his understanding of many other portions of the "Ancient Wisdom".

The whole course of the movement downwards into matter is called in India the *pravritti marga* or the path of outgoing. When the lowest point necessary has been reached, the man enters upon the *nivritti marga*, or the path of return. The man returns from his day's work of harvesting, bearing his sheaves with him, in the shape of the fully awakened consciousness, which enables him to be far more useful than he could have been before his descent into matter.

In the course of man's development , the intellectual evolution must for a time obscure the spiritual evolution. The spiritual has to give way before the rush of intelligence, and retire into the background for a while, leaving intelligence to grasp the reins and guide the next stages of evolution.

The Monad will begin silently and subtly to inform the intelligence, working through it indirectly, stimulating it by its energies, evolving it by a ceaseless flow of influence from within, while intelligence grapples with the lower vehicles, to be at first conquered and enslaved, but eventually to master them and to rule.

Thus for a time the spirit is obscured, maturing in silence, while the warrior intellect carries on the struggle: the time will eventually come when intellect will lay its spoils at the feet of spirit, and man, becoming divine, shall reign on 'earth' i.e., On the lower planes, as their master, no longer their slave.

The intellect is essentially the separative principle in man, that marks off the " I " from the "not I ", that is conscious of itself, and sees all else as outside itself and alien. It is the combative, struggling, self-assertive principle, and from the plane of the intellect downwards, the world presents a scene of conflict, bitter in proportion as the intellectmingles in it. Even the passion-nature is spontaneously combative only when it is stirred by the feeling of desire, and finds anything standing between itself and the object of its desire. It becomes more and more aggressive, as the mind inspires its activity, for then it seeks to provide for the gratification of future desires, and tries to appropriate more and more from the stores of nature. But the intellect appears to be spontaneously combative, its very nature being to assert itself as different from others. Hence we find in intellect the root of separateness, the ever-springing source of divisions among men.

Unity, on the other hand, is at once felt when the buddhic plane is reached. But with that we shall deal in a much later chapter.

The student, however, must not form the idea that man is *only* that which functions, as mind or intellect in his causal body. In essence, as we have seen, man is a Spark of the Divine Fire, *i.e.*, the Monad, and that Monad manifests its three aspects as Spirit in the world of Atma, as Intuition in the world of Buddhi, and as Intelligence in the world of Manas. It is these *three aspects taken together which constitute the ego* which inhabits the causal body, which was built from the fragment of the Group-Soul. Thus man, as we know him, though in reality a Monad residing in the monadic world, shows himself as an ego in the higher mental world, manifesting the three aspects of himself, which we designate Spirit, Intuition and Intelligence.

The ego is the man during the human stage of evolution; he is the nearest correspondence, in fact, to the ordinary and somewhat unscientific conception, of the soul. He lives unchanged [except for his growth] from the moment, of individualisation until humanity is transcended and merged in divinity. He is in no way affected by what we call birth and death, for what we commonly consider as his life is, of course only a day in his real life. The lower bodies, which are born and die, are merely garments, which he puts on for the purposes of a certain part of his evolution.

A concise way of stating the case is to say that man *is* an immortal individuality, who *has* a mortal personality.

In the whole of man's existence, there are three definite changes which outweigh all others in importance and significance.

[1] The first of these is when, he individualises and enters the human kingdom, emerging from the animal, and beginning his career as an ego.

[2] The second is the passing of the First of the great initiations.

[3] The third is the attainment of Adeptship.

With [2] and [3] we shall deal in later chapters: here we are concerned only with [1]---the attainment of individualisation.

To gain this individuality is the aim of animal evolution, and its development serves a definite purpose. That purpose is to make a strong individual centre through which eventually the force of the Logos can be poured out.

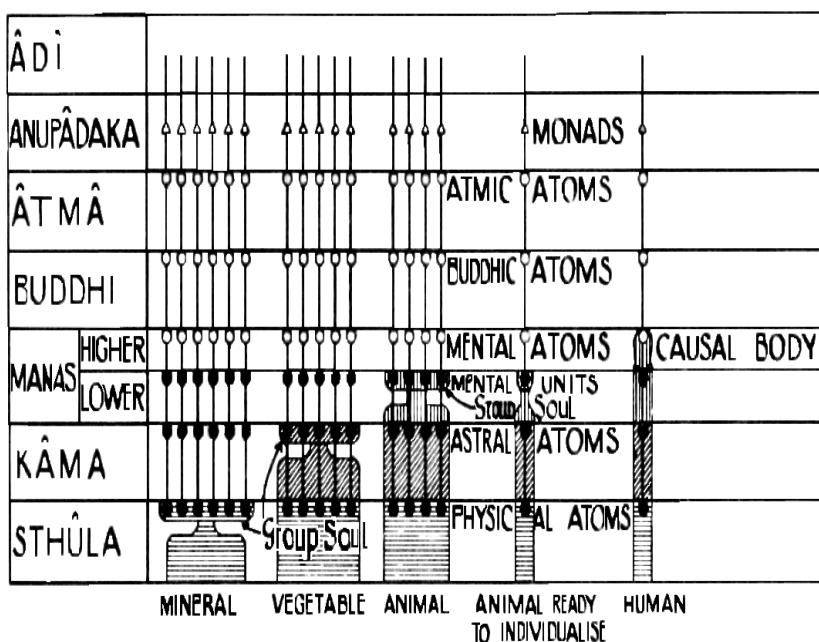
When such a centre is first formed, it is of course merely a baby ego, weak and uncertain. In order that it may become strong and definite, it has to be fenced round by - *selfishness* - the intense selfishness of the savage. For many lives a strong wall of this selfishness has to be maintained, so that within it the centre may grow more and more definite.

Selfishness may therefore be regarded as a kind of scaffolding, which is absolutely necessary for the erection of a building, but which must be destroyed as soon as the building is completed, in order that the building may serve the purpose for which it was erected. The scaffolding is unbeautiful, and, if it were

not removed, the building would be uninhabitable: yet, without the scaffolding, there would have been no building at all.

The object of the creation of the centre being that, through it, the force of the Logos should radiate out upon the world, such radiation would be quite impossible if the selfishness persisted; nevertheless without the selfishness in the earlier stages a strong centre could never have, been established.

Hence in the light of this analogy, we see that even the most unlovely of qualities has its place in the scheme of evolution - *at the right time*. For many men, however, its work is over, and they should rid themselves of selfishness completely. It is useless and foolish to be angry with men who are selfish, for their conduct implies that what was in the savage a necessary virtue is still persisting into civilised condition. A wiser attitude to adopt towards the selfish, is to regard them as anachronisms - survivals from prehistoric savagery, men behind the times.



**DIAGRAM XXIII.—From Mineral to Man.**

**Diagram XXIII** summarises the results of the last four chapters, showing the relative positions in the evolutionary scheme of the stages we know as the mineral Group-Soul, the Vegetable Group-Soul, the Animal Group-Soul, the Animal ready to Individualise, and the Human Being in His Causal Body.

## CHAPTER XIV

## METHODS AND DEGREES OF INDIVIDUALISATION

It was said in the preceding chapter that the effort, resulting from which individualisation, takes place, must be made from below, i.e., by the animal. This effort may take place in one of three distinct ways, and so exercise a very far-reaching effect on the whole future life of the entity concerned.

When an ego is formed, the three aspects of the Higher Triad, i.e., Atma, Buddhi, and Manas, must all be called forth: the first connection, however may be made through any one of the three, as follows:-----

- [1] Between the lower mind and the higher
- [2] Between the astral body and Buddhi
- [3] Between the physical body and Atma

The animal will thus individualise in the first case through intellect, in the second case through emotions, and in the third case through will. We will now briefly consider each of these three methods.

[ I ] *Individualisation through Intellect* ---If an animal is associated with a human being, who is not predominantly emotional, but whose chief activities are of a mental nature, then the nascent mental body of the animal will be stimulated by the close association, and the probabilities are that individualisation will take place through the mind, as the result of mental efforts made by the animal to understand his master.

[ II ] *Individualisation through Emotion - if*, on the other hand, the master be an emotional man, full of strong affections, the probability is that the animal will develop chiefly through his astral body, and that the final breaking of the link with the group-soul will be due to some sudden outrush of intense, affection, which will reach the buddhic aspect of the floating Monad belonging to it, and will thus cause the formation of the ego.

[ III ] *Individualisation through Will* - In yet a third case, if the master be a man of great spirituality, or of intensely strong will, while the animal will develop, great affection and admiration for him, it will yet be the will within the animal which is principally stimulated. This will show itself in the physical body by intense activity, and indomitable resolution to achieve whatever the creature may attempt, especially in the service of his master.

We thus see that the character and type of the master will have a great influence on the destiny of the animal. The greater portion of the work is, of course, done without any direct volition on either side, simply by incessant and inevitable action due to the proximity of the two entities concerned. The astral and mental vibrations of the man are far stronger and more complex than those of the animal, and they are consequently exercising a never-ceasing pressure upon the latter.

The student should avoid the error of thinking that the "distance" between Atma

and the physical body is greater than that between the lower mind and the higher mind, or between the astral and the buddhic principles. It is not a question of distance in space at all, but rather of conveying of a sympathetic vibration from the reflection to the original. Looking at the matter in this way, it is clear that each reflection must be in some direct connection with its original , whatever the "distance" between them may be - in closer connection than it is with any object which is out of the direct line, no matter how much nearer in space the latter object may be.

The desire of the animal to rise constitutes a steady upward pressure along all the lines mentioned, and the point at which that pressure finally breaks through the restrictions, and forms the required link between the Monad and the personality, determines certain characteristics of the new ego which thus comes into existence.

The actual formation of the link is usually instantaneous, in the case of individualisation through affection or will: it is more gradual when it takes place through intellect. This also makes a considerable difference in the current of the future evolution of the entity.

Out of the great mass of the people who were individualised at a certain point in the Moon-Chain, those who had attained individualisation gradually, by intellectual development, came into incarnation on the earth about a million years ago: since then they have taken an average interval between lives of about 1,200 years.

Those of the group who had attained individualisation through an instantaneous, uprush of affection,or of will, came into terrestrial incarnation about 6000,000 years ago; they have taken an average interval between incarnations of about 700 years. The condition of both groups at present time is nevertheless about the same.

It appears that those who individualised through affection are able to generate, if anything, slightly *more* force than those who individualised through intellect. But a better description of the difference between the two classes is to say they produce a different *kind* of force. The shorter interval between lives is due to the fact that this group takes its bliss in a much more concentrated form, and therefore works out the result of an equal expenditure of force in much less time.

In fact, it appears probable that the period of the respective entries of these two groups upon terrestrial life was especially arranged in order that, after running through about the same number of incarnations, they might arrive at the same point, and be able to work together. The necessity of bringing groups of people into incarnation together, in order not only that they may work out mutual karmic interrelations, but also that they may all learn to labour together towards one great end, is evidently a dominant factor in regulating the rate of the expenditure of force.

Besides the differences in the method of individualisation, there are also differences in the —degree—of individualisation, owing to the stage at which it takes place. For it makes a great deal of difference at what stage of development of the animal individualisation occurs. Thus, for example, if a pariah dog were to individualise —as is presumably possible - it could be only a very low type of individualisation. Probably it would at most be nothing, more than a separated fragment of the group-soul, with a Monad hovering over it, connected perhaps by a line or two of spiritual matter.

A case of this kind would correspond to the "lunar animal-men"—those egos who individualised from the earliest stage of the animal kingdom, at which individualisation was possible. They commenced their human life without anything which could properly be called a causal body, but with the Monad floating above a personality, to which it was linked only by certain threads of nirvanic matter. It was they who, in the first round of the Earth-period, filled the forms made by the Lords of the Moon, thus doing pioneer work for all the kingdoms.

A really intelligent and affectionate pet dog or cat, on the other hand, whose owner looks after him properly, and makes friends of him, would certainly when he individualised, obtain a causal body at least equivalent to that of the First Order of Moon-Men.

Various intermediate types of domestic animals would produce the "basketwork" causal body, such as that obtained by the Second Order Moon-Men.

The last named class of egos had not yet fully developed a causal body, but had what might be described as the skeleton of such a vehicle—a number of interlacing streams of force, which indicated the outline of the ovoid that was yet to come. They had consequently a somewhat curious appearance almost as though they were enclosed in a kind of basketwork of the higher mental matter.

The determining cause of these different causal bodies lies in the stage at which individualisation takes place. If the animal, a dog, for example, has been for a long time in contact with man, and is one of a small group of 10 or 20 , then on individualising, a complete causal body is formed. If there are about 100 in the group—the sheep dog stage - a basketwork causal body is formed. If there are several hundreds—the pariah dog stage—there is formed the indication of a causal body made by connecting lines.

The amount of work done in the attainment of any given level in evolution is practically, always the same, but in some cases more is done in one kingdom and less in another. For the various kingdoms of nature overlap a good deal, so that an animal who reached the summit of intelligence and affection possible in the animal kingdom, would skip over the absolutely primitive conditions of humanity, and show himself as a first class individuality from the beginning of his human career. On the other hand, one who leaves the animal kingdom at a lower level will have to begin correspondingly lower down in the scale of humanity.

This is the explanation of a remark once made by a Master, when referring to the cruelty and superstition shown by the great mass of humanity: "They have individualised too soon; they are not yet worthy of the human form."

The three methods of individualisation - through intellect, affection, and will - are the normal methods. Occasionally, however, individualisation is attained in other ways, which we may call abnormal or irregular ways.

For example, at the beginning of the Moon Chain, a certain group of beings were at the point of individualisation, and were drawn towards it by their association with some of the perfected inhabitants, whom we call the Lords of the Moon. An unfortunate twist, however, entered into their development, and they began to take so great a pride in their intellectual advance, that that became the prominent feature in their character. They worked, not so much to gain the approval or affection of their masters, as to show their advantage over their fellow animals, and to excite their envy.

This latter motive pushed them on to make the efforts resulting in individualisation, and so the causal bodies which were formed showed almost no colour but orange. They were allowed to individualise, apparently because if they had continued in the animal kingdom any further, they would have become worse instead of better.

This detachment - or "ship load", as it is sometimes called - numbered about two millions. They individualised by pride, and, though clever enough in their way, possessed but little of any other quality.

The members of this orange shipload, from Planet A of the Moon-Chain declined to enter the vehicles provided for them in the Earth-Chain, while the golden coloured egos from Globe B, and the rose-coloured egos from Globe C, accepted the conditions, entered into the vehicles, and fulfilled their destiny.

All through their history these orange egos caused trouble to themselves and to others, owing to their arrogance and unruliness. They have been described as turbulent and aggressive, independent and separative, prone to discontent, and eager for change.

Some of the cleverest of them became the notorious "Lords of the Dark Face", in Atlantis, and later world-devastating conquerors, caring nothing for the thousands who were slain or starved in the course of gratification of their mad ambition, or later still, unscrupulous millionaires, aptly termed "Napoleons, of finance".

Another abnormal method of individualising is through fear. In some cases animals which have been cruelly treated by man have developed cunning by their strenuous efforts to understand and avoid the cruelty, so that they have broken away from the Group -Soul, and produced an ego possessing only a very low type of intellectuality.

A variant of this class is the type of ego in which the cruelty has produced hatred instead of fear. This is the explanation of the fiendishly cruel and bloodthirsty savages, of whom we sometimes hear, of the inquisitors of the Middle Ages, and of child-torturers at the present day.

Yet another variant is the entity who is individualised by an intense desire for power over others, such as is sometimes shown by the chief bull of a herd. An ego developed in such a way often manifests great cruelty, and appears to take pleasure in it, probably because to torture others is a manifestation of his power over them.

On the other hand, those who have individualised at a comparatively low level along one of the regular lines—as by affection, for example - provide us with a type of equally primitive, but joyous and good-natured savages. Such savages are so only in name, for they are kindly, as are many of the tribes in some of the islands of the South Seas.

## **CHAPTER XV**

### **FUNCTIONS OF THE CAUSAL BODY**

The causal body owes its name to the fact that in it reside the causes which manifest themselves as effects in the lower planes.

For it is the experience of past lives, stored in the causal body, which are the cause of the general attitude taken up towards life, and the actions undertaken.

In Samskrit, the causal body is known as the Karana Sharira, Karana meaning, cause.

Briefly we may say that the causal body has two main functions:

[1] To act as a vehicle for the Ego: the causal body is the "body of Manas", the form- aspect of the individual , the true man, the Thinker.

[2] To act as a receptacle or storehouse for the essence of the man's experiences in his various incarnations. The causal body is that into which is woven everything which can endure, and in which are stored the germs of qualities, to be carried over to the next incarnation. Hence one sees that the lower, manifestation of man, *i.e.*, his expression in his mental, astral and physical bodies, depends ultimately upon the growth and development of the real man himself, the one "for whom the hour never strikes".

As we have seen in Chapter XIII, there is no *man*, no real *human* being, until the causal body comes into existence. Every individual being must necessarily have a causal body: it is, in fact, the possession of a causal body which constitutes individuality.

The immense amount of work done, in the long aeons preceding the birth of the

causal body, is devoted to developing and building the matter of the physical, astral and lower mental planes, until it becomes a fit habitation for the divine spirit to dwell in as a *man*.

At its inception, the causal body, or form-aspect of the true man, is described, as a delicate film of subtlest matter, just visible, marking where the individual begins his separate life. That delicate almost colourless, film of subtlest matter, is the body which will last through the whole of human evolution: on this, as on a thread—the thread-self, or Sutratma, as it is sometimes called—will all the future incarnations be strung.

The causal body, as said, is the receptacle of all that is enduring—*i.e., only* that which is noble and harmonious, and in accordance with the law of spirit; for every great and noble thought, every pure and lofty emotion, is carried up, and its essence worked into the substance of the causal body. Hence the condition of the causal body is a true register - the *only true* register - of the growth of man, of the stage of evolution to which he has attained.

All the various bodies of man should be regarded as casings or vehicles, enabling the Self to function in some definite region of the universe. Just as a man may use a carriage on land, a ship on the sea, a balloon in the air, to travel from one place to another, and yet in all places remain himself, so does the Self, the real man, utilise his various bodies, each for its appropriate purposes, yet remains all the time himself no matter in what vehicle he may be functioning at any given moment. Relatively to the man, all these bodies are transient, they are his instruments or servants; they wear out and are renewed, time after time, and adapted to his varying needs, and his ever-growing powers.

More specifically, because mind is fundamentally dual in its functioning, so man needs, and is provided with, two mind bodies. As we saw in *The Mental Body*, the mental body serves for the concrete mind, which deals with concrete thoughts; the causal body similarly is the organ, for abstract thinking.

In the Thinker, residing in the causal body, are all the powers that we class as Mind - *i.e.*, memory, intuition, will. The Thinker gathers up all the experiences of the earth-lives, through which he passes, to be transmuted within himself, by his own divine alchemy, into that essence of experience and knowledge which is Wisdom. Even in one brief earth-life we distinguish between the knowledge we acquire and the wisdom we gradually -often too rarely - distil from that knowledge. Wisdom is the fruitage of a life's experience, the crowning possession of the aged. In a much fuller and richer sense, Wisdom is the fruitage of many incarnations, the produce of much experience and knowledge. In the Thinker, thus, is the store of experiences, reaped in our past lives, harvested through many rebirths.

In the classification of the bodies of man as "sheaths", the causal body is known as the discriminating sheath, as in the following table:--

Principle in Man	Kosha or Sheath	
	Sanskrit	English
Buddhi	Anandamayakosha	Bliss Sheath
Higher Manas	Vijnanamayakosha	Discriminating Sheath
Lower Manas & Kama	Manomayakosha	Feeling Sheath
Prana	Pranamayakosha	Vitality Breath
Sthula	Annamayakosha	Food Sheath

In the word Vijnanamayakosha, the particle "Vi" implies the discriminating, separating, and arranging of things, for that is the peculiar function of this sheath. Into the Vijnanamayakosha, or causal body, experiences from the Manomayakosha are reflected as ideal concepts. The Manomayakosha collects and elaborates, the Vijnanamayakosha arranges and discriminates. The lower bodies receive and deal with sensations, perceptions, the making and elaborating of ideas, but it is the work of the causal body to arrange these, discriminate between them, and perform the work of abstract reasoning from them, dealing with pure ideas, separated from the concrete presentations.

In the causal body we thus have the abstract, not the concrete, the pure internal working, no longer confused by the senses, nor in any way interfered with by the outer world. Here there is pure intelligence, clear vision, intelligence unmoved by the senses, intelligence tranquil, strong, serene.

In the causal body also lies the creative power of meditation, the energies that grow out of one-pointed contemplation. This is the creative sheath of man, for Manas in man corresponds in the Kosmos to Mahat, the Universal Mind, Divine Ideation, the moulding directing force which is the creative power, from which all comes forth. In this sheath of man exist all forms that can come forth, to which objective reality may be given by this creative power.

*The Secret Doctrine* [I , 312] says: "Kriyashakti: the mysterious power of thought which enables it to produce external, perceptible, phenomenal results, by its own inherent energy. The ancients held that *any idea will manifest itself externally if one's attention be deeply concentrated upon it*. Similarly, *an intense volition will be followed by the desired results*". This of course, is the secret of all true "magic".

Intelligence in man is thus, as said, the reflection of Brahma, of the Universal Mind, the creative energy. The creative faculty of imagination in man, which at present works in subtle matter, will, when man becomes perfect, work in grosser matter as well, because, as said, the imaginative power in man is the reflection of the power that created the universe. Brahma meditated, and all forms came forth: so, in the creative power of mind lies every possibility of form.

Hence H.P.Blavatsky sometimes calls manas the Deva-ego, or the divine as distinguished from the personal self. Higher Manas is divine because it has positive thought, which is Kriyashakti, the power of doing things. Manas, mind, is

thus by its very nature, *activity*. All work is really done by thought power ; the sculptor's hand does not do the work, but the thought-power directing that hand does it. For it is a truism to say that thought precedes action. Whilst there are occasions on which a man act, as we say, without thinking, yet even so his action is the result of *previous* thought; he has set up a habit of thought along a certain line and acts instinctively in agreement with that line of thought.

Higher Manas is divine because, as said, it is a positive thinker, using the quality of its own life, which shines from within. That is what is meant by the word divine, from *div*, to shine.

The outgoing energy of Atma, working in the causal body, is the force which dominates and moulds everything that is external to it. The outgoing energy of Atma, working in the Manomayakosha, on the other hand, is Desire, an its characteristics is that it is attracted by external objects and its direction is governed from without. But Atma, working in the causal body, is Will, *dealing*, no longer with choice directed from without, but with choice initiated from within, moulded on the internal images by a process of discriminative reflection. Thus the outgoing energy is, in the causal body, *guided from within* in its direction, whereas in the lower bodies it is *attracted from without*. This is the essential difference between Will and Desire. The will, moreover, is essentially a quality of the ego, not of the personality.

The Chit, or intelligence aspect of man is the first to be evolved: this is the analysing faculty which perceives multiplicity and differences ; then comes Ananda, the wisdom that realises the unity of things, and that accomplishes union, thus finding the joy or bliss that is at the heart of life; lastly, comes the third or highest aspect, Sat, self-existence, the Unity that is beyond even union.

In the cycle of Races, the Fifth Race is developing the Chit, or Intelligence aspect; the Sixth will develop the Ananda, the union or bliss aspect, the "Kingdom of Happiness"; the Seventh will develop the Sat, or Self-existence aspect.

## CHAPTER XVI

### COMPOSITION AND STRUCTURE

The causal body consists of matter of the first, second and third sub-planes of the mental plane. The student will recollect that an atom of mental matter contains 49 to the 4th, or 5,764,801 - approximately , say, 5  $\frac{3}{4}$  millions –of "bubbles in koilon".

In ordinary people the causal body is not yet fully active, and consequently only that matter which belongs to the third sub-plane is vivified. As the ego during the long course of his evolution, unfolds his latent possibilities, the higher matter is

gradually brought into activity; but it is only in the perfected men whom we call Adepts, or Master, that it is developed to its fullest extent.

It is difficult to describe a causal body fully, because the senses belonging to the causal world are altogether different from and higher than those we employ at the physical level. Such memory of the appearance of a causal body, as it is possible for a clairvoyant to bring into his physical brain, represents it as ovoid, that being, in fact, the shape of all the higher bodies, and as surrounding the physical body of the man, extending to a distance of about 18 inches from the surface of the physical body.

A human being, who has just individualised from the animal kingdom, has a causal body of minimum size.

In the case of primitive man, the causal body resembles a bubble and gives the impression of being empty. It is a mere colourless film, just sufficient, apparently, to hold itself together and make a reincarnating entity, but no more. Although it is filled with higher mental matter, this is not yet brought into activity, and so it remains colourless and transparent. As the man develops, this matter is gradually stirred into alertness by vibrations which reach it from the lower bodies. This comes but slowly, because, the activities of man in the earlier stages of his evolution are not of a character to obtain expression in matter so fine as that of the causal body. But, when a man reaches the stage where he is capable either of abstract thought, or of unselfish emotion, the matter of the causal body is aroused into response.

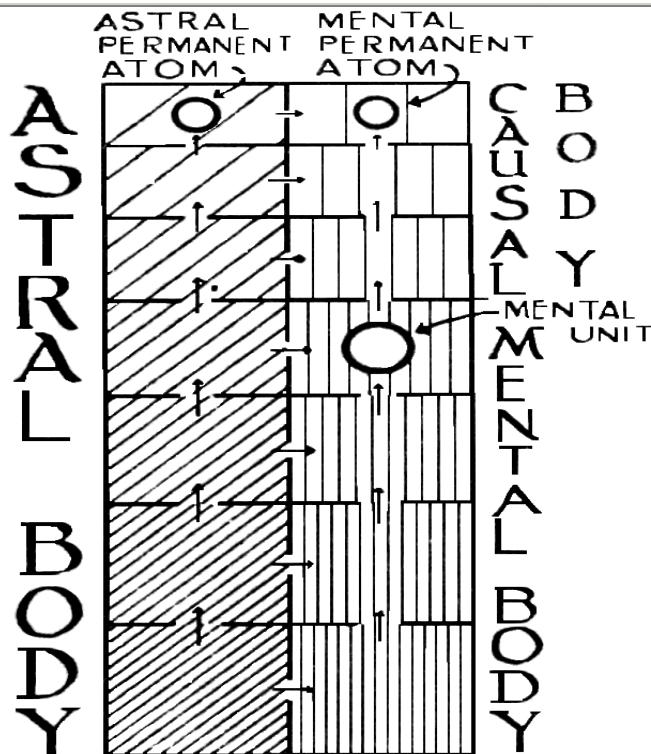
The vibrations thus aroused show themselves in the causal body as colours, so that instead of being a mere transparent bubble, it gradually becomes a sphere filled with matter of the most lovely and delicate hues, an object beautiful beyond all conception.

The student will be familiar with the meaning of the various colours, from his study of the same phenomenon in the astral and mental bodies. Thus pale rose expresses unselfish affection; yellow indicates high intellectual power; blue betokens devotion; sympathy is expressed by green and luminous lilac-blue typifies the higher spirituality. These same colours in the denser bodies are, of course, far less delicate and also less living.

Although, in the course of his evolution in the lower worlds, a man often introduces into his vehicles qualities which are undesirable, and entirely inappropriate for his life as an ego—such, for example, as pride, irritability, sensuality, - yet none of these can be expressed in the causal body. Diagram XXIV may help to make clear the reason for this important phenomenon. Each section of the astral body acts strongly upon matter of the corresponding mental sub-plane. Hence, as the coarser vibrations of the astral body are expressed only in the lower sub-planes of the astral world, they will affect the mental body only, not the causal body. *The causal body therefore, is*

*affected only by the three higher portions of the astral body, and the vibrations in those portions represent only good qualities.*

The practical effect of this is that the man can build into his ego, that is, nothing but good qualities.. The evil qualities which he develops are from the point of view of the ego, only transitory, and must be thrown aside as the man advances, because he no longer has within him matter which can express them.



**DIAGRAM XXIV.—Effect of Astral on Mental and Causal Bodies**

**DIAGRAM XXIV--** The sub-planes of the astral and mental planes are here shown as of diminishing size, in order to illustrate the fact of their increasing, fineness as we rise from the lower to the higher levels.

Openings between adjacent sub-planes of each plane indicate that certain of the "vibrations" of a given sub-plane can be transmitted to the sub-plane immediately above. These openings or gateways become narrower and narrower, indicating

that only the finest vibrations can pass onwards to the higher levels.

Openings between each sub-plane of the astral plane and the corresponding sub-plane of the mental plane , indicate that there is also a possibility of an astral vibration being communicated, at a higher octave, to the corresponding, mental sub-plane.

The diagram further illustrates that the mental body is more directly affected by the four lower levels of the astral plane, whilst the causal body is affected by only three higher levels of astral matter.

For coloured illustrations of causal bodies at various degrees of development, the student is referred to *Man Visible and Invisible*, by C.W.Leadbeater, as follows:-

Causal body of Savage [Plate V, page 66]

Causal Body of average man [Plate VIII, page 91]

Causal Body of developed man [Plate XXI, page 118]

Causal Body of Arhat [Plate XXVI, page 138]

As already said, the causal body of an undeveloped savage is like a gigantic soap-bubble, transparent yet iridescent. It is almost empty in appearance, what little there is within it representing certain qualities which may already have been evolved within the Group-Soul, of which it previously formed, a part. The faint indications of these rates of vibrations are observable within the young causal body as dawning gleams of colour.

It might perhaps have been thought that the causal body of a primitive man would be very small at first.; but this is not the case; his causal body is the same size as any other; it does at later stage increase in size, but not until it has first been vivified and filled with active matter.

In the case of an average man, there is a distinct increase in the content of the great ovoid film. A certain amount of exceedingly delicate and ethereal colour now exists within it, though it is still less than half filled. Something of the higher intellect is visible, and something of the power of devotion and unselfish love. There is also a faint tint of that exceedingly delicate violet which indicates the capacity of love and devotion turned towards the highest ideal, and also a faint hint of the clear green of sympathy and compassion.

As soon as the man begins to develop in spirituality, or even higher intellect, a change takes place. The real individual then begins to have a persisting character of his own, apart from that moulded in each of his personalities in turn by training, and by surrounding circumstances. This character shows itself in the size, colour, luminosity, and definiteness of the causal body, just as that of the personality shows itself in the mental body, except that the higher vehicle is naturally subtler and more beautiful.

In the case of the spiritually developed man, an enormous change is noticed. The glorious iridescent film is now completely filled with the most lovely colours, typifying the higher forms of love, devotion and sympathy aided by an intellect refined and spiritualised, and by aspirations reaching ever towards the divine. Some of these colours have no place in the physical plane spectrum.

The inconceivably fine and delicate matter of such a causal body is intensely alive and pulsating with living fire, forming a radiant globe of flashing colours, its high vibrations sending ripples of changing hues over its surface-hues of which earth knows nothing,---brilliant, soft and luminous beyond the power of language to describe.

Such a causal body is filled with living fire, drawn from a still higher plane, with which it appears to be connected by a quivering thread of intense light -- the Sutratma—vividly recalling to mind the stanzas of Dzyan : "The spark hangs from

the flame by the finest thread of Fohat." As the soul grows, and is able to receive more and more from the inexhaustible ocean of Divine Spirit, which pours down through the thread as a channel, the channel expands, and gives wider passage to the flood, till, on the next sub-plane, it might be imaged as a water-spout connecting earth and sky, and higher still as itself a globe, through which rushes the living spring, until the causal body seems to melt into the inpouring light. As the stanza says: "The thread between the watcher and his shadow becomes, more strong and radiant with every change. The morning sunlight has changed into noonday glory. This is thy present wheel, said the flame to the spark. Thou art myself, my image and my shadow. I have clothed myself in thee, and thou art my *vahan* --to the day " Be-With-Us ", when thou shalt re-become myself and others, thyself and me."

It was said about that in the undeveloped man the causal body is at first almost empty, and as the man develops, the ovoid gradually fills up. When it is completely filled, not only will it commence to grow in size, but in addition, streams of force will flow out in various directions. This, is in fact, is one of the grandest characteristics of the developed man—his capacity to serve as a channel for higher force. For his attitude of helpfulness, and readiness, to give, make it possible for the divine strength to descend upon him in a steady stream, and, through him, reach many who are not yet strong enough to receive it directly.

Furthermore, from the upper part of the causal body there ascends a crown of brilliant sparks, indicating the activity of spiritual aspiration, and of course adding very greatly to the beauty and dignity of the man's appearance. No matter how the lower man may be occupied on the physical plane, this stream of sparks rises constantly. The reason for this is that once the soul or ego of man is awakened upon his own level, and is beginning to understand something of himself, and his relation, to the Divine, he looks ever upwards to the source from which he came, quite irrespective of any activities which he may be inspiring on lower planes.

It must be remembered that even the noblest personality is but a very small and partial expression of the real higher self; so that as soon as the higher self begins to look round him, he finds almost unlimited possibilities opening before him, of which in this cramped physical life we can form no idea.

This very upward rushing of spiritual aspiration which makes so glorious a crown for the developed man, is itself the channel through which the divine power descends: so that the fuller and stronger his aspirations become, the larger is the measure of the grace from on high.

In the case of the causal body of an Arhat, i.e., of one who has passed the Fourth of the great Initiations --the colours have two characteristics, which are irreconcilable on the physical plane. They are more delicate and ethereal than any that have been previously described, :yet at the same time they are fuller, more brilliant and more luminous. The size of the causal body is many times

larger than that of the physical body, and there is displayed magnificent development of the highest types of intellect, love and devotion, great wealth of sympathy, and highest, spirituality.

The bands of colours are arranged now in concentric rings, while through these, and extending beyond them, there are streams of white light, radiating, outwards from the centre. The outrush of Divine influence is thus enormously intensified, for the man has become an almost perfect channel for the life and power of the Logos. Not only does the glory radiate from him in white light, but all colours of the rainbow play round him, in ever changing gleams like mother-of-pearl. Hence there is something in that radiation to strengthen the highest qualities in every person who approaches him, no matter what qualities may be. None can come within the range of his influence without being the better for it; he shines upon all around him like the sun, for like that luminary, he has become a manifestation of the Logos.

The causal body of the Adept or Master has enormously increased in size and shines with a sun-like splendour far beyond all imagination in its glorious loveliness. Of the beauty and form and colour here, as C.W.Leadbeater, states, no words can speak, for mortal language has no terms in which those radiant spheres may be described. Such a vehicle would be a separate study itself, but one quite beyond the powers of any but those who are already far on the Path.

As in the case of the causal body of an Arhat, the colours no longer move in whirling clouds, but are arranged in great concentric shells, yet penetrated everywhere by radiations of living light, always pouring forth from Him as a centre.

The order of the colours varies according to the type to which the Adept belongs, so that there are several well-marked varieties amid their glory. A perfectly accurate tradition of this fact has been preserved in many of the roughly drawn pictures of the Lord Buddha, which may be seen upon temple walls in Ceylon. The Great Teacher is usually represented there surrounded by an aura; and, although the colouring and general arrangement of those surroundings would be very inaccurate, and even impossible, if intended for the aura of an ordinary man, or even for that of one who is the rank of a Master, yet it is a rough and material representation of the actual higher vehicle of the Adept of that particular type, to which this Great One belongs.

The causal body is sometimes called the "auric egg". But, when H.P.Blavatsky spoke of the sacred auric egg, it seems probable that she meant the four permanent atoms—more accurately, the physical and astral permanent atoms, the mental unit, and the mental permanent atom,----within an envelope of matter of the Atmic of Nirvanic plane.

The Causal Body is known also as the Augoeides, the glorified man; it is not an image of any one of his past vehicles, but contains within itself the essence of all

that was best in each of them. It thus indicates , more or less perfectly, as through experience it grows, what the Deity means that man shall, be. For, as we have seen, by observation of the causal vehicle it is possible to see the stage of evolution which the man has reached. Not only can his past history be seen, but also to a considerable extent the future that lies before him.

The glorified form within the causal body is an approach to the archetype and comes nearer to it as man develops. The human form appears to be the model for the highest evolution in this particular system. It is varied slightly in different planets, but is, broadly speaking, the same in general outline. In other solar systems forms may possibly be quite unlike it : on that point we have no information.

Prana, or Vitality, exists in all planes, and therefore must play some part in the causal body, but concerning this no information is at present available.

We may note, however, that after the formation of the causal body, the complexity of the prana circulating in the nervous system of the physical body much increases, and it appears to become yet more enriched in the progress, of human evolution. For, as the consciousness becomes active on the mental plane, the prana of that plane mingles with the lower, as the activity of consciousness is carried on in higher regions.

In the causal body also, as in each of the other vehicles, there are Chakrams or Force-Centres, which in addition to other functions, serve as points of connection at which force flows from one vehicle to another. At present time, however , no information is available regarding the Chakrams of the causal body.

## CHAPTER XVII

### CAUSAL THOUGHT

The mental plane, as we know, is the sphere of action of what we call mind or manas, in man. As we have already seen, the plane is divided into two parts, the higher, consisting of three upper sub-planes, and the lower, consisting , of the four lower sub-planes. The two divisions are known as arupa, or formless, and rupa, having form.

In man, Intellect has, as its vehicle, the causal body, with abstract thought as its function, whilst Mind has, as its vehicle the mental body, with the function of concrete thinking.

The Mind acquires knowledge by utilising the senses for observations: it works on its percepts, and builds them into concepts. Its powers are attention, memory, reasoning by induction and deduction, imagination, and the like.

The names arupa and rupa are given in order to indicate a certain quality of the matter of the mental plane. In the lower part of it, the matter is very readily moulded by the action of human thought into definite forms; in the higher division, this does not occur, the more abstract thought of that level expressing itself to the eye of the clairvoyant in flashes or streams.

On the arupa levels, the difference in the effect of thought is very marked, especially as regards the elemental essence. The disturbance set up in the mere matter of the plane is similar, though greatly intensified in this much more refined form of matter. But in the elemental essence, no form at all is now created, and the method of action is entirely changed.

On the lower sub-planes, an elemental or thought form , which is there created, hovers about the person thought of , and awaits a favourable opportunity of expending its energy either, upon his mental body, his astral body, or even his physical body. But on the three higher sub-planes, the result is a kind of lightening flash of the essence from the causal body of the thinker, direct to the causal body of the object of his thought.

So that, while on the lower sub-planes the thought is always directed to the mere personality, on the higher sub-planes we influence the reincarnating ego, the real man himself. If the message has any reference to the personality, it will reach that personality only from above, through the instrumentality of the causal body.

It is said to be a striking sight to observe the change from an abstract or arupa idea to a concrete or rupa thought, as the idea clothes itself in the matter of the four lower sub-planes.

The standard and sample example is that of a triangle. Difficult as it is to describe in words, which belong to the planes of form, the abstract idea of a triangle is a reality on the arupa levels. It means a non-figure, which is yet a figure. The figure—which is yet no *particular* figure, is circumscribed by three lines, yet not by any particular lines: its three angles possess the property of making collectively two right angles; yet they are not particular angles.

On the arupa levels, this abstract idea of a triangle has real existence. With the sense of the causal body, it is seen, or apprehended. It is a fact of consciousness, external to the observer, even though it is not what we usually mean by form.

If such an abstract triangle is thrown into contact with the matter of the rupa sub-planes, instantly it becomes an indefinite number of triangles, each of which has a definite form. There will be triangles of every known shape- equilateral , isosceles, scalene, right-angled, acute-angled, obtuse –angled—all coming into visible existence.

If the abstract idea is brought down within the causal body, the observer becomes a fountain of triangles, which go off in all directions, much as a jet of water spurts up as a more or less coherent mass, comes down as a fountain, separating into innumerable drops of spray. That is perhaps the best physical analogy of the process that can be given.

As was fully explained in the *Mental Body*, concrete thought naturally takes the shape of the objects which we thought about: abstract ideas when thrown down into the rupa levels, usually represent themselves by all kinds of perfect and most beautiful geometrical figures. It should however, be remembered that many thoughts which come down here are little more than mere abstractions, become on the mental plane concrete facts.

Causal consciousness thus deals with the essence of a thing, whilst the lower mind studies its details. With the mind, we talk round a subject, or endeavour to explain it: with the causal consciousness, we take up the essence of the idea of the subject, and move it as a whole, as one moves a piece when playing chess. The causal plane is a world of realities: we no longer deal with emotions, ideas or conceptions, but with the thing in itself.

It may be well to describe rather more in detail the process of arriving at causal thought. Whilst the lower mind dwells entirely on mental images, obtained from sensations, reasons on purely concrete objects, and is concerned with the attributes which differentiate one object from another, the ego, using the causal consciousness, having learned to discriminate clearly between objects, by dwelling upon their — *unlikenesses* — now begins to group them together by some attribute which appears in a number of objects, otherwise dissimilar, and makes a link between them.

He draws out, abstracts, this common attribute, and sets all objects that possess it apart from the rest that are without it. In this way, he evolves the power of recognising identity amid diversity, a step towards the much later recognition of the One underlying the many.

He thus classifies all that is around him, developing the synthetic faculty, and learning to construct as well as to analyse.

Presently, he takes another step, and conceives of the common property as an idea, apart from all the objects in which it appears, and thus constructs a kind of mental higher image higher than the image of a concrete object--- the image of an idea that has no phenomenal existence in the world of form, but which exists on the higher levels of the mental plane, and affords material on which the ego, the Thinker himself, can work.

The lower mind reaches the abstract idea by reason, and, in so doing, accomplishes its loftiest flight, touching the threshold of the formless world, and dimly seeing that which lies beyond.

The Thinker with his causal consciousness, sees these ideas, and lives among, them habitually. As he exercises and develops the power of abstract reasoning, he becomes effective in his own world, and begins his life of active functioning in his own sphere.

Such a man would care little for the life of the senses, or for external observation, or for mental application to images of external objects. His powers are indrawn, no longer rushing outwards in the search for satisfaction.

He dwells calmly within himself, engrossed with the problems of Philosophy, with the deeper aspects of life and thought, seeking to understand causes, rather than troubling himself with effects, and approaching nearer and nearer to the recognition of the One that underlies all the diversities of external nature.

The method of passing from the lower mental to the causal consciousness, by means of an orderly process of concentration, meditation, and contemplation, is described in detail in *The Mental Body*, and so need not be repeated, here.

On the higher levels of the mental plane, thoughts act with much greater force, than on the lower levels: one reason for this is, that, as comparatively few are as yet able to think on these higher levels any thoughts, which are generated there, have the field practically to themselves: *i.e.*, there are not many other thoughts in that realm, with which they have to contend.

Most thoughts of the ordinary man begin in the mental body, on the lower mental levels, and clothe themselves, as they descend, with the appropriate astral elemental essence. But, when a man is active on the causal levels, his thought commences there, and clothes itself first in the elemental essence of the lower levels of the mental plane, and is consequently infinitely finer, more penetrating, and in every way more effective.

If the thought be directed exclusively to higher objects, its vibrations may be of too fine a character to find expression on the astral plane at all. But if they do affect such lower matter, they will do so with much more far-reaching effect than those which are generated so much nearer to the level of that lower matter.

Following this principle a stage further, it is clear that the thought of the Initiate, taking its rise upon the Buddhic Plane, above the mental world altogether, will clothe itself with the elemental essence of the causal sub-planes. Similarly, the thought of the Adept will pour down from the plane of Atma, wielding the tremendous and wholly incalculable powers of regions beyond the ken of the ordinary humanity.

Hence the truth of the saying that the work of one day, on levels such as these, may well surpass in efficiency the toil of a thousand years on the physical, plane.

Students who are not accustomed to causal thought, to thinking in principles should be careful that they do not, by their efforts to think abstractly, at first cause headaches, which mean, of course, in this instance, that the mechanism of the

brain is being strained. Meditation, practised regularly for a number of years, should establish a certain tendency of the causal consciousness to be affected by the consciousness in the mental body. When that has been established, abstract thought at the causal levels should be possible without the risk of straining the thinking mechanism.

When the effort to form an abstract conception, say of a triangle, has been successful, the student may at first feel a little dazed in the attempt to grasp the abstract idea : later the consciousness will suddenly change, and become clear. That means that the centre of consciousness has been transferred from the mental to the causal body, and the student becomes conscious, in his causal body, of a distinct existence outside himself.

That is the "intuition" of the causal body, which recognises the – outer -. The "intuition" of Buddhi, as we shall see in a later chapter, recognises the inner, enabling one to see things from the inside. With the intellectual intuition, one realises a thing which is outside oneself.

Again the student may be reminded that, in spite of external differences of functioning between the higher and lower mind, yet Manas, the Thinker, is one, the Self in the causal body. It is the source of innumerable energies of vibrations of innumerable kinds. These it sends out, raying outwards from itself. The subtlest and finest of these are expressed in the matter of the causal body, which alone is fine enough to respond to them. They form what is sometimes called the Pure Reason, whose thoughts are abstract, whose method of gaining knowledge is intuition. Its very "nature is knowledge", and it recognises truth at sight as congruous with itself.

The less subtle vibrations pass outward from the one Thinker, attracting the matter of the lower mental world, and becoming the activities of the lower mind, as has already been described.

It is, perhaps, somewhat unfortunate that Buddhi is also sometimes spoken of as Pure Reason, and its faculty is described as that of intuition. As psychology progresses, no doubt appropriate terms will be selected, and applied, specifically and solely, to the distinct functions of the causal consciousness, and to the Buddhic faculties.

It was said above, of Manas, that its very " nature is Knowledge". That is so, because Manas is the reflection, in the atomic matter of the mental, plane, of the cognitional aspect of the Self ---- of the Self as Knower. It is therefore possible to unfold a power of knowing truth at sight. This shows itself only when the lower mind, with its slow process of reasoning, is transcended. For whenever the "I " --- the expression of the Self whose "nature is knowledge"----comes into contact with a truth, he finds its vibrations regular and therefore capable of producing a coherent image in himself : whereas the false causes a distorted image, out of proportion, by its very reflection announcing its nature.

As the lower mind assumes a more and more subordinate position, these powers of the ego assert their own predominance, and intuition - which is analogous to the direct vision of the physical plane - takes the place of reasoning, which may aptly be compared with the physical plane sense of touch.

Thus intuition develops out of reasoning in the same unbroken manner, and without change of essential nature, as the eye develops out of touch. The change of "manner" should not blind us to the orderly and sequential evolution of the faculty.

The student will, of course be careful to distinguish genuine intuition from that pseudo-intuition of the unintelligent, which is merely impulse, born of desire, and is not higher, but lower than reasoning.

The act of thinking develops the spirillae in the physical atoms : hence those who are definitely and carefully thinking day by day are not only improving their own powers of thought, but also improving for others the amount of available material of a higher kind, thus facilitating high thinking.

In the etheric body of man, the brow chakram, or force centre, which utilises the dark blue prana, is associated with the principle of higher manas.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### DEVELOPMENT AND FACULTIES OF THE CAUSAL BODY

In chapter XV, we saw that only good elements are stored in the causal body, evil finding in that body no means of expression. We may now consider this matter a little further, and study the effects which are produced, more or less indirectly, on the causal body by the practise of evil.

In a primitive man, the growth of the causal body is necessarily exceedingly slow. As we have seen, it is by the method of exciting sympathetic vibration that the higher qualities, developed by the life on lower planes, are gradually built into the causal body : but in the life of an undeveloped man there will be very few feelings or thoughts, belonging to the higher world, which can serve as food for the growth of the real man. Hence the growth is slow, for all the rest of life does not aid it.

But even the worst of men can commonly show himself on the causal plane, though as an entirely undeveloped entity. His vices, even though continued through life after life, cannot soil the causal body. They can, however, make it more and more difficult to develop the opposite virtues.

In every case, the existence of an evil quality in the personality means a lack of the corresponding good quality in the causal body. For an ego cannot be evil,

though he can be imperfect. The qualities which the ego develops cannot be other than good qualities, and, when they are well defined, they show themselves in each of all his numerous personalities : consequently, those personalities can never be guilty of the vices opposite to those good qualities.

A good quality which is lacking, may nevertheless be said to exist in the ego, although it has not yet been called into activity. As soon as it *is* called into activity, its intense vibrations will act upon the lower vehicles, and it will be impossible, as said, for the opposite evil ever again to find place in them.

Where there is a gap in the ego, indicating that there is a quality undeveloped there need not necessarily be a definite vice in the personality; but there is also nothing *positive* in the personality to prevent the growth of the vice in question. Hence, since in all probability many other people around him already possess that vice, and since man is an imitative animal, it is more than likely that the will develop that vice. The vice, however, as we have seen, belongs only to the lower vehicles, and not to the real man in the causal body. In those lower vehicles its repetition may set up a momentum which it is hard to conquer: but, if the ego bestirs himself to create in himself the opposite virtue, the vice is cut off at the root, and can no longer exist, neither in this life nor in all the lives that are to come.

Thus the shortest way to get rid of evil, and prevent its reappearance, is to fill the gap in the ego, so that the good quality which is thus developed will show itself as an integral part of the man's character through all his future lives.

Whilst evil cannot be definitely stored in the causal body, yet the practise of evil may affect the causal body; for every intensification of vice in the lower vehicles, every indulgence in it in the lower worlds, tends somewhat to dim the luminosity of the opposite virtues in the causal body.

The " I " cannot assimilate anything that is evil, for it cannot touch the " I " level of consciousness. The ego is not conscious of evil; he knows nothing about it, so that it makes no impression upon him. The utmost result brought about, in the causal body by very, very long continued lives of a low type, is what may be called incapacity to receive the opposite good impression for a very considerable period afterwards, a kind of numbness or paralysis of the matter of the causal body. This is not so much consciousness as unconsciousness.; an unconsciousness which resists impressions of the good of the opposite kind. That is the limit of the harm that is done. Hence , when the life of evil has been very much prolonged, it will take many more lives in order to bring out the first response to the good side of activity.

This result was observed when, in studying past lives, an endeavour was made to understand how the causal body was not injured through a number of savage lives. In very prolonged cases, where there was an abnormal number of such lives, this effect of numbness was noted, brought about by the repeated beating upon it of evil, over a long period of time. A number of lives then had to be spent

in restoring, so to say, the responsive vitality to that portion of the causal body. Such cases, however, are abnormal.

We may pursue the study of the effects of evil still further. Where evil is subtle and persistent, it drags away, if the expression be permitted, something of the individual himself. If evil be continually followed, the mental body becomes so entangled with the astral body, that after death it cannot free itself entirely : some of its very substance is torn away from it, and, when the astral body in its turn dies and disintegrates, the matter of the mental body, which has been wrenched away, also goes back to the general stock of mental matter, and is thus lost to the individual. In ordinary cases, the harm done to the causal body does not go further than this. We shall deal with this aspect of our subject in more technical detail in Chapter XXV.

Where, however, the ego has become strong, both in intellect and in will, without at the same time increasing in unselfishness and love, it contracts itself round its own separated centre, instead of expanding, as it grows : It thus builds around it a wall of selfishness, and uses its developing powers for itself, instead of for others. In such cases, there arises the possibility, alluded to in so many of the world-scriptures, of the ego setting himself consciously against the "Good Law", of fighting deliberately against evolution. Then the casual body itself shows the dark hues, brought about by contraction, and loses the dazzling radiance which is its characteristic property. Harm such as this cannot be wrought by an ego who is poorly developed, nor by ordinary passional or mental faults. To effect injury so far-reaching, the ego must be highly evolved, and must have its energies awakened on the mental plane.

It is for this reason that ambition, pride and powers of the intellect, used for selfish aims, are so far more dangerous, and deadly in their effects, than the more palpable faults of the lower nature. So that the "Pharisee" is often further from the "kingdom of God", than the "publican and sinner". Along this line is developed the "black magician", the man who conquers passion and desire, develops will and the higher powers of the mind, not to offer them as forces to help forward the evolution of the whole, but in order to grasp all he can for himself as a unit, to hold, and not to share. Such men set themselves to maintain separation as against unity, striving to retard instead of to quicken, evolution. They vibrate in discord with the whole, instead of harmony, and are in danger of that rending of the ego himself, which means the loss of all the fruits of evolution.

Hitherto we have spoken mainly of the effects of evil on a man's growth : let us now look at the other side of the picture. All those who are beginning to understand something of the causal body, can make its evolution a definite object in life. They can strive to think, feel and act unselfishly, and so contribute to its growth and activity. Life after life this evolution of the individual proceeds, and, in aiding its growth by conscious effort, we are working in harmony with the Divine Will, and carrying out the purpose for which we are here. Nothing good,

that is once woven into the causal body, can ever be lost or dissipated: for this is the man that lives, so long as he remains man.

Thus we see that by the law of evolution everything that is evil, however strong it may seem, has within itself the germ of its own destruction, while everything that is good has in it the seed of immortality. The secret of this lies in the fact that everything evil, is inharmonious, because it sets itself against the cosmic law. Sooner or later, therefore, it is broken up by that law, dashed into pieces against it. Everything that is good, on the other hand, being in harmony with the law, is taken on by it and carried forward: it becomes part of the stream of evolution, of that "not ourselves which makes for righteousness", and therefore can never perish or be destroyed.

We may conceive of all the experience of a man as passing through a fine sieve or mesh : only that which is good can pass through : that which is evil is left behind, rejected. In this , the very mechanism by which the causal body the vehicle of the man that endures, is built up, lies not only the hope of man, but the certainty of his final triumph. However slow the growth, it is there: however long the way, it has its ending. The individual, which is our Self, is evolving, and cannot be utterly destroyed. Even though by our folly we may make the growth slower than it need be, none the less everything we contribute to it, however little, lasts in it forever, and is our possession for all the ages that lie in front.

Whilst nothing evil can be stored in the causal body, it is, however, stored if we may so use the term, in the lower vehicles to which it pertains. For under the law of justice, every man must receive the results of his own actions, be they bad or good. But evil necessarily works itself out on the lower planes, because it is only the matter of those planes that its vibrations can be expressed, and it has not even overtones capable of awakening a response in the causal body. Its force, therefore, is all expended at its own level, and it reacts in its entirety upon its creator in his astral and physical life, whether in this or in future incarnations.

More precisely, the result of evil is stored in the mental unitand in the astral and physical permanent atoms : and so the man has to face it over and over again : but that, of course, is a very different matter from taking it into the ego and making it really a part of himself.

Good actions and thoughts also, of course, produce results on the lower planes, but, in addition to that, they have the immensely higher and permanent effect upon the causal body. Thus all alike produce effects on the lower planes, and are manifested in the lower temporary vehicles, but good qualities alone are retained in the causal body as so much definite gain to the real man.

In this way, at first slowly, in the later stages with ever-increasing rapidity, a man's causal body is built. At each stage of his growth, a study of the colours, and striations of the causal body reveals the progress the ego has made since the causal body was first formed, when the entity emerged from the animal kingdom, and the exact stage of evolution at which he has now arrived.

As we have seen, in the later stages of evolution, both the causal and mental bodies expand enormously, exhibiting the most gorgeous radiance of many-coloured lights, glowing with intense splendour when comparatively at rest, and sending forth dazzling coruscations when in high activity.

As the causal body becomes able to express more and more of the ego, it extends further and further from its physical centre, until a man is able to enfold hundreds and even thousands of persons within himself, and so exercise a vast influence for good.

The pouring into the causal body of faculties acquired by a personality is analogous, to the pouring into the Group-Soul of the experiences acquired by the forms in which portions of the Group-Soul incarnate.

Thus, for example, supposing that the quality of accuracy is developed in a personality: when that quality goes back to the ego in the causal body, the same amount has to be spread over the whole causal body. The amount, which was quite sufficient to make one personality very accurate, when it goes into the ego, is only a fractional part of his requirements. He may consequently have many lives to develop enough of the quality to make it prominent in the next life, especially as the ego does not put into the next personality the same piece of himself but simply a piece of the whole mass of himself.

The student must, all through his studies, recollect that the causal body is *not* the ego, but only such matter of the higher mental plane which has been vivified, and which expresses the *qualities* the ego has acquired.

The real man himself - the divine trinity within - we may not see : but the more our sight and knowledge increase, the more nearly we approach that which veils Itself in him. Thus we may think of the causal body as the nearest to a conception of the true man that our sight will at present give us.

The student will recollect also, that it is by the size and shape of the causal body that are determined the size and shape of the mental body. In fact, the aura of a man, which has a definite size, is the same as that of a section of the causal body, and, as the causal body grows, that section becomes larger, and the man has a larger aura.

Furthermore, in the case of a developed man, the mental body becomes a reflection of the causal body, since the man learns to follow solely the promptings of the higher self, and to guide his reason exclusively by them.

In the process of meditation, [vide *The Mental Body* page 160] as the mental body is stilled, the consciousness escapes from it, and passes into and out of the "laya centre", the neutral points of contact between the mental body and the causal body. The passage is accompanied by a momentary swoon, or loss of consciousness—the inevitable result of the disappearance of objects of consciousness - followed by consciousness in the higher. The dropping out of objects of consciousness, belonging to the lower worlds, is thus followed by the

appearance of objects of consciousness in the higher world. Then the ego can shape the mental body according to his own lofty thoughts, and permeate it with his own vibrations. He can mould it after the high visions of the planes beyond his own, of which he has caught a glimpse in his highest moments, and can thus convey downwards and outwards ideas to which the mental body would otherwise be unable to respond.

Such ideas are the inspirations of genius, that flash down into the mind with dazzling light, and illuminate a world.

We may here usefully repeat the substance of what was said in *The Mental Body*, page 160, etc., directing our attention now, not so much to the lower brain consciousness, as to that of the ego working in the causal body. Genius, which is of the ego, sees instead of arguing. True intuition is one of its faculties .The lower manas or mind, working in the brain apparatus, arranges facts, gathered by observation, balances them one against the other, and draws, conclusions from them. By the process of ratiocination it operates, using the methods of induction and deduction.

Intuition on the other hand, as etymology indicates, is – in-sight, looking within - a process as direct and swift as physical sight. It is the exercise of the eyes of intelligence, the unerring recognition of a truth presented on the mental plane. Proof is unnecessary, because it is above and beyond reason. Great care must, of course, be taken to distinguish mere kamic impulse, from true intuition. It is only when the desires and appetites of the lower, kamic self are stilled and at rest that the voice of the higher mind can make itself heard in the lower personality.

In *Isis Unveiled*, pages 305-306, H.P.Blavatsky explains the matter with force and lucidity. Allied to the physical half of man's nature, she says, is reason ; allied to his spiritual part is his conscience, which is that instantaneous perception between right and wrong which can be exercised by the spirit which, being a portion of divine wisdom and purity, is itself absolutely pure and wise. Its promptings are independent of reason, and can manifest themselves clearly only when they are unhampered by the baser attractions of the lower nature. Reason, she points out , being wholly dependent on the evidence of other senses, cannot be a quality pertaining directly to the divine spirit. For spirit *knows* - hence reasoning is useless. Hence the ancient Theurgists maintained that the rational part of man's soul [spirit] never entered wholly into the man's body, but only overshadowed him more or less through the irrational or astral soul, which serves as an intermediary, agent or medium between spirit and body. The man who has conquered, matter sufficiently to receive the direct light from his shining *Augoeides*, [see p. 101], feels truth intuitively. He could not err in his judgement notwithstanding all the sophisms suggested by reason, for he is *illuminated*. Hence prophecy, vaticination, and so-called divine inspiration are simply , the effects of this illumination from above, by our own immortal spirit.

As with a flame we might light a wick , and the colour of the flame of the burning

wick will depend on the nature of the wick, and of the liquid in which it is soaked, so in each human being the flame of manas sets alight the brain and kamic wick, and the colour of the light from the wick will depend upon the kamic nature, and the development of the brain-apparatus.

In her article on "Genius ", H.P.Blavatsky explained this matter clearly: what we call the manifestations of genius in a person are only the more or less successful efforts of the ego to assert itself through its outer objective form. The egos of a Newton, an Aeschylus, a Shakespeare, are of the same essence and substance as the egos of a yokel, an ignoramus, a fool; or even an idiot. The self-assertion of their informing *genii* depends on the physiological and material construction of the physical man. No ego differs from another ego in its primordial or original essence and nature. That which makes of one mortal a great man and of another a vulgar, silly person is, as said, the quality and make-up of the shell or casing, the adequacy or inadequacy of brain and body to transmit and give expression to the light of the real *inner* man - the ego.

To use a familiar simile, physical man is the instruments , the ego the performing artist. The potentiality of perfect melody rests in the instrument, and no skill of the artist can awaken faultless harmony out of a broken or badly constructed instrument. This harmony depends on the fidelity of transmission, by word and act, to the objective plane, of the unspoken divine thought in the the very depths of man's subjective or inner nature: in a word, of his ego.

Mental ability, intellectual strength, acuteness, subtlety, are manifestations of lower manas in man : they may reach as far as what H. P. Blavatsky spoke of as "artificial genius" the outcome of culture and purely intellectual acuteness. Often its nature is demonstrated by the presence of kamic elements in it, i.e., of passion, vanity, arrogance.

At the present stage of human evolution, higher manas can but rarely manifest, itself. Occasional flashes of it are what we call true genius. "Behold in every manifestation of genius, *when combined with virtue*, the undeniable presence of the celestial exile, the divine ego whose jailer thou art, O man of matter." Such manifestations depend upon an accumulation of individual antecedent experiences of the ego in its preceding life or lives. For, although it is omniscient in its essence and nature, yet it still requires experience, through its *personalities*, of the things of earth, in order to apply the fruition of its abstract experience to them. And the cultivation of certain aptitudes, through out a long series of incarnations, must finally culminate, in some one life, as *genius*, in one direction or another. It is clear from the above that, for the manifestation of true genius, purity of life is essential.

It is important to recognise the part which the ego in the causal body plays in the formation of our conceptions of external objects. The vibrations of nerve threads present to the brain merely impressions : it is the work of the ego to classify, combine, and arrange them. The discrimination of the ego, acting through the mind, is brought to bear upon everything that the senses transmit to the brain.

Furthermore, this discrimination is not an inherent instinct of the mind, perfect from the first, but is the result of the comparison of a number of previous experiences.

Before considering the possibility of functioning consciously on the causal plane, we may remind ourselves that, for a man still attached to the physical body to move in full consciousness on the mental plane - *i.e.* either the lower or higher mental—he must be either an Adept or one of Their Initiated pupils , for until a student has been taught by his Master how to use his mental, body he will be unable to move with freedom even upon its lower levels.

To function consciously during physical life upon the higher levels denotes, of course, still greater advancement, for it means the unification of the man,so that down here he is no longer a mere personality, more or less influenced by the individuality above, but is himself that individuality or ego. He is certainly still trammelled and confined by a body, but nevertheless he has within him the power and knowledge of a highly developed ego.

At present, most people are not more than just conscious in the causal body: they can work only in the matter of the third sub-plane, *i.e.*,the lowest part of the causal body, and in fact only the lowest matter even of that is usually in operation. When they are on the Path, the second sub-plane opens up. The Adept, of course, uses the whole causal body, while his consciousness is on the physical plane. These details will be considered fully in a later chapter.

Passing now to more specific and detailed powers of the causal body, it will be recollected, as explained in the two preceding volumes of this series, that is not possible for a man to pass to another planet of our chain either in his astral or his mental body. In the causal body, however, when very highly developed, this achievement is possible, though even then by no means with the ease or the rapidity with which it can be done on the Buddhic plane, by those who have succeeded in raising their consciousness to that level.

It appears however, that a causal body would not normally be able to move in interstellar space. In that space it seems that the atoms lie apart and equidistant, and this is probably their normal condition when undisturbed. That is what is meant by speaking of the atoms as "free". Within the atmosphere of a planet they are never found at all in that state, for even when they are not grouped in forms, they are at any rate enormously compressed by the force of attraction.

In interplanetary space, the conditions are probably not exactly the same as in interstellar space, for there may be a great deal of disturbance due to cometic and meteoric matter, and also the tremendous attraction of the sun produces a considerable compression within the limits of this system.

Hence the atomic matter of a man's causal body is crushed together by attraction into a definite and quite dense shape, even though the atoms are in no way altered in themselves, and are not grouped into molecules . While such a body

can exist comfortably on its own atomic plane, in the neighbourhood of a planet, where the atomic matter is compressed, it would not be able to move or function in far-away space where the atoms are "free" and uncompressed.

The power of magnification belongs to the causal body, and is associated with the brow chakram, the force-centre between the eyebrows. From the central portion of this chakram what may be called a tiny microscope is projected, having for its lens only one atom. In this way an organ is produced, commensurate in size with the minute objects, to be observed. The atom employed may be either physical, astral or mental, but, whichever it is, it needs a special preparation. All its spirillae must be opened up, so that it is just as it will be in the seventh round of our chain of worlds.

If an atom of a level lower than the causal be used as an eyepiece, a system, of reflecting counterparts must be introduced. The atom can be adjusted, to any sub-plane, so that any required degree of magnification can be applied , in order to suit the object which is being examined. A further extension of the same power enables the operator to focus his own consciousness in the lens through which he is looking, and then to project it to distant points.

The same power, by a different arrangement, can be used for diminishing purposes, when one wishes to view as a whole something far too large to be taken in at once by ordinary vision.

The sight of the causal body enables one to foresee the future to some extent. Even with physical senses, one may sometimes foretell certain things. Thus, for example, if we see a man leading a life of debauchery, we may safely predict that, unless he changes, he will presently lose health and fortune. What we cannot tell, by physical means, is whether the man will change or not.

But a man who has the sight of the causal body could often tell this, because to him the reserve forces of the other would be visible. He could see what the ego thought of it all, and whether he was strong enough to interfere. No merely physical prediction is certain, because so many of the causes which influence life, cannot be seen on this lower plane. But, when the consciousness is raised to higher planes, we can see more of the causes, and so can come nearer to calculating the effects.

It is, of course, easier to foresee the future of an undeveloped man than of one more advanced. For the ordinary man has little will-power; karma assigns him certain surroundings, and he is the creature of those surroundings; he accepts fate marked out for him, because he does not know that he can alter it.

A more developed man, however, takes hold of his destiny, and moulds it;he makes his future what he wills it to be, counteracting the karma of the past by setting fresh forces in motion. Hence his future is not so easily predictable . But no doubt even in this case an Adept, who could see the latent will , could also calculate how he would use it.

Students of *The Mental Body* will recollect that there is there given a description of the Akashic Records, or the Memory of Nature, as it is sometimes called. In reading these Records, the work is done through the causal body, the mental body vibrating only in response to the activity of the causal body. For that reason, no satisfactory or reliable reading of the Records can be done without definite development of the causal body.

C.W. Leadbeater describes an interesting and unusual case where, through, reckless mental overwork, a man so aroused the faculties of his causal body that he was able, spasmodically, to read the Records with great clarity of detail. In addition, he was able to exercise the power of magnification, to some extent, particularly in regard to perfumes. The result, which is characteristic of this faculty, was a *roughening* of a smell, the smell losing its smoothness, and becoming like woollen cloth, so to say, or a basin of sand. The reason for this is that the faculty of magnification, which belong to the causal body, causes tiny physical particles which arouse in us the sense of smell to become separately appreciable, like the grains on sandpaper, and so the sense of roughness is produced.

Needless to say, this method of arousing the powers of the causal body by overwork is strongly to be deprecated, as it is far more likely to result in breakdown of the brain or nervous system than, as happened in this rare instance, to arouse causal faculties.

If a man raises his consciousness to the highest subdivision of his causal body, and focusses it exclusively in the atomic matter of the mental plane, he has before him three possibilities of moving his consciousness, which correspond to some extent with the three dimensions of space.

Obviously [1] a way is open to him to move it downwards into the second sub-plane of the mental, or upward into the lowest sub-plane of the Buddhic provided of course that he has developed his Buddhic body sufficiently to be able to utilise it as a vehicle.

[2] A second line of movement is the short cut from the atomic subdivision of one plane to the corresponding atomic subdivision of the planes above or below, without touching any of the intermediate sub-planes.

[3] A third possibility is not so much a *movement* along another line, at right angles to both of these others, but rather a possibility to looking up such a line, the line that joins the ego and the Monad, much as a man at the bottom of a well might look up at a star in the sky above him.

For there is a direct line of communication between the atomic sub-plane of the mental in this lowest cosmic plane and the corresponding atomic mental in the *cosmic* mental plane. Although we are as yet infinitely far from being able to

climb upwards by that line, yet C.W.Leadbeater states that once at least the experience came of being able to look up it for a moment. What is seen, he says, it is hopeless to try to describe, for no human words can give the least idea of it. But at least this much emerges, with a certitude that can never be shaken, that what we have hitherto supposed to be our consciousness, our intellect, is simply not ours at all, but His. Not even a reflection of His, but literally and truly a part of His consciousness, a part of His intellect. Some little help in understanding this, may be derived from the knowledge that the human ego itself is a manifestation of the Third Outpouring which comes from His First Aspect, the eternal and all-loving Father.

The growth and development of the causal body is greatly assisted by the work of the Masters, for they deal more with egos in their causal bodies than with the lower vehicles of men. They devote themselves to the pouring of spiritual influence upon men, raying out, as the sunlight radiates upon flowers, thereby evoking from them all that is noblest and best in them, and so promoting their growth. Many people are sometimes conscious of helpful influences of this description, but are quite unable to trace them to their source. This work will be explained somewhat more fully in a later chapter.

## CHAPTER XIX

### LIFE AFTER DEATH : THE FIFTH HEAVEN

In *The Astral Body* and *The Mental Body* we have dealt with the life of a man after death on the astral plane, and also on the lower mental plane, in his mental body, in the First, Second, Third and Fourth Heaven-worlds, on the Seventh, Sixth, Fifth and Fourth Sub-planes respectively. We now have to describe the life after death in the causal body, on the three higher levels of the mental plane.

The distinction between the two great divisions of the mental plane - the lower or rupa [form] and the higher or arupa [formless] ----is very marked : so different, indeed, are the two worlds, that different vehicles of consciousness are necessary for functioning in them.

In *The Mental Body*, pp. 202-204, the general rationale and purpose of the life in devachan has already been explained, and so need not be repeated here. It was also explained in that book why devachan is a necessity for the great majority of people. In certain exceptional cases, however, we saw that a man sufficiently advanced, with the permission of a very high authority, may "renounce devachan", and take a series of rapid incarnations, without any appreciable intervals between them.

In the lower mental plane, matter is dominant : it is the first thing that strikes the eye; and consciousness shines with difficulty through the forms. But in the higher planes life is the most prominent thing, and forms are there only for its purposes.

The difficulty in the lower planes is to give the life expression in the forms : in the higher , it is the reverse - to hold and give form to the flood of life. It is only above the dividing line between the lower and higher mental planes that the light of consciousness is subject to no wind, and shines with its own power. The symbol of a spiritual fire is very fitting for consciousness at those levels, as distinguished from the lower planes, where the symbol of fire burning fuel is more appropriate.

In the arupa levels, matter is subordinated to life, altering at every moment. An entity changes form with every change of thought. Matter is an instrument of his life and is no expression of himself. The form is made momentarily, and it changes with every change of his life. This is true not only of the arupa levels, of manas, but also in a subtle way of the plane of Buddhi, and it is true also of the spiritual ego.

Glorious as has been the life in the heaven-worlds of the lower mental plane it eventually comes to an end. The mental body in its turn drops away, as have done the other bodies, and the man's life in his causal body begins. All through the heaven-life, the personality of the last physical life is distinctly preserved, and it is only when the consciousness is finally withdrawn into the causal body that this feeling of personality is merged in the individuality, and the man for the first time since his descent into incarnation realises himself as the true and comparatively permanent ego.

In the causal body the man needs no "windows"--which as the student will recollect, were formed by his own thoughts in the lower heavens - for this, the causal plane, is his true home, and all his walls have fallen away.

The majority of men have as yet very little consciousness at this height; they rest dreamily unobservant and scarcely awake. Such vision, however, as they have is true, however limited it may be for lack of development.

The higher heaven-world life plays a very small part in the life of the ordinary man, for in his case the ego is not sufficiently developed to be awake in the causal body. Backward egos, in fact, never *consciously* attain the heaven-world at all, while in a still larger number obtain only a comparatively slight touch of the lower sub-planes.

But in the case of a man who is spiritually developed, his life, as an ego in his own world, is glorious and fully satisfying.

Nevertheless, consciously or unconsciously, every human being must touch the higher levels of the mental plane, before reincarnation can take place. As his evolution proceeds, this touch, of course becomes more and more definite and real to him. Not only is he more conscious there as he progresses, but the period he passes in that world of reality becomes longer, for his consciousness is slowly but steadily rising through the different planes of the system.

The time spent in the higher mental world may vary, according to the stage of development, from two or three days of unconsciousness, in the case of an ordinary undeveloped man, to a long period of years of conscious and glorious life, in the case of exceptionally advanced people.

The length of time spent in the heaven-worlds between incarnations is dependent upon three principal factors: [1] the class to which an ego belongs; [2] the mode in which he attained individualisation; and [3] the length and nature of his last life. As this matter has been treated in detail in *The Mental Body*, Chapter XXI, it is unnecessary to repeat here what was said there.

Even when we have fully realised how small a part of each life-cycle is spent on the physical plane, in order fairly to estimate its true proportion to the whole, we must also bear thoroughly in mind the far greater reality of the life in the higher worlds. This is a point which it is impossible to emphasise too strongly, for the vast majority of people are as yet so entirely under the dominion, of their physical senses, that the unrealities of the lower world seem to them the only reality, whilst the nearer anything approaches to true reality, the more unreal and incomprehensible it appears to them.

For reasons which are sufficiently comprehensible, the astral world has been called the world of illusion: but it is nevertheless at least one step nearer to reality : far indeed as is the astral sight from the clear, all-embracing vision of the man on his own plane, it is as least keener and more reliable than physical sense. And as is the astral to the physical, so is the mental to the astral, except that the proportion is raised to a higher power. Hence not only is the time spent on these higher planes far longer than the physical life, but every moment of it may, if properly used, be enormously more fruitful than the same amount of time on the physical plane could possibly be.

As evolution proceeds, the principle governing the life after death is that life on the lower levels, both of the astral and the mental planes, gradually shortens, while the higher life becomes steadily longer and fuller. Eventually the time arrives when the consciousness is unified, *i.e.*, when the higher and the lower selves are indissolubly united, and the man is no longer capable of wrapping himself up in his own cloud of thought, and mistaking the little that he can see through for the whole of the great heaven-world around him; then he realises the possibilities of his life, and so for the first time truly begins to live. But, by the time, that he attains these heights, he will already have entered upon the Path, and taken his future progress definitely into his own hands.

It is only when the consciousness has withdrawn from the lower bodies, and is once more centred in the ego, that the final result of the incarnation just concluded is known. Then it is seen what new qualities he has acquired in that particular little cycle of his evolution. At that time also, a glimpse of the life as a whole is obtained; the ego has for a moment a flash of clearer consciousness, in which he sees the results of the life just completed, and something, of what will follow from it in his next birth.

This glimpse can hardly be said to involve a knowledge of the nature of the next incarnation, except in the vaguest and most general sense. No doubt the main object of the coming life would be seen, and the specific progress which he is intended to make in it, but the vision would be chiefly valuable as a lesson in the karmic result of his action in the past. It offers him an opportunity, of which he takes more or less advantage, according to the stage of development to which he has attained.

At first he makes little use of it, since he is but very dimly conscious, and very poorly fitted to apprehend facts, and their varied interrelations; but gradually his power to appreciate what he sees increases, and later comes the ability to remember such flashes at the end of previous lives, and to compare them, and so to estimate the progress which he is making along the road which he has to traverse: in addition, he will devote some time to his plans for the life which lies before him. His consciousness gradually increases, until he comes to have an appreciable life on the higher levels of the mental plane, each time that he touches them.

#### THE FIFTH HEAVEN : THE THIRD SUB-PLANE

This is, of course, the lowest of the arupa or formless mental sub-planes; it is also the most populous of all the regions with which we are acquainted, because here are present almost all the **sixty thousand million souls** who are said to be engaged in the present human evolution -- all, in fact, except the comparatively small number who are capable of functioning on the second and first sub-planes.

As we have already seen, each soul is represented by an ovoid form, which at first is a mere colourless film, but which later, as the ego develops, begins to show a shimmering iridescence like a soap-bubble, colours playing over its surface like the changing hues made by sunlight on the spray of a waterfall.

Those who are connected with a physical body are distinguishable from those in the disembodied state by a difference in types of vibrations set up on the surface of their causal bodies, and it is therefore easy, on this plane, to see at a glance whether an individual is or is not in incarnation at the time.

The immense majority, whether in or out of the body, are but dreamily semiconscious, though few are now in the condition of mere colourless films. Those who are fully awake are marked and brilliant exceptions, standing out amid the less radiant crowds like stars of the first magnitude. Between these and the least developed are ranged every variety of size and beauty, each thus representing the exact stage of evolution at which he has arrived.

The majority are not yet sufficiently definite, even in such consciousness as they possess, to understand the purpose of the laws of the evolution in which they are engaged. They seek incarnation in obedience to the impulse of the Cosmic Will, and also to *Tanha*, the blind thirst for manifested life, the desire to find some region in which they can feel and be conscious of living. In the earlier stages, such entities cannot feel the intensely rapid and piercing, vibrations of the highly

refined matter of their own plane; the strong and coarse, but comparatively slow, movements of the heavier matter of the physical plane are the only ones that can evoke any response from them. Hence it is only on the physical plane that they feel themselves to be alive at all, and this explains their strong craving for rebirth into earth-life.

Thus for a time their desire agrees exactly with the law of evolution. They can develop only by means of those impacts from without, to which they are gradually, aroused to respond, and in this early stage they can receive them only in earth life. By slow degrees their power of response increases, and is awakened, first to the higher and finer physical vibrations, and still more slowly to those of the astral plane. Next, their astral bodies, which until now have been merely bridges to convey sensations to the ego, gradually become definite vehicles which they can use, and their consciousness begins to be centred rather in their emotions, than in the mere physical sensation.

At a later stage, but always by the same process of learning to respond to impacts from without, the egos learn to centre their consciousness in the mental body, to live in and according to the mental images which they have formed for themselves, and so to govern the emotions with their mind.

Yet further along the long road of evolution, the centre moves up to the causal body, and the egos realise their true life. When that stage is reached, however, they will be found upon a higher sub-plane than this [the third] and the lower earthly existence will be no longer necessary for them. But for the present, we are dealing with the less evolved majority, who still put forth, as groping, waving tentacles into the ocean of existence, the personalities which are themselves on the lower planes of life. But they are as yet in no sense aware that these personalities are the means whereby they are to be nourished and to grow. They see nothing of their past or future, not being yet conscious on their own plane. Nevertheless, as they are slowly drawing in experience, and assimilating it, there develops a sense that certain things are good to do, and others bad, and that expresses itself imperfectly in the connected, personality as the beginning of a conscience, a feeling of right and wrong. Gradually, as they evolve, the sense more and more clearly formulates itself in the lower nature, and becomes a less inefficient guide to conduct.

By means of the opportunities given by the flash of consciousness, to which we have previously referred, the most advanced egos of this sub-plane develop to a point at which they are engaged in studying their past, tracing out the causes set going in it, and learning much from retrospection, so that the impulses sent downwards become clearer and more definite, and translate themselves, in the lower consciousness, as firm convictions and imperative intuitions.

It should be unnecessary to point out that the thought images of the rupa or form levels are not carried into the higher heaven world. All illusion now is past, and each ego knows his real kindred, sees them, and is seen, in his own

royal nature, as the true immortal man that passes on from life to life, with all the ties intact that are knit to his real being.

On this third sub-plane are also to be found the causal bodies of the comparatively few members of the animal kingdom who are individualised. Strictly speaking, as we have previously seen, these are not animals any longer. They are practically the only examples now to be seen of the quite primitive causal body, undeveloped in size, and as yet coloured only very faintly by the first vibrations of newly born qualities.

When the individualised animal retires into his causal body, to await the turn of the wheel of evolution, which shall give him an opportunity of a primitive human incarnation, he seems to lose almost all consciousness of outer things, and to spend the time in a sort of delightful trance of the deepest peace and contentment. Even then, interior development of some sort is surely taking place, though its nature is difficult for us to comprehend. In any event, he is enjoying the highest bliss of which, at his level, he is capable.

## CHAPTER XX

### THE SIXTH HEAVEN : SECOND SUB-PLANE

From the densely thronged Fifth Heaven, we pass now into the more thinly populated world, as out of a great city into a peaceful countryside. For, at the present stage of human evolution, only a small minority of individuals have risen to this loftier level, where even the least advanced is definitely self-conscious, and also conscious of his surroundings.

He is able, at least to some extent, to review the past through which he has come, and is aware of the purpose and method of evolution. He knows that he is engaged in a work of self-development, and recognises the stages of physical and *post-mortem* life, through which he passes in his lower vehicles.

The personality, with which he is connected, is seen by him as part of himself, and endeavours to guide it, using his knowledge of the past as a store of experience from which he formulates principles of conduct, clear and immutable convictions of right and wrong. These he sends down into the lower mind, superintending and directing its activities.

In the earlier part of his life on this sub-plane, he may continually fail to make the lower mind understand logically the foundations of the principles he impresses upon it: yet, nevertheless, he succeeds in making the impression, so that such abstract ideas as truth, justice and honour, become unchallenged, and ruling conceptions in the lower mental life.

So firmly are such principles wrought into the very fibres of his being that, no matter what may be strain of circumstance or the torment of temptation, to act

against them becomes an impossibility. For these principles are the life of the ego.

While however, he thus succeeds in guiding his lower vehicle, his knowledge of that vehicle and its doings is often far from precise and clear. He sees the lower planes but dimly, understanding their principles rather than their details and part of his evolution on this sub-plane consists in coming more and more consciously into direct touch with the personality, which so imperfectly represents him below.

Only such persons as are deliberately aiming at spiritual growth live on this sub-plane, and they have, in consequence, become largely receptive of influences from the planes above them. The communication grows and enlarges, and a fuller flood pours through. Under this influence, the thought takes on a singularly clear and piercing quality, even in the less developed: the effect shows itself in the lower mind as a tendency to philosophic and abstract thinking.

In the more highly evolved, the vision is far-reaching: it ranges with clear insight over the past, recognising the causes set up, their working out, and what remains of their effects still unexhausted.

Egos living on this plane, have wide opportunities for growth when freed from the physical body, for here they may receive instruction from more advanced entities, coming into direct touch with their teachers. No longer by thought pictures, but by a flashing luminousness impossible to describe, the very essence of the idea flies like a star from one ego to another, its correlations expressing themselves as light waves pouring out from the central star, and needing no separate enunciation. A thought here is like a light placed, in a room: it shows all things round it, but requires no words to describe, them.

In this, the Sixth Heaven, a man sees also the vast treasures of the Divine Mind in creative activity, and can study the archetypes of all the forms that are being gradually evolved in the lower worlds. He may unravel the problems, connected with the working out of those archetypes, the partial good that seems as evil to the limited vision of men encased in flesh. In the wider outlook of this level, phenomena assume their due relative proportions, and a man sees the justification of the divine ways, so far as they are concerned with the evolution of the lower worlds.

## CHAPTER XXI

### THE SEVENTH HEAVEN : FIRST SUB-PLANE

This most glorious level of the heaven-world, has but few denizens as yet from our humanity, for on its heights dwell none but the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion, and Their Initiated pupils.

In one of the earlier letters, received from a Master, it was stated that to comprehend the condition of the First and Second Elemental Kingdoms.

i.e., those on the causal and lower mental planes - was impossible except to an Initiate: hence we cannot expect success in attempting to describe them on the physical plane.

Of the beauty of form, and colour, and sound, on the causal plane, no words can speak, for mortal language has no terms in which those radiant splendours may find expression.

In touching the seventh heaven, we come in contact for the first time with a plane which is cosmic in its extent: for this, the atomic part of our mental plane, is the lowest sub-plane of the mental body of the Planetary Logos.

On this level, therefore, may be met many an entity which mere human language has no words to portray. For our present purposes, however, it will be best to put aside altogether those vast hosts of beings whose range is cosmic, and confine ourselves strictly to the inhabitants peculiar to the mental plane of our Chain of Worlds.

Those who are on this sub-plane have accomplished the mental evolution, so that in them the higher shines out ever through the lower. From their eyes the illusion-veil of personality has been lifted, and they know and realise that they are *not* the lower nature, but use it only as a vehicle of experience.

In the less evolved of them, it may yet have power to shackle and to hamper, but they can never fall into the blunder of confusing the vehicle with the self behind it. From this they are saved, because they carry their consciousness not only from day to day, but from one incarnation to another, so that past lives are not so much looked back upon, as always present in the consciousness, the man feeling them as one life, rather than as many lives.

On this sub-plane, the ego is conscious of the lower heaven-world, as well as of his own. If he has there any manifestations, as a thought form, in the heaven-life of his friends, he can make the fullest use of them.

On the third sub-plane, and even in the lower part of the second, his consciousness of the sub-planes below him was still dim, and his action in the thought form largely instinctive and automatic. But as soon as he got well into the second sub-plane, his vision rapidly became clearer, and he recognised the thought-forms, with pleasure, as vehicles through which he was able to express more of himself, in certain ways, than he could do through his personality.

Now that he is functioning in the causal body, amidst the magnificent light and splendour of the highest heaven, his consciousness is instantaneously and perfectly active at any point in the lower divisions to which he wills to direct it, and he can, therefore, intentionally project additional energy into such a thought-form, when he wishes to use it for the purpose of teaching. From this highest level of the mental plane come down most of the influences, poured out by the Masters of Wisdom, as They work for the evolution of the human race, acting directly on the souls, or egos, of men, shedding upon them the inspiring energies

which stimulate spiritual growth, which enlighten the intellect, and purify the emotions.

From here genius receives its illumination: here all upward efforts find their guidance. As the sun-rays fall everywhere from one centre, and each body that receives them uses them after its nature, so from the Elder Brothers of the race fall on all men the light and life which it is Their function to dispense. Each uses as much as he can assimilate, and thereby grows and evolves. Thus as everywhere else, the highest glory of the heaven-world is found in the glory of service, and they who have accomplished the mental evolution are the fountains, from which flows strength for those who are still climbing.

On the three higher levels of the mental plane are to be found the hosts of arupa or formless devas, who possess no body denser than the causal. The nature of their life appears to be so essentially different from the life we lead as to make it impossible to describe in physical words.

Arupa devas are connected with the guidance of the worlds, of races, of nations.

There is also a very limited class of men, conscious on the arupa levels of the mental plane, who have been "sorcerers" in the past. In them the higher intellect is awakened, and with it the intellectual recognition of unity. They now perceive that they have been on the wrong path, that it is not possible to hold back the world, and prevent it from climbing on the upward arc. Being still tied by the karma they have made, they have to work on the wrong side that is, on the side of disintegration. But they work with a changed motive, and endeavour to turn their forces against those men who are in need of being strengthened by having to struggle against resistance in their spiritual life. This truth appears to have been perceived by Marie Corelli who dealt with the point in her book *The Sorrows of Satan*. The Satan there described is always glad when he is defeated: he exerts himself to oppose, but rejoices when a man proves himself spiritual enough to resist.

This side of life is recognised also in the Hindu Puranas. There are cases in which a man has evolved to a very high point of knowledge, and then incarnates to expiate some of his past karma, in the form of an opponent of good, like Ravanna. By his past karma he is compelled to gather up in himself the evil forces of the world, in order that they may be destroyed. Other religions have the same idea in different forms.

## CHAPTER XXII

### TRISHNA : THE CAUSE OF REINCARNATION

We have now practically completed our study of the nature, functions, growth and development of the causal body. Having thus studied what we may call the form-side of the ego, it is now necessary that we endeavour to obtain some further understanding of the ego himself, as a conscious, functioning entity.

In the present chapter we shall commence the study of the ego in his relation, to his personalities: this practically amounts to the life-side of reincarnation. The first part of our subject will be Trishna - that "thirst" which is the primary reason why the ego seeks reincarnation. In the next chapter we will deal more specifically with the form-side of reincarnation. *i.e.*, its mechanism.

Then we shall deal with other aspects of the attitude of the ego towards the personality. After that, we shall pass to a study of the life of the ego on his own plane. Finally, we must study, so far as our materials permit, the relation of the ego to the Monad.

The primary and essential reason for reincarnation is the Cosmic Will, which impresses itself upon the ego, appearing in him as a desire for manifestation. In obedience to this, the ego copies the action of the Logos by pouring himself forth into the lower planes.

More specifically, this desire is known in Samskrit as Trishna, or thirst in Pali as Tanha it is the blind thirst for manifested life, the desire to find some region where the ego can [1]express himself, and [2] receive those impressions and impacts from without which alone enable him to be conscious of living, to feel himself alive.

This is not desire for life in the ordinary sense of the word, but rather for a more perfect manifestation, a desire to feel himself more thoroughly alive and active, a desire for that complete consciousness which involves the power to respond to all possible vibrations from the surroundings on every plane, so that the ego may attain the perfection of sympathy, *i.e.*, of feeling-with.

As we shall see more fully later on, the ego on his own plane is far from being fully conscious, but what consciousness he has gives him a feeling of great pleasure, and arouses a kind of hunger for a fuller realisation of life. It is this hunger of the ego, in fact, which lies behind the world's great clamour for a fuller life.

It is not an outside pressure which drives a man back into incarnation: he comes because he wants to come. If the ego did not want to come back, he would not return: but so long as any desire remains for anything that the world can give him, he will want to come back. Thus an ego is *not* driven, against his will, back to this world of troubles, but his own intense hunger for it brings him back.

We may take an analogy from the physical body. When food has been taken, and completely assimilated, the body wants more food, becomes hungry. No one has to drive the man to eat: he gets food and eats it, because he wants it. Similarly, so long as man is imperfect, so long as he has not assimilated, everything this world can give, and utilised it to the full, so that he does not want anything more from this world, so long he will return to rebirth.

Trishna may be conceived as one of the many ways in which the universal law of periodicity manifests itself. In the Esoteric Philosophy, this law is recognised as

extending to the emanation and reabsorption of the universe, the Night and Day of Brahma, the outbreathing and the inbreathing of the Great Breath.

Hence Hindus have pictured the God of Desire as the impulse to manifestation. "Kama" .....is in the *Rig Veda* [x.129] the personification of that feeling, which leads and propels to creation. He was the *first Movement* that stirred the ONE, after its manifestation from the purely abstract Principle, to create. 'Desire first arose in It, which was the primal germ of mind; and which sages, searching with their intellect, have discovered to be the bond which connects Entity with Non-entity.' [ *The Secret Doctrine*, II. 185]. Kama [Desire] is essentially, the longing for active sentient existence, existence of vivid sensation, the tossing turbulence of passionate life.

When spiritual Intelligence comes into contact with this thirst for sensation, its first action is to intensify it. As the Stanza says: "From their own essence they filled [*i.e.*, intensified] the Kama." [*Ibid.* 170]. Thus Kama for the individual, as for Kosmos, becomes the primary cause of reincarnation, and, as Desire differentiates into desires, these chain down the Thinker to earth, and bring him back, time after time, to rebirth. The Hindu and Buddhist scriptures are, of course, filled with this statement of truth.

Until the realisation of Brahman is reached, there must always be Trishna. When a man has assimilated all that he has acquired, and made it part of himself, then Trishna will arise and drive him out to seek new experiences.

At first, this is a thirst for *external* experiences, and this is the sense in which Trishna, is usually employed. There is, however, another and keener thirst, well expressed in the phrase: "My soul is athirst for God"; yea, even for the living, God." This is the thirst of the part to find the whole to which it belongs. If we think of the part coming forth from, but never losing the link with, the whole, then there is always a certain retractive force, trying to bring the part back. The Spirit, which is divine, can find no permanent satisfaction outside divinity: it is this dissatisfaction, this desire to search, which is the root of Trishna, and which brings a man out of Devachan, or, in fact, out of any condition, until the end of the search is reached.

It is quite possible for a man to obtain a certain lower kind of Moksha - a temporary liberation from rebirth. Thus certain of the less developed yogis in India deliberately kill out all desires belonging to this particular world. Realising that the world is transitory, that it is hardly worth while to take very much trouble to remain in it, especially if there has been much suffering or disappointment, the man reaches that form of *vairagya* [ non-attachment ] which is called technically "burning-ground vairagya"; this does not lead to full Liberation, but it does result in a partial liberation.

As one of the Upanishats states, a man is born in the world to which his desires lead him. Hence, having killed all desire for anything in *this* world, the man passes away from it, and is not reborn in it. He will then pass into a *loka* [ world ]

which is not permanent, but in which he may remain for long ages. There are a number of such worlds, connected very often with the worship of a particular Divine form, connected with special kinds of meditation, and so on, and a man may pass into one of these, and remain there for a quite indefinite, time. In the case of those who have given themselves very largely to meditation, their desire is entirely towards Objects of meditation: consequently they stay in the mental world, whither their own desires have led them.

Whilst such people have taken themselves out of the troubles of this world, they will ultimately come back to a world, either this world, if it is still going on, or a world similar to this, where they can take up their evolution at the point at which it was dropped. Hence the troubles are only postponed, and it does not, therefore, seem to be worth while to adopt the plane described.

It is because it is possible to "kill out" desire that occult teachers prescribe instead transmutation of desire. That which is killed will rise again: that which is transmuted is changed forever. A person, in a very imperfect condition of evolution, who kills out desire, kills at the same time all possibility of the higher, evolution, because he has nothing to transmute. Desire is dead for the present life, which means that all the higher life of the emotions and of the mind is for the time killed.

The false *vairagya* is a *repulsion* from the lower, brought about by disappointment, trouble, or weariness of some kind: the true *indifference* to the lower things results from the desire for the higher life, and brings about a quite different result.

In the *Voice of The Silence* it is said that the soul wants "points that draw it upwards"; by killing out desire a man gets rid of the taste for life only temporarily, : the taste is there latent, and will in due time revive.

If a man, who has killed out desire in the manner described, is quite an average person, with no special intellectual or moral qualities, he will remain, as said, away from this world, in a condition in which he is quite happy, but in which he is of no particular use, either to himself or anybody else.

If, on the other hand, the man is one who has gone a considerable way along the Path, he may have reached a stage of meditation in which his mental powers are of very great value. He may be able, even though unconsciously, to influence the world, and so help in that great stream of mental and spiritual energy which is drawn upon by the Masters for Their work in the world. This is the reservoir which is filled with spiritual energy by the Nirmanakayas [ vide *The Mental Body*, page 193].

A man of this kind, who is filled with the spirit of service, would pass to a world where he could work along that particular line. It would be a world about the level of the causal body. Here he would live, literally for ages, pouring out his stream

of concentrated thought, for the helping of others, and so helping to supply this reservoir of spiritual power.

## CHAPTER XXIII

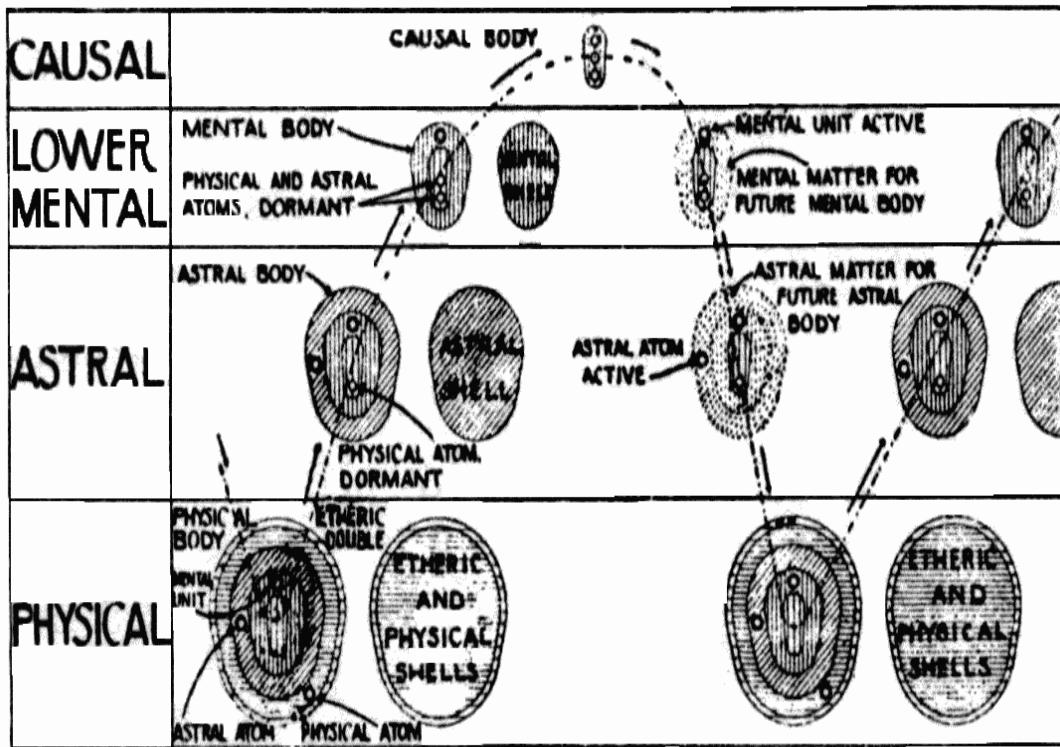
### THE PERMANENT ATOMS AND THE MECHANISM OF REINCARNATION

In this chapter we shall deal with the part played by the permanent atoms in rebirth, and also with certain further details of the mechanism of rebirth.

It has already been explained, in this series of books, that after the death of the physical body, the ego steadily withdraws through plane after plane, until eventually he is clothed only in his causal vehicle. At physical death, the life web, together with prana is withdrawn into the heart, round the physical permanent atom. The physical permanent atom then rises along the Sushumna-nadi --- a canal running from the heart to the third ventricle - into the head, to the third ventricle of the brain. Then the whole of the life-web, collected round the permanent atom, rises slowly to the point of junction of the parietal and occipital sutures, and leaves the physical body - now dead.

As the ego vacates each of his bodies, the permanent atoms of those bodies pass into a dormant condition , and are retained in the causal body in that quiescent state. While the man is in his causal body only, he thus has within that body the physical permanent atom, the astral permanent atom, and the mental permanent molecule, or unit,as it is more usually called. These three, wrapped in the buddhic life-web, appear as a brilliant nucleus-like particle in the causal body. They are, of course, all that now remains to the ego of the physical, astral and mental bodies of his previous incarnation.

These various stages are illustrated by the left-hand portion of **Diagram XXV**. Whilst the man is in possession of all his vehicles, the permanent atoms are shown with rays projecting from them, indicating that they are actively functioning. As each body dies, and is left behind, the permanent atom concerned becomes dormant, as is shown by the plain ring without rays, and retreats within the causal body. As the permanent atoms thus "go to sleep", the normal flow of life in the spirillae is lessened, and, during the whole period of repose, the flow is small and slow. In the diagram, the causal body is shown, on the causal level, with the three permanent particles within it, all dormant.



**DIAGRAM XXV.—The Cycle of Re-birth.**

The student should realise that it is necessary for evolution that these permanent atoms should be carried over, the reason being that the developed man must be master of *all* planes or worlds, and the permanent atoms form the only direct channel, imperfect though it be, between the spiritual triad, or ego, and the forms he is connected with. If it were conceivable that he could develop without permanent atoms, he might possibly become a glorious, archangel upon higher planes, but he would be entirely useless in these lower worlds, having cut off from himself the power of feeling and thinking. We must not, therefore, drop the permanent atoms: our business is to purify and develop them.

We may note here that permanent atoms are much more evolved than are other atoms, being at the fullest development of seventh round atoms in men who are about to become Adepts. They are thus as highly developed as atoms can possibly be, and, as we have seen, are charged with all the qualities which they have brought over from previous births.

When a person reaches the level of a Buddha, it is quite impossible for him to find atoms useful to him, except those which have been used as permanent atoms by human beings.

All the permanent atoms of all those who, in connection with this world, or probably even with this chain of worlds, have attained Adeptship and have cast them off, have been collected together and used in the vehicles of the Lord Gautama Buddha. As there were not quite enough of these to make the entire

vehicle, some of the best ordinary atoms available were also employed, being galvanised into activity by the others. They are replaced by permanent atoms, obtained from every new Adept who takes the Sambhogakaya or the Dharmakaya vesture [see page 322]. This set of bodies is unique and there is no material to make another set. They were used by Gautama Buddha, and afterwards preserved.

The causal, mental and astral bodies of the Buddha were used also by the Christ, along with the physical body of Jesus, and by Shankaracharya, and are now again being used by the Lord Maitreya.

Returning from this digression on permanent atoms, to the time when the life on the higher mental sub-planes comes to an end, we perceive that Trishna *i.e.*, desire for further experience, reasserts itself, and the ego once more turns his attention outwards, stepping over the threshold of devachan into what has been called the plane of reincarnation, bringing with him the results, small or great, of his devachanic work.

With his attention turned outwards, as said, the ego sends forth a thrill of life, which arouses the mental unit. The flow in the spirillae of this unit, and in the other permanent atoms in their turn, which during the period of repose, has been small and slow, is now increased, and the mental unit, thus stimulated, begins to vibrate strongly. This is shown in the diagram, on the right hand side, by a reappearance of the rays round the mental unit.

The life-web begins to unfold again, and the vibrating mental unit, acting as a magnet, draws around itself mental matter, with vibratory powers resembling, or accordant with, its own.

The devas of the Second Elemental Kingdom bring this material within reach of the mental unit, and, in the earlier stages of evolution, they also shape the matter into a loose cloud around the permanent unit: but, as evolution proceeds, the ego himself exercises an ever increasing influence over the shaping of the material. This cloud of matter—which is not yet of course a vehicle, properly so-called—is indicated in the diagram by the dotted outline.

When the mental body is partially formed, the life-thrill from the ego awakens the astral permanent atom, and a similar procedure takes place, a cloud of astral matter being drawn round the astral permanent atom.

In his descent to incarnation, we thus see that the ego does not receive ready-made mental and astral bodies: instead, he receives material out of which these bodies will be built, in the course of the life that is to follow. Moreover, the matter which he receives is capable of providing him with mental and astral bodies, of exactly the same type as those he had at the end of his last mental and astral lives, respectively.

The method whereby the ego obtains a new etheric body, into which, as into a mould, the new physical body is built, has been, fully described in The Etheric Double, p.67, and so need not be repeated here. We may add, however, that during human ante-natal life the prolongation of the Sutratma is formed, consisting of a single thread, which weaves a network, a shimmering web of inconceivable fineness and delicate beauty, with minute meshes, reminding one of the closely woven cocoon of the silkworm.

Within the meshes of this web the coarser particles of the bodies are built together. Thus if the bodies are looked at with buddhic vision, they all disappear, and in their places is seen this web of life, as it is called, which supports and vivifies all the bodies.

During the ante-natal life, the thread grows out from the physical permanent atom and branches out in every direction, the growth continuing until the physical body is full grown. During physical life the prana, or vitality, courses along the branches and meshes.

It appears that it is usually the presence of the permanent atom which renders possible the fertilisation of the ovum, from which the new body is to grow. Nevertheless, when a child is stillborn, there has usually been no ego behind, it [and presumably, therefore, no permanent atom], and of course no etheric elemental [*vide The Etheric Double*, p.67]. Although there are vast hosts of egos seeking incarnation, many of them still at so early a stage that almost any ordinary surroundings would be equally suitable for them, yet it does sometimes happen that, at a given time, there is no ego able to take advantage of a particular opportunity; in that case, though the body may be formed, to a certain extent, by the thought of the mother, yet, as there is no ego, it is never really alive.

The ordinary ego is, of course, by no means in a position to choose a body for himself. The place of his birth is usually determined by the combined action, of three forces: these are: [1] the law of evolution, which causes an ego to be born under conditions which will give him an opportunity of developing exactly those qualities, of which he stands most in need; [2] the law of karma. The ego may not have deserved the best possible opportunity, and so he has to put up with the second or third best. He may not even have deserved any great opportunity at all, and so a tumultuous life of small progress may be his fate. We shall return a little later to this question, of the karma of an ego; [3] the force of any personal ties of love or hate that the ego may have previously formed. Sometimes a man may be drawn into a position, which he cannot be said to have deserved in any other way than by the strong personal love, which he felt for some one higher in evolution than himself.

A more advanced man, who is already on the Path, may be able to exercise a certain amount of choice as to the country and family of his birth. But such a man would be the first to put aside entirely any personal wish in the matter, and resign

himself wholly into the hands of the eternal law, confident that what ever it brings to him must be far better for him than any selection of his own.

Parents cannot choose the ego who shall inhabit the body to which they give birth, but by so living as to offer an unusually good opportunity for the progress of an advanced ego, they can make it exceedingly probable that such an ego will come to them.

We have seen that as the ego descends to a fresh incarnation, he has to take up the burden of his past, much of which has been stored as vibratory tendencies in his permanent atoms. These germs or seeds are known to Buddhists as Skandhas, a convenient word for which there seems to be as yet no exact equivalent in English. They consist of material qualities, sensations, abstract ideas, tendencies of mind, mental powers, the pure aroma of all these having been built into the causal body, the remainder being stored, as stated, in the permanent atoms and mental unit.

H.P. Blavatsky, in her vivid, forceful and inimitable language, gives the following, description of the ego coming to rebirth., and being met by his Skandhas :

"Karma , with its arm of Skandhas, waits at the threshold of Devachan, whence the Ego re-emerges to assume a new incarnation. It is at this moment that the future destiny of the now-rested Ego trembles in the scales of just retribution, as it now falls once again under the sway of active Karmic Law. It is in this rebirth. which is ready for it, a rebirth selected and prepared by this mysterious, inexorable, but in the equity and wisdom of its decrees, infallible LAW, that the sins of the previous life of the Ego are punished. Only it is into no imaginary Hell, with theatrical flames and ridiculous tailed and horned devils, that the Ego is cast, but verily on to this earth, the plane and region of his sins, where he will have to atone for every bad thought and deed. As he has sown, so will he reap.

Reincarnation will gather around him all those other Egos who have suffered, whether directly or indirectly, at the hands, or even through the unconscious instrumentality, of the past personality. They will be thrown by Nemesis in the way of the *new* man, concealing the old Eternal Ego... The new personality is no better than a fresh suit of clothes with its specific characteristics colour, form and qualities: but the real man who wears it is the same culprit as of old". [The Key To Theosophy, pp. 141-2].

Hence it is the law of Karma which guides the man unerringly towards the race and nation herein are to be found the general characteristics that will produce a body and provide a social environment fitted for the manifestation of the general character, built up by the Ego in previous earth-lives, and for reaping of the harvest he has sown.

Karma thus traces the line, which forms the Ego's path to the new incarnation, this Karma being the collectivity of causes set going by the Ego himself.

In considering this play of karmic forces, however, there is one factor to which

due weight should be given *viz.*, the ready acceptance by the ego, in his clear-sighted vision, of conditions for his personality for other than those of the personality might be willing to choose for itself. The schooling of experience is not always pleasant, and, to the limited knowledge of the personality, there must be much of earth experience which seems needlessly painful unjust and useless. But the Ego, ere he plunges into the "Lethe of the body—" sees the causes which result in the conditions of the incarnation, on which he is to enter, and the opportunities which will be afforded for growth: hence it is easy to see how lightly will weigh in the balance all passing griefs and pains trivial, to that piercing, farseeing gaze, the joys and woes of earth.

For what is each life but a step in the "Perpetual progress for each incarnating, Ego, or divine soul, in an evolution from the outward to the inward, from the material to the Spiritual, arriving at the end of each stage of absolute unity with the Divine Principle. From strength to strength, from the beauty and perfection of one plane to the greater beauty and perfection of another, with accessions of new glory, of fresh knowledge and power in each cycle, such is the destiny of every Ego". [Key To Theosophy, p.155].

And as Annie Besant graphically puts it, "with such a destiny, what boots the passing suffering of a moment, or even the anguish of a darkened life?"

Continuing with our brief examination of the question of the karma of an ego, it is possible to see the great mass of the accumulated karma - known as the *sanchita* or piled-up karma—hovering over the ego. Usually it is not a pleasant sight, because, by the nature of things, it contains more evil than good. The reason for this is as follows.

In the earlier stages of their development most men have, through ignorance, done many things that they should not have done, and consequently have laid up for themselves, as a physical result, a good deal of suffering on the physical plane. The average civilised man, on the other hand, is trying to do good rather than harm, and therefore, on the whole, is likely to be making more good karma than bad. But by no means all of the good karma goes into the accumulated mass and so we get the impression in that mass of a preponderance of evil over good.

This again needs further explanation. The natural result of good thoughts, or good actions, is to improve the man himself, to improve the quality of his vehicles, to bring out in him qualities of courage, affection, devotion, and so forth. These effects thus show themselves in the man himself, and in his vehicles, but *not* in the mass of piled-up karma which is waiting for him.

If, however, he performs a good action, with the thought of its reward in his mind, then good karma for that action will come to him, and it will be stored up, with the rest of the accumulation, until such time as it can be brought forward, and materialised into activity.

Such good karma naturally binds the man to earth just as effectually as evil karma: consequently, the man who is aiming at real progress learns to do all actions entirely without thought of self, or of the result of his action. This is not to say that any man can avoid the result of his actions, be they good or bad: but he can change the character of the result. If he forgets himself entirely, and does good actions out of the fulness of his heart, then the whole force of the result is spent in the building of his own character, and nothing of it remains to bind him to the lower planes. The fact is that in each case the man gets what he wants: in the words of the Jesus: "Verily I say unto you, they have their reward".

An ego may sometimes choose whether he will take certain karma in the present life, though often the brain consciousness may know nothing of the choice: the very adverse circumstances, at which a man is grumbling, may thus be exactly what he has deliberately chosen for himself, in order to forward his evolution.

A pupil of a Master may often dominate and largely change his karma, setting in motion new forces in many directions, which naturally modify the working out of the old ones.

All of us have more or less of evil karma behind us, and, until that is disposed of it will be a perpetual hindrance to us in our higher work. Hence one of the earliest steps, in the direction of serious progress, is to work out whatever of this evil still remains to us. This results in the Agents of Karma giving us the opportunity of paying off more of this debt, in order that the way may be cleared for our future work; this, of course, may, and often does, involve a considerable increase of suffering in various directions.

The portion of karma selected for discharge in a particular life is known as "ripe", or *prarabda* karma. With this in view, the mental, astral and physical bodies are constructed for a particular length of life. That is one reason why suicide is such a grievous mistake: it constitutes a direct refusal to work out the karma, selected for that particular incarnation, and merely postpones the trouble, as well as generating new karma of an unpleasant nature.

Another reason against suicide is that each incarnation costs the ego no inconsiderable trouble in its preparation, and also in the wearisome period of early childhood, during which he is gradually, and with much effort, gaining some control over his new vehicles. It is obviously, therefore, alike his duty, and his interest, to make the most of his vehicles, and to preserve them as carefully as possible. Certainly he ought by no means to yield them up, until the Great Law compels him to do so, except at the bidding of some higher and overmastering duty from outside, such as the duty of a soldier to his country.

The selection of "ripe" karma for a particular incarnation is, of course, a highly complicated process: it has for example, to be sufficiently *congruous* to be worked out at a particular age of the world, in a particular family, a particular environment of people and circumstances.

As a man's will is free, it may happen that the karma selected for him, for particular life, is worked through sooner than the Administrators of Karma had expected, if one may put it that way. In such a case, They give him more, that being the explanation of the otherwise perplexing statement that "Whom the Lord loveth He Chasteneth".

The parabda karma of an individual divides itself into two parts. That which is to express itself in the physical body is made by the Devarajas into the elemental which builds the body, as described in the Etheric Double, Chapter XV.

The other far larger block, which is to indicate his fate through life, the good or evil fortune which is to come to him, is made into another thought-form which does not descend. Hovering over the embryo, it remains upon the mental plane. From that level it broods over the man, and takes or makes opportunities, to discharge itself by sections, sending down from itself a flash like lightening to strike, or a finger to touch, sometimes far down on the physical plane, sometimes a sort of extension which reaches only the astral plane, and sometimes what we may call a horizontal flash or finger upon the mental plane.

This thought-form goes on discharging itself until it is quite empty, and then returns to the matter of the plane. The man can of course, modify its action by the new karma which he is constantly making. The ordinary man has usually scarcely will enough to create any strong new causes, and so the elemental empties itself of its contents according to what may be described as its original programme, taking advantage of convenient astrological periods and surrounding circumstances, which make its work easier or more effective. And so the horoscope of the man may work out with considerable exactitude.

But if the man be sufficiently developed to possess a strong will, the elemental's action is likely to be much modified, and the life will by no means follow the lines laid down in the horoscope.

Sometimes the modifications introduced are such that the elemental is unable fully to discharge itself before the time of the man's death. In that case, whatever is left of it is again absorbed into the great mass of the sanchita or accumulated karma, and out of that another and more or less similar elemental is made, ready for the next physical life.

The time and place of the physical birth are determined by the "temperament", sometimes called the "colour" or the "keynote" of the person, this again being determined, to some extent, by the permanent atom. The physical body must be born into the world, at a time when the physical planetary influences are suitable to the "temperament": hence it is born "under" its astrological "Star". Needless to say, it is not the Star that imposes the temperament, but the temperament that fixes the epoch of birth under that Star. Hence arise the correspondences between Stars and characters, and the usefulness, for educational purposes, of a skilfully drawn horoscope, as a guide to the personal temperament of the child.

It seems probable that, in the majority of cases, the exact time and manner of a man's death are *not* decided before or at his birth. Astrologers often assert that they cannot foretell the death of a subject, though they can calculate that, at a certain time, malefic influences will be strong, so that the man *may* die then: if, however, he does not die then, his life will continue, until a certain other occasion, when evil aspects again threaten him, and so on.

It is likely that these uncertainties represent points, which are left open for later decision, depending largely upon the modifications introduced by the action of the man, during his life, and by the use which he makes of his opportunities.

In any event, we should avoid the error of attaching an exaggerated importance to the time and manner of death. We may be assured that Those, who are in charge of such matters, possess a much truer appreciation of relative values, and have regard to the progress of the ego concerned, as the one matter of importance.

Whilst we are dealing with the subject of death, it may be mentioned that the fundamental objection to killing is that it interferes with the course of evolution. To kill a man is to cut him off from the opportunity which he would otherwise have had in that body. He will, of course, have another body later on, but he has been delayed, and additional trouble has been given to the agents of karma in finding another place for his evolution.

It is obviously much more serious to kill a man than an animal, because the man has to develop an entirely new personality, whereas the animal goes back to the group-soul, from which another incarnation is a comparatively easy matter, but even this lesser amount of karma should not be generated thoughtlessly or needlessly.

To an advanced Ego, all the earlier stages of childhood are exceedingly wearisome. Sometimes a really advanced person avoids all this, by asking some one else to give him an adult body, a sacrifice which any of his disciples would always be delighted to make for him.

This method, however, also has its drawbacks. Every body has its own little peculiarities and habits, which cannot readily be changed, so that it must to some extent be a misfit to another ego. In the case under consideration, the man would have retained his old mental and astral bodies, which are, of course counterparts of his previous physical body. To adapt these to the new physical body, grown by some one else, may obviously often be a very difficult business. Further, if the new physical body be a baby, this adaptation can be done gradually, but, if it is an adult body, it has to be done immediately, which means an amount of strain that is distinctly unpleasant.

In The Etheric Double, p. 67, it was explained how the new physical body is gradually built into the mould provided by the etheric double, this etheric double being built in advance for the incoming ego by an elemental, which is a joint

thought-form of the four Devarajas.

This elemental takes charge of the body from the first, but, some time before the physical birth takes place, the ego also comes into contact with his future habitation, and from that time onwards the two forces are working side by side. Sometimes the characteristics, which the elemental is directed to impose, are but few in number and consequently it is able to retire at a comparatively early age, and to leave the ego in full control of the body. In other cases, where the limitations are of such a character that a good deal of time is necessary for their development, it may retain its position until the body is seven years old.

In the majority of cases, however, the actual work done by the ego, upon the new vehicles, up to the point at which the elemental withdraws, is inconsiderable. He is certainly in connection with the body, but generally pays little attention to it, preferring to wait until it has reached a stage where it is more responsive to his efforts.

During the embryonic period, whilst the physical body is being built, out of the substance of the mother, the ego broods over the mother, but can do little towards the shaping of the body. The embryo is unconscious of its future, dimly conscious only of the flow of maternal life, impressed by maternal hopes and fears, thoughts and desires. Nothing from the ego can affect it, save a feeble influence coming through the physical permanent atom, and it does not share, because it cannot answer to, the wide-reaching thoughts ,the aspiring emotions of the ego, as expressed by him in his causal body.

During the years whilst the ego is slowly coming into full touch with the new vehicles, he is, on his own plane, carrying on his own wider, richer life. His touch with the new physical body is manifested as the growth of the *brain* consciousness.

Egos differ greatly in the interest which they take in their physical vehicles: Some hover over them anxiously from the first, and take a good deal of trouble about them, while others are almost entirely careless with regard to the whole matter.

The case of the Adept is very different. As there is no evil karma to be worked out, no artificial elemental is at work, and the ego himself is in sole charge of the development of the body from the beginning, finding himself limited only by heredity.

This enables a far more refined and delicate instrument to be produced: but it also involves more trouble for the ego, and engages for some years a considerable, amount of his time and energy. Consequently, for this, and no doubt for other reasons also, an Adept does not wish to repeat the process more often, than is strictly necessary, and He therefore makes His physical body last as long as possible.

Whilst our bodies grow old and die, for various reasons, from inherited

weakness, disease, accident, self-indulgence, worry and overwork, in the case of the Adept none of these causes are present, though we must, of course, remember that His body is fit for work, and capable of endurance, immeasurably beyond those of ordinary men.

In the case of the ordinary man, there seems to be but little continuity of personal appearance life after life, though cases of strong similarity have been found. As the physical body is to some extent an expression of the ego, and the ego remains the same, there must be some cases where it expresses itself in similar forms. But as a rule, racial, family and other characteristics over-ride this tendency.

When an individual is so advanced that the personality and ego are unified, the personality tends to have impressed upon it the characteristics of the glorified form in the causal body, which, of course is relatively permanent.

When the man is an Adept, all His karma is worked out ; the physical body is the nearest possible presentation of that glorified form. The Masters therefore will remain recognisable through any number of incarnations, so that one would not expect to see much difference in Their bodies, even though They might be of another race.

Prototypes of what bodies are to be like in the seventh Race have been seen, and they are described as transcendently beautiful.

Emphasis has often been laid on the period of seven years, in connection with the coming down of the ego to take full possession of the physical body. For this there is a physical reason. In the human embryo, there is a certain set of cells which do not, like other cells, go through the process of subdivision. This set of cells works its way up to the upper part of the embryo, but does not sub-divide: when the child is born, they are still separate and remain separate for a considerable period in the postnatal life. Changes, however, do occur within the cells, and they send out branches. These branches, after a time, meet the intervening dividing walls being absorbed, so that the cells are completely intercommunicating: thus is built a channel.

The process occupies some seven years, until a fair network is formed, becoming more and more complicated later on.

Physiologists and psychologists point out that, until this complex network is made, the child cannot reason to any great extent, and he should not be given any mental process of complicated reasoning, which puts too great a strain upon him. Materialistic science affirms that, with the growth of this network, the power of reasoning grows. The occultist would explain the phenomenon, by saying, that as the physical mechanism is perfected, the power of reasoning which already exists in the ego, is able to manifest itself. The ego has to wait until the brain is ready for him to come into close touch with and permeate it.

It was stated above that during the descent of the ego to rebirth., there are drawn, round the permanent atoms, materials for the building of the new mental and astral bodies. If the young child is left entirely to himself, the automatic, action of the astral permanent atom will tend to produce for him an astral body, precisely similar to that which he had in the last life. There is, however, no reason whatever why all these materials should be used, and, if the child is wisely treated, and reasonably guided, he will be encouraged to develop to the fullest all the germs of good which he has brought over from his previous life, while the evil germs will be allowed to slumber. If that is done, these evil germs will gradually atrophy, and drop away from him, and the ego will unfold within himself the opposite virtues, and then he will be free, for all his future lives, from the evil qualities which these germs indicated.

Parents and teachers may help him towards this desirable consummation, not so much by any definite facts which they teach him, as by the encouragement which they give to him, by the rational and kindly treatment uniformly accorded to him, and, above all, by the amount of affection lavished upon him.

In *The Astral Body* and *The Mental Body*, in the chapters on Rebirth, we have already laid great stress on the immense services which may - and should be - rendered to an ego, by those who are responsible for his upbringing and training, so that it is unnecessary to repeat here what was said in those books.

We may, however, add that one who, instead of arousing love and good qualities in his charges, awakens in them evil qualities, such as fear, deceit, and the like, is hampering the progress of the egos concerned, and thus doing them serious positive harm. Misuse of such an opportunity involves a terrible fall for the man. In some cases, for example, cruelty of this nature may result in insanity, hysteria, or neurasthenia. In other cases, it results in a cataclysmic descent in the social scale, such as a brahman being reborn as a pariah, as a result of cruelty to children.

On the same principle, a man who, having wealth and power, uses his position to oppress his employees, generates very bad karma. The only aspect of the matter, which concerns the agents of karma, is that the man in such a position has in his hands an opportunity of being a helpful influence in the life of a number of people. He neglects or abuses such an opportunity at his own peril.

## CHAPTER XXIV

### THE EGO AND REINCARNATION

(Page 163) We come now to deal more specifically with the attitude which the ego takes up towards his incarnation in a personality.

Since the appointed method for the evolution of the latent qualities of the ego is by means of impacts from without, it is clearly necessary that the ego should

descend far enough to enable him to meet such impacts as can affect him. The method of achieving this result is, as we know, that of reincarnation, the ego putting forth part of himself into the lower planes for the sake of the experience to be gained there, and then withdrawing back again into himself, bearing with him the results of his endeavour.

It must not be thought, however, that the ego makes any movement in space. It is rather that he endeavours to focus his consciousness at a lower level, to obtain an expression through a denser variety of matter.

This putting forth of part of himself into incarnation has often been compared with an investment. The ego expects, if all goes well, to reclaim not only the whole of his capital invested, but also a considerable amount of interest, and he usually obtains this. But, as with other investments, there is occasionally loss instead of gain; for it is possible that some portion of that which he puts down may become so entangled with the lower matter that it may be impossible wholly to reclaim it. With this "investment" aspect of reincarnation we shall deal in full detail in our next chapter.

The student will by now have fully realised that each stage of the descent of the ego into incarnation ([Page 164](#)) means submission to limitation: consequently no expression of the ego upon any of the lower planes can ever be a perfect expression. It is merely an indication of its qualities, just as a picture is a representation, on a two-dimensional surface, of a three dimensional scene. In exactly the same way the true quality, as it exists in the ego, cannot be expressed in matter of any lower level. The vibrations of the lower matter are altogether too dull and sluggish to represent it, the string is not sufficiently taut to enable it to respond to the note which resounds from above. It can however, be tuned to correspond with it in a lower octave, like a man's voice singing in unison with a boy's, expressing the same sound, as nearly as the capabilities of the inferior organism permit.

It is not possible in physical language to express exactly this matter of the descent of the ego; but until we are able to raise our own consciousness to those levels, and see exactly what takes place, the best impression we can have of it is perhaps the idea of the ego putting down part of himself, like a tongue of fire, into planes of matter grosser than his own.

The ego, belonging as he does to a higher plane, is a much greater and grander thing than any manifestation of him can be. His relation to his personalities is that of one dimension to another - that of a square to a line, or a cube to a square. No number of squares could ever make a cube, because the square has only two dimensions, while the cube has three. So no number of expressions on any lower plane can ever exhaust the fulness of the ego. Even if he could take a thousand personalities, he could still not sufficiently express all that he is. The most for which he can hope is that the personality will contain nothing which is not

intended by the ego—that the personality will express as much of the ego as can be expressed in this lower world.

Whilst the ego may have but one physical body, for that is the law, he can ensoul any number of thought-forms which friends who love him may make of him, and he is only too pleased to have these additional opportunities of manifesting himself, as he is able, through those thought forms, to develop qualities in himself.

(Page 165) Just as in physical consciousness a man may be simultaneously conscious of many physical contacts, as well as of emotions, and of thoughts, without any confusion, so may the ego be simultaneously conscious and active through both his own personality, and also through any number of thought-forms which his friends may make of him.

The wise man thus recognises that the true man is the ego, not the personality, or the physical body, and he sees that it is the life of the ego only which is really of moment, and that everything connected with the body must unhesitatingly be subordinated to those higher interests. He recognises that this earth-life is given to him for purposes of progress, and that that progress is the one important thing. The real purpose of life is the unfoldment of his powers as an ego, the development of his character. He recognises that this development is in his own hands, and that the sooner it is perfected the happier, and more useful will he be.

Furthermore, he soon learns by experience that nothing can be really good for him, as an ego, or for any one, which his not good for all: in due time he thus learns to forget himself altogether, and to ask only what will be best for humanity as a whole.

The development of the ego is thus the object of the whole process of descent, into matter: the ego assumes veils of matter precisely because through them he is able to receive vibrations to which he can respond, so that his latent faculties may thereby be unfolded.

The whole object of the ego putting himself down is that he may become more definite, that all his vaguely beautiful feelings may crystallise into a definite resolution to act. All his incarnations form a process by means of which he may gain precision and definiteness.

(Page 166) Hence specialisation is his way of advancement. He comes down into each race or sub-race in order that he may acquire the qualities for the perfection of which that sub-race is working. The fragment of the ego which is put down is highly specialised. When a certain quality is developed, the ego absorbs it into himself in due course, and he does that over and over again. The personality scatters something of its special achievement over the whole, when it is withdrawn into the ego, so that the ego becomes a little less vague than before.

In The Key to Theosophy,(pages 183-184), H.P.Blavatsky describes the objective of reincarnation in vivid language: "Try to imagine a 'Spirit', a celestial being whether we call it by one name or another, divine in its essential nature, yet not pure enough to be one with the ALL, and having, in order to achieve this, so to purify its nature as finally to gain its goal. It can do so by passing *individually* and *personally*, i.e., spiritually and physically, through every experience and feeling that exists in the manifold or differentiated universe. It has, therefore, after having gained such experience in the lower kingdoms, and having ascended higher and still higher with every rung of the ladder of being, to pass through every experience on the human planes. In its very essence it is Thought, and is, therefore, called in its plurality, "*Manasaputra*",'the Sons of [universal] Mind'. This *individualised* 'Thought' is what we Theosophists call the real human Ego, the thinking entity imprisoned in a case of flesh and bones. This is surely a spiritual entity, not *matter* [that is not matter as we know it on the plane of the objective universe], and such entities are the incarnating Egos that inform the bundle of animal matter called mankind, and whose names are *Manasa* or minds".

The student should note that the term *Manasaputra*, which means literally the "Sons of Mind", is used in the above quotation in a special sense. The term is a wide one, and covers many grades of intelligences, from the "Sons of Flame" Themselves, down to the entities who individualised the Moon Chain, and took their first purely human incarnation in the Earth Chain.

(Page 167) Many similes and metaphors have from time to time been employed, to illustrate, the relation between the ego and his personalities, or incarnations. Thus, each incarnation has been compared to a day at school. In the morning of each new life the ego takes up his lessons again, at the point where he left it the night before. The time taken by the pupil in qualifying himself is left entirely to his own discretion and energy. The wise pupil perceives that school life is not an end in itself, but merely a preparation for a more glorious and far wider future. He co-operates intelligently with his Teachers, and sets himself to the maximum of work which is possible for him, in order that as soon as he can he may come of age and enter into his kingdom as a glorified ego

The dipping down of the ego into the physical world, for brief snatches of mortal life, has been likened to the diving of a bird into the sea after a fish. Personalities are also like the leaves put forth by a tree; they draw in material from outside, transform it into useful substance, and send it into the tree as sap, by which the tree is nourished. Then the leaves, having served for their season, wither and drop off, to be in due time succeeded by a fresh crop of leaves.

As a diver may plunge into the depths of the ocean, to seek a pearl, so the ego plunges into the depths of the ocean of life to seek the pearl of experience,: but he does not stay there long, for it is not his own element. He rises up again, into his own atmosphere, and shakes off the heavier element, which he leaves behind. Therefore it is truly said that the Soul that has escaped from earth has returned

to its own place, for its home is the "land of the Gods " and on earth it is an exile and a prisoner.

The ego may be regarded as a labourer who goes out into a field, toiling in rain and sunshine, in cold and heat, returning home at night. But the labourer is also the proprietor, and all the results of his labour fill ([Page 168](#)) his own granaries, and enrich his own store. Each personality is the immediately effective part of the individuality, representing it in the lower world. There is no injustice in the lot that falls to the personality, because the ego sowed the karma in the past, and the ego must reap it. The labourer that sowed the seed must harvest it, though the clothes in which he worked as sower may have worn out during the interval between the sowing and the reaping. He who reaps is the same as he who sows, and, if he sowed but little seed or seed badly chosen, it is he who will find but a poor harvest when, as reaper, he goes again into the field.

The ego has been described as moving in eternity like a pendulum between the periods of life terrestrial and life posthumous. The hours of the posthumous life, to one who really understands, are the only reality. So very often, the ego really begins his personal life-cycle with the entry into the heaven-world , and pays a minimum of attention to the personality during its period of collecting materials.

As we have seen, in the cycle of incarnation, the period spent in devachan, which, for all except for the very primitive, is of enormous duration compared with the breaks in it spent on earth, may fairly be called the normal state. A further reason for regarding this as the normal, the earth life as the abnormal, is that in devachan the man is much nearer the source of his Divine life.

The ego may be regarded as the actor, his numerous and different incarnations, being the actor's parts. Like an actor, the ego is bound to play many such parts, which often are disagreeable to him: but like a bee, collecting honey from every flower, the ego collects only nectar of mortal qualities and consciousness, from every terrestrial personality in which he has to clothe himself, until at last he unites all these qualities in one, and becomes a perfect, being, sometimes termed a Dhyan Chohan.

([Page 169](#)) In The Voice of The Silence the personalities are spoken of as "shadows": the candidate for initiation is exhorted thus : "Have perseverance as one who doth evermore endure. Thy shadows live and vanish; that which in thee shall live for ever, that which in thee *knows*, for it is knowledge, is not of fleeting life; it is the man that was, that is, and will be, for whom the hour shall never strike."

Thus through the ages the ego, the Immortal Thinker, patiently toils at his work of leading the animal-man upwards, till he is fit to become one with the Divine. Out of any one life he may win but a mere fragment for his work, yet on that slightly improved model will be moulded the next man, each incarnation showing some advance, though in the early stages it may be almost imperceptible. Slowly is accomplished the task of lessening the animal, of increasing the human. At a

certain stage in this progress, the personalities begin to become translucent, to answer to the vibrations from the Thinker, and dimly to sense that they are something more than isolated lives, are attached to something permanent and immortal. They may not quite recognise, their goal: but they begin to thrill and quiver, under the touch of the ego. Thereafter, progress becomes more swift, the rate of development increasing enormously in the later stages.

The above are but analogies, useful perhaps, but crude, for it is a matter of exceeding difficulty to express the relation of the ego to the personality. On the whole, perhaps the best way to put it is to say that the personality is a fragment of the ego, a tiny part of him expressing itself under serious difficulties. When we meet another person on the physical plane, it would be somewhere near the truth to say that we know a thousandth part of the real man: moreover, the part that we see is the worst part. Even if we are able to look at the causal body of another man, we see but a manifestation of the ego on his own plane, and are still far from seeing the true man.

Regarding the ego as the real man, and looking at him on his own plane, we see him to be indeed a glorious being. The only way in which down here we can form a conception ([Page 170](#)) of what he really is, is to think of him as some splendid angel. But the expression of this beautiful being on the physical plane may fall far short of all this: in fact, it must do so: first, because it is only a tiny fragment; secondly, because it is so cramped by its conditions.

If a man puts his finger into a hole in the wall, or into a small metal pipe, so that he cannot even bend the finger, it is obvious that he could express but very little of himself through that finger. Much like this is the fate of that fragment of the ego which is put down into this dense body.

We may carry the analogy a little further, by supposing that the finger has a considerable amount of consciousness of its own, so that, shut off as it is from the rest of the body, it temporarily forgets that it is merely a part of the whole body. Forgetting the freedom of the wider life, it tries to adapt itself to the hole, it gilds its sides and makes it an enjoyable hole by acquiring money, property, fame and so forth, not realising that it only begins really to live when it withdraws itself from the hole altogether, and recognises itself as a part of the body. Clumsy as is the image, it may yet give some sort of idea of the relation of the personality to the ego.

Other, and more picturesque analogies are to be found in certain ancient myths. Thus Narcissus was a youth of great beauty, who fell in love with his own image reflected in the water, and was so attracted by it that he fell in and was drowned, and was afterwards changed by the gods into a flower and bound to earth. This of course refers to the ego looking down upon the waters of the astral plane and the lower world, reflecting itself in the personality, identifying itself with that personality, falling in love with its image, and being bound to earth.

So also Proserpine, while picking the narcissus, was seized and carried off by

Desire to the underworld; and although she was rescued from complete captivity by the efforts of her mother, yet after that she ([Page 171](#)) had to spend her life half in the lower world and half in that above: that is to say, partly in material incarnation, and partly out of it.

Another old mystery-teaching was that of the Minotaur, which signified the lower nature in man—the personality which is half man and half animal. This was eventually slain by Theseus, who typifies the higher self, or the individuality, which has been gradually growing and gathering strength, until at last it can wield the sword of its Divine Father, the Spirit.

Guided through the labyrinth of illusion, which constitutes these lower planes, by the thread of occult knowledge given him by Ariadne [who represents - intuition], the higher self is enabled to slay the lower, and to escape safely from the web of illusion. Yet there still remains for him the danger that, developing intellectual pride, he may neglect intuition, even as Theseus neglected Ariadne, and so fail for a time to realise his highest possibilities.

It is abundantly clear that a view of reincarnation can be obtained, in proper perspective, only if we regard it from the point of view of the ego. Each movement of the ego towards the lower planes is a vast circular sweep. The limited vision of the personality is apt to take a small fragment of the lower arc of the circle, and regard it as a straight line, attaching quite undue importance to its beginning and ending, while the real turning point of the circle entirely escapes it.

From the point of view of the ego, during the earlier part of that little fragment of existence on the physical plane, which we call life, the outward force of the ego is still strong: at the middle of it, in ordinary cases, that force becomes exhausted, and the great inward sweep begins.

Nevertheless, there is no sudden or violent change, for this is not an angle, but still part of the curve of the same circle - exactly corresponding to the moment of aphelion in a planet's course round its orbit. Yet it is the real turning point of that little cycle of evolution, though with us it is not marked in any way. ([Page 172](#)) In the old Indian scheme of life it was marked as the end of the *grihasta* or "householder" period of the man's earthly existence.

In that ancient system, a man spent the first twenty-one years of his life in education, and the next twenty-one in doing his duty as householder and head of the family. But then, having attained middle life, he gave up altogether his worldly cares, resigned his house and property into the hands of his son, and retired with his wife into a little hut near by, where he devoted the next twenty-one years to rest and spiritual converse and meditation. After that came the fourth stage, of perfect isolation and contemplation in the jungle, if he wished it. In all this, the middle of life was the real turning-point, and it is evident that it is a much more important point than either physical birth or death, for it marks the limit of the outgoing energy of the ego, the change, as it were, from his out-breathing to his in-breathing.

From this point, there should be nothing but a steady drawing inward of the whole force of the man and his attention should be more and more withdrawn from mere earthly things and concentrated on those of higher planes. Such considerations cannot fail to impress upon us how exceedingly ill-adapted to real progress are the conditions of modern European life.

In this arc of evolution, the point at which the man drops his physical body is not a specially important one: by no means so important, in fact, as the next change, his death on the astral plane, and his birth into the heaven-world, or otherwise expressed, the transfer of his consciousness from the astral to mental matter, in the course of the steady withdrawal mentioned.

As was mentioned in Chapter XIII, the whole course of the movement down into matter is called in India the *pravritti marga*, literally the path of pursuit of forthgoing; the *nivritti marga* is the path of return, of retirement of renunciation. These terms are relative, and can be applied to the whole course of the (Page 173) evolution of the ego, to an individual incarnation in a personality, etc..

On the pravritti marga, on which are the vast majority of men, desires are necessary and useful, these being the motives that prompt him to activity. On the nivritti marga desire must cease. What was *desire* in the pravritti marga, becomes *will* on the nivritti marga: similarly *thought*, alert, flighty, changing becomes *reason*: work, activity, restless *action*, becomes in its turn *sacrifice*, its binding force thus being broken.

## CHAPTER XXV

### THE EGO AND HIS "INVESTMENT"

(Page 174) We come now to study the subject of reincarnation, regarding the putting forth by the ego of a personality as an "investment" made by the ego.

This "investment" analogy is not a mere figure of speech, but has a definite and material side to it. When the ego, in his causal body, takes to himself in addition a mental and an astral body, the operation involves the actual entangling of a portion of the matter of his causal body with matter of those lower astral and mental types. This "putting down" of a portion of himself is, therefore, closely analogous to an investment.

As in all investments, the ego hopes to get back more than he puts out: there is a risk however, a risk of disappointment, a possibility that he may lose something of what he invests: in fact, under very exceptional circumstances there may even be a total loss which leaves him, not absolutely bankrupt, but without available capital.

Elaborating on this analogy, we may remind ourselves that the causal body consists of matter of the first, second and third sub-planes of the mental plane. By far the greater portion of it belongs to the first sub-plane: a lesser portion

belongs to the second sub-plane, and still less to the third.

For the vast majority of men, there is as yet no activity beyond the lowest of these three types, and even that is usually partial. It is, therefore, only some of the lowest type of causal matter that can be put down to lower levels, and only a small fraction even of that part can be entangled with mental and astral matter. Hence, only a very small portion of the ego is in activity with reference to the personality.

(Page 175) In fact, with people who are unevolved, probably not more than one-hundredth part of the matter of the third sub-plane is active. With occult students, a little of the second sub-plane matter is generally in activity also. More advanced students have a great deal of that sub-plane in activity, and in the stage below that of an Arhat, about one-half of the ego is active.

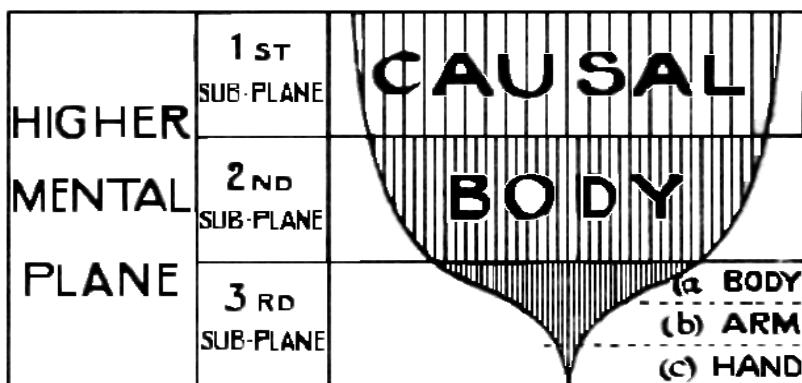
The ego, being as yet half asleep, has but a very weak and imperfect control of that which he puts down. But, as his physical body grows up, and his astral and mental bodies also develop, the causal matter entangled with them is awakened, by the vigorous vibrations which reach it through them. The fraction of-a-fraction, which is fully entangled, gives life and vigour, and a sense of individuality, to these vehicles, and they in turn react strongly upon it, and arouse it to a keen realisation of life.

This keen realisation of life is, of course, exactly what it needs, the very object, for which it is put down; and it is the longing for this keen realisation which is *trishna*, with which we have already dealt in a previous chapter.

But just because this small fraction has had these experiences, and is therefore, so much more awake than the rest of the ego, it may often be so far intensified as to think itself the whole, and forget for a time its relation to its "Father in Heaven". It may temporarily identify itself with the matter through which it should be working, and may resist the influence of that other portion which has been put down, but not *entangled* - that which forms the link with the great mass of the ego on his own plane.

**Diagram XXVI** may serve to make this matter a little more clear. The causal body is here shown as roughly the shape of a chalice in section. That portion of the ego which is awakened on the third causal sub-plane is itself divided into three parts, which we will call [a], [b] and [c]. [a] is a very small part of the ego, and remains on its one plane: [b] is a small part of [a], is put down, (Page 176) but remains un-entangled with the matter of the lower planes,: it acts as a link between [a] and [c]; [c] in turn is a small part of [b], and is thoroughly entangled with lower matter of the mental and astral bodies.

[a] we may think of as the body of a man; [b] as his arm stretched out; [c] as the hand which grasps, or perhaps rather the tips of the fingers which are dipped in matter.



**DIAGRAM XXVI —The Causal Body as a Chalice**

We have here a very delicately balanced arrangement, which may be affected in various ways. The intention is that the hand [c] should grasp firmly and guide the matter with which it is entangled, being fully directed all the time by the body [a] through the arm [b]. Under favourable circumstances,

additional strength, and even additional matter, may be poured from the body [a] through the arm [b] into the hand [c], so that the control may become more and more perfect.

The hand [c] may grow in size as well as in strength, and the more it does so the better, so long as the communication through the arm [b] is kept open freely, and the body [a] retains control. For the very entanglement of the causal matter, which constitutes the hand [c], awakens it to a keen activity, and an accuracy of response to fine shades of vibration, which it could gain in no other way, and this, when transmitted through the arm [b], to the body [a], means the development of the ego himself.

Unfortunately the course of events does not always follow the ideal plan of working indicated above. When the control of the body [a] is feeble, it sometimes happens that the hand [c] becomes so thoroughly enmeshed in lower matter that, as said, it actually identifies itself ([Page 177](#)) with that lower matter, forgets for the time its high estate, and thinks of itself as the whole ego.

If the matter be of the lower *mental* plane, then we shall have a man who is wholly materialistic. He may perhaps be keenly intellectual, but not spiritual; he may very likely be intolerant of spirituality, and quite unable to comprehend, or appreciate it. He may probably call himself practical, matter-of-fact unsentimental, while in reality he is as hard as the nether-millstone; and, because of that hardness, his life, from the point of view of the ego, is a failure, and he is making no spiritual progress.

If, on the other hand, the matter in which he is so fatally entangled be *astral*, he will, on the physical plane, be one who thinks only of his own gratification, who is utterly ruthless when in pursuit of some object which he strongly desires, a man quite unprincipled, and of brutal selfishness. Such a man lives in his passions, just as the man immeshed in mental matter lives in his mind. Cases such as these have been spoken of as "lost souls", though they are not irretrievably lost.

H.P.Blavatsky says of such men: "There is, however, still hope for a person who has lost his Higher Soul through his vices, while he is yet in the body. He may still be redeemed and made to turn on his material nature. For either an intense feeling of repentance, or one single earnest appeal to the Ego that has fled, or best of all, an active effort to amend one's ways, may bring the Higher Ego back again. The thread of connection is not altogether broken, "—[Secret Doctrine, III 527].

In returning to our analogy of the investment, we note that, in making his investment, the ego expects not only to recover the hand[c], but he expects also that it will be improved both in quality and quantity. Its *quality* should be better, because it should be much more awake, and capable of instant and accurate response to a far more varied gamut of vibrations than before. ([Page 178](#)) This capacity the hand [c], when reabsorbed, necessarily communicates to the body [a], though, of course, the store of energy which made such a powerful wave in the hand (c) will be able to create a ripple, when distributed throughout the whole substance of the body [a].

We should remind ourselves here that although the *vehicles* can respond to, and express, evil thoughts and emotions, and although their excitement under such vibrations can produce perturbation in the entangled causal matter [c], yet it is quite impossible for [c] to reproduce those vibrations itself, or to communicate them to the arm[b] or the body [a], simply because matter of the three higher mental levels can no more vibrate at the rate of the lowest plane than the string of a violin tuned to a certain pitch can be made to produce a note lower than that pitch.

The hand[c] should also be increased in *quantity*, because the causal body, like all other vehicles, is constantly changing its matter, and, when special exercise is given to a certain part of it, that part grows in size, and becomes stronger, precisely as a physical muscle does, when it is used.

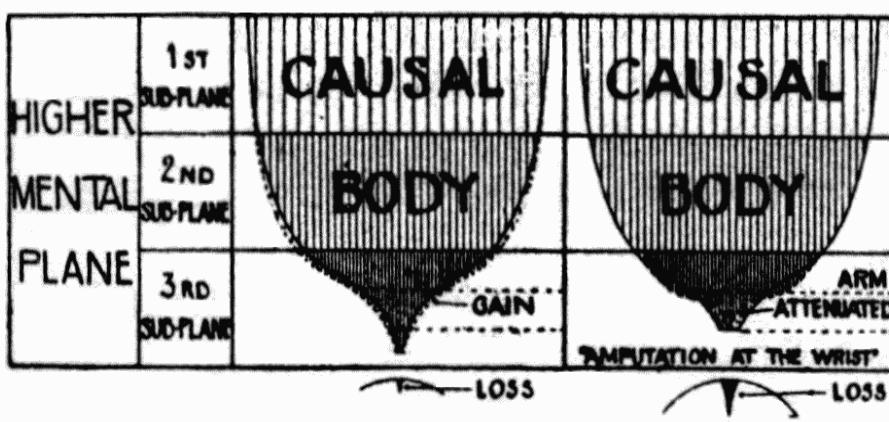
Every earth-life is an opportunity, carefully calculated, for such development in quality and quantity as is most needed by the ego; a failure to use that opportunity means the trouble and delay of another similar incarnation, and sufferings probably aggravated by the additional karma incurred.

Against the increment, which the ego has a right to expect from each incarnation, we must offset a certain amount of loss which, in the earlier stages, is scarcely avoidable. In order to be effective, the entanglement with lower matter must be very intimate, and it is found that when this is so, it is scarcely ever possible to recover every particle, especially from the connection with the *astral* body.

When the time comes for separation from the astral body, it is almost always a shade and not a mere shell—[vide *The Astral Body*, pages 170 - 171] that is left behind ([Page 179](#)) on the astral plane; and that very distinction means that some of the causal material is lost. Except in the case of an unusually bad life however,

this amount should be much smaller than that gained by growth, so that there should be, on the whole, a profit on the transaction.

Diagram XXVII-A illustrates this case, which may be regarded as the normal state of affairs.



**DIAGRAM XXVII.—The Ego and His Investment (I)**

The student should not allow the analogy of the arm and the hand to mislead him into thinking of the arm [b] and hand [c] as permanent appanages of the ego.

During a life period they may certainly be

considered as separate, but at the end of each life-period, they withdraw into the body [a], and the result of the experience is distributed, as it were, through the whole mass of its substance. When, therefore, the time comes for the ego again to put part of himself into incarnation, he does not, nor can he, stretch out again the old arm [b], and the old hand [c], for they have become absorbed in him and become part of him, just as a cupful of water emptied into a bucket becomes part of the water in the bucket, and cannot be separated from it.

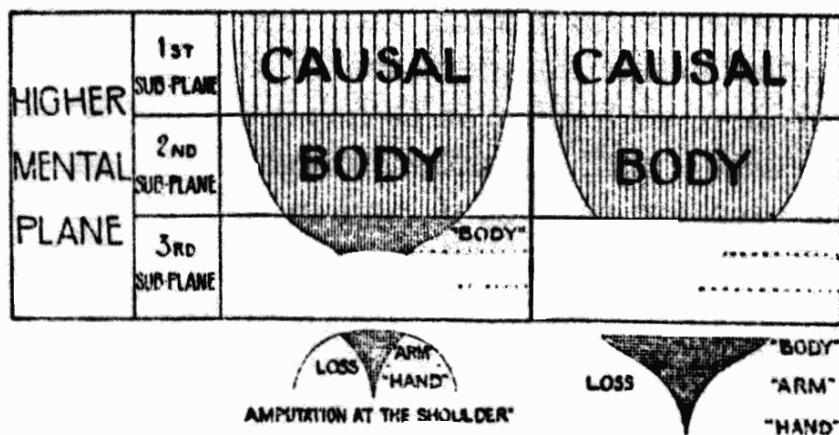
Any colouring matter - symbolising the qualities developed by experience - which was present in the cup is distributed though in paler tint, through the whole bucketful of water. The plan is, therefore, exactly parallel to that we have already studied in the case of group-souls, ([Page 180](#)) except that a group-soul may put down many tentacles simultaneously, while the ego puts forth only one at a time. In each incarnation, therefore, the personality is obviously quite a different one from those preceding it, though, of course, the ego behind it remains the same.

In the case of men, such as those described above, men living entirely in their passions or their minds, there would be no gain, either in quality or quantity, since the vibrations would not be such as could be stored in the causal body. And, on the other hand, as the entanglement has been so strong, there would certainly be considerable loss when the separation took place.

In cases where the hand [c] has asserted itself against the arm [b] and pressed it back towards the body [a], the arm [b], has become attenuated, and almost paralysed, its strength and substance being withdrawn into the body, while the

hand [c] has set up for itself, and makes on its own account jerky and spasmodic movements, which are not controlled by the brain. If the separation could become perfect, it would correspond to an amputation at the wrist; but this very rarely takes place during physical existence, although only so much communication remains as is necessary to keep the personality alive. **Diagram XXVII-B** illustrates the case we have been describing.

Such a case is not hopeless, for even at the last moment fresh life may be poured through the paralysed arm, if a sufficiently strong effort be made, and thus the ego may be enabled to recover some proportion of the hand [c], just as he has already recovered most of the arm [b]. Nevertheless, such a life has been wasted, for, even if the man just contrived to escape serious loss, at any rate nothing has been gained, and much time has been frittered away.



**C. Result of Black Magic. D. Extreme Case.**  
**DIAGRAM XXVIII.—The Ego and His Investment (II)**

The most disastrous catastrophe which can occur to an ego is that in which the personality captures the part of the ego which is put down, and actually causes it to break away. Such cases are exceedingly rare, but they have happened. (Page

**181**) This time, the hand [c], instead of *repelling* the arm [b], and driving it gradually back into the body [a], by degrees *absorbs* the arm [b] and detaches it from the body [a]. **Diagram XXVIII-C** illustrates such a case. This could be accomplished only by determined persistence in deliberate evil, in short, by black magic. Continuing the analogy, this is equivalent to amputation at the shoulder, or to the loss by the ego of nearly all his available capital. Fortunately for him, he cannot lose everything, because the arm [b] and the hand [c] together are only a small proportion of the body [a], and behind [a] is the great undeveloped portion of the ego, on the first and second mental sub-planes. Mercifully a man, however incredibly foolish or wicked, cannot completely wreck himself, for he cannot bring that higher part of the causal body into activity, until he has reached a level at which such evil is unthinkable.

There are certain men, who deliberately set them selves in opposition to nature and, instead of working for unity, towards which the whole force of the universe is pressing, they debase every faculty they possess for purely selfish ends. They spend their lives striving for separateness, and for a long time they attain it : it is

said that the sensation of being utterly alone in space is the most awful fate that can ever befall a man.

This extraordinary development of selfishness is, (Page 182) of course, the characteristic of the black magician, and it is among their ranks only that men can be found who are in danger of this terrible fate. Many and loathsome as are their varieties, they may all be classed in one or other of two great divisions. Both classes use such occult arts as they possess for selfish purposes, but these purposes differ.

In the commoner and less formidable type, the object pursued is the gratification of sensual desire of some sort: naturally, the result of such a life is to centre the man's energy in his astral body. Having succeeded in killing out from himself every unselfish or affectionate feeling, every spark of higher impulse, nothing is left but a remorseless, ruthless monster of lust, who finds himself after death neither able nor desiring to rise above the lowest subdivisions, of the astral plane. The whole of such mind as he has is absolutely in the grip of desire, and, when the struggle takes place, the ego can recover none of it, and in consequence finds himself seriously weakened.

For the time being he has cut himself off from the current of evolution, and so, until he can return to incarnation, he stands - or so it seems to him - outside that evolution, in the condition of *avichi*, the waveless. Even when he does return to incarnation, it cannot be among those whom he has known before, for he has not enough available capital left, to provide ensoulment for a mind and body at his previous level. He must now be content, therefore, to occupy vehicles of a far less evolved type, belonging to some earlier race. He has thus thrown himself far back in evolution, and must climb over again many rungs of the ladder.

He will probably be born as a savage, but will most likely be a chief among them, as he will still have some intellect. It has been said that he may even throw himself so far back that he may be unable to find in the world, in its present condition, any type of human body low enough for the manifestation which he now requires, so that he may be incapacitated from taking any further part in the Scheme of evolution, and may therefore have (Page 183) to wait, in a kind of condition of suspended animation, for the commencement of another.

Meanwhile, the amputated personality, having broken the "silver thread that binds it to the Master", is, of course, no longer a permanent evolving entity, but remains full of vigorous and wholly evil life, entirely without remorse or responsibility. As it is destined to disintegrate amidst the unpleasant surroundings of the "eighth sphere", it tries to maintain some sort of existence on the physical plane as long as possible. The sole means of prolonging its baneful existence is vampirism of some sort: when that fails, it has been known to seize upon any available body, driving out the lawful owner. The body chosen might very probably be that of a child, both because it might be expected to last longer, and because an ego, which had not yet really taken hold, could be more easily dispossessed.

In spite of its frenzied efforts, its power seems soon to fail, and it is said there is no instance on record of its successfully stealing a second body, after its first theft is worn out. The creature is a demon of the most terrible type, a monster for whom there is no permanent place in the Scheme of evolution to which we belong.

Its natural tendency, therefore, is to drift out of this evolution and to be drawn into that astral cesspool known as the "eighth sphere", because what passes into it stands outside the ring of our seven worlds, or globes, and cannot return, into their evolution. There, surrounded by loathsome relics of all the concentrated vileness of the ages that are past, burning ever with desire, yet without the possibility of satisfaction, this monstrosity slowly decays, its mental and causal matter being thus at last set free. Such matter will never rejoin the ego from which it has torn itself, but will be distributed among the other matter of the plane, to enter gradually into fresh combinations, and so be put to better uses. Such entities are, as already stated, ([Page 184](#)) exceedingly rare: and, moreover, they have power to seize only those who have in their nature pronounced defects of a kindred type.

The other type of black magician, in outward appearance more respectable, is yet really even more dangerous, because more powerful. This is the man who, instead of giving himself up altogether to sensuality, sets before himself the goal of a more refined but not less unscrupulous selfishness. His object is the acquisition of occult power higher and wider, but still to be used always for his own gratification and advancement, to further his own ambition, or satisfy his own revenge.

In order to gain this, he adopts the most rigid asceticism as regards mere fleshly desires, and starves out the grosser particles of his astral body, as perseveringly as does the pupil of the Great White Brotherhood. But, though it is only a less material kind of desire, with which he will allow his mind to become entangled, the centre of his energy is none the less entirely in his personality. When therefore, the separation, at the end of the astral life, takes place, the ego is unable to recover any of his investment. For this man the result is, therefore, much the same as in the former case, except that he will remain in touch with the personality much longer, and will to some extent share its experiences, so far as it is possible for an ego to share them.

The fate of that personality, however, is very different. The comparatively tenuous, astral integument is not strong enough to hold it for any length of time on the astral plane, and yet it has entirely lost touch with the heaven-world, which should have been its habitat. For the whole effort of the man's life has been to kill out such thoughts as naturally find their result at that level. His one endeavour has been to oppose natural evolution, to separate himself from the great whole, and to war against it ; and, as far as the personality is concerned, he has succeeded. It is cut off from the light and life of the solar system,: ([Page 185](#)) all that is left to it is the sense of absolute isolation, of being alone in the universe.

Thus, in this rare case, the lost personality practically shares the fate of the ego from which it is in process of detaching itself. But, in the case of the ego, such an experience is only temporary, although it may last for what we would call a very long time, and the end of it will be reincarnation, and a fresh opportunity.

For the personality, however, the end is disintegration - the invariable end, of course, of that which has cut itself off from its source.

In a case of this kind, involving the loss of an entire personality, the ego does no evil intentionally. He has let the personality get out of hand, and for that he is responsible. He is therefore responsible for weakness, rather than for direct evil. Whilst the ego has fallen back terribly, yet he does go on: probably not immediately, because he seems to be stunned at first.

After such an experience, an ego would always be peculiar. He would be dissatisfied, and would have recollections of something higher and greater than now he could reach. It is a fearful condition, but still the ego has to take the karma of it, and realise that he has brought it upon himself.

It is reported that there is another even more remote possibility. Just as the hand [c] may absorb the arm[b] and revolt against the body [a], setting up on its own account and breaking away altogether, it is [or at any rate has been in the past] just possible that the disease of separateness and selfishness, may infect the body[a] also. Even if it is then absorbed into the monstrous growth of evil, and may be torn away from the undeveloped portion of the ego, so that the causal body itself may be hardened and carried away, instead of only the personality. Diagram XXVIII-D illustrates this case.

This class of case would correspond, not to an amputation, but an entire destruction of the body. Such an ego could not reincarnate in the human race ; ([Page 186](#)) ego though it be, it would fall into the depths of animal life, and would need at least a whole Chain period to regain the status which it had lost. This, though theoretically possible, is practically scarcely conceivable. It will be noted, however, that even in this case the undeveloped part of the ego remains as the vehicle of the monad.

Whilst some ancient scriptures speak of men sinking back into the animal kingdom, there is no direct evidence of any such cases. There are other cases in which man may come into touch with animal consciousness, and suffer terribly through It [*vide The Astral Body*, p.142] but to reincarnate as an animal is not possible now, whatever may have been possible in the distant past.

We may here make a slight digression,in order to explain how it is that even in cases such as those described above a really serious loss is no easy matter.

Owing to the fact that good thoughts and emotions work in the higher types of matter, and that finer matter is far more easily moved than coarser matter, it

follows that a given amount of force spent in good thought or feeling produces perhaps a hundred times as much effect as precisely the same amount of force sent out into coarser matter. If this were not so, it is obvious that the ordinary man would make no progress at all.

If a man throws a certain amount of energy into some evil quality, it has to express itself through the lower and heavier astral matter; and, whilst any kind of astral matter is exceedingly subtle as compared with anything on the physical plane, yet, as compared with higher matter of its own plane, it is just as gross as lead is on the physical plane, when compared with the finest ether.

If therefore, a man should exert exactly the same amount of force in the direction of good, it would have to move through much finer matter of the higher sub-planes, and would produce, as said, at least a hundred times as much effect, or, (Page 187) if we compare the lowest with the highest, probably more than a thousand times as much.

Whilst we are probably entitled to assume that 90 percent of the thought and feeling of the undeveloped man is self-centred, even if not actually selfish, yet, if 10 percent of it is spiritual and unselfish, the man must already be rising somewhat above the average. In fact, if these proportions did produce commensurate results, the vast majority of humanity would take nine steps backwards for everyone forward, and we should have retrogression so rapid that a few incarnations would deposit us in the animal kingdom, out of which we evolved.

Happily for us, however, the effect of the 10 percent of force, directed to good ends, enormously outweighs that of the 90 percent, devoted to selfish purposes, and so, on the whole, such a man makes an appreciable advance from life to life.

A man who can show even 1 percent of good makes a slight advance, so it will be readily understood that a man whose account balances exactly, so that there is neither advance nor retrogression, must have been living a distinctly evil life; while to obtain an actual descent in evolution, a person must be an unusually consistent villain.

Apart from these considerations, we have to bear in mind that the Logos Himself is, by His resistless power, steadily pressing the whole system onwards and upwards, and that, however slow this cyclic progression may seem to us, it is a fact which cannot be neglected, for its effect is, that a man who accurately balances his good and evil, comes back, not to the same *actual* position, but to the same *relative* position, and therefore even he has made some slight advance, and is, as it were, in a position just a little better than that which he has actually deserved and made for himself.

It is thus clear, that if any one is so foolish as to want to go really backwards against the stream, he will have to work hard and definitely towards evil. There is no fear of "sliding back". That is one of the old delusions, which (Page 189)

remains from the times of the belief in the orthodox "devil" who was so much stronger than the Deity that everything in the world was working in his favour. The fact is that the exact opposite is the case, and everything round a man is calculated to assist him, if only he understands it.

## CHAPTER XXVI

### THE EGO AND THE PERSONALITY

(Page 189) In *The Mental Body* we examined the relationship between the personality and the ego, principally from the point of view of the personality. It is now necessary to study more deeply the relationship between the ego and the personality, this time from the point of view of the ego.

Let us recapitulate the main facts regarding the constitution of man as Monad, Ego and Personality.

The fragment of The Divine Life, which we know as the Monad, manifests itself upon the plane of Âtma as the triple spirit [*vide -Diagram XII*, p. 36].

Of these three aspects, one, the spirit itself, remains upon its own plane, that of Âtma. The second, that of intuition, or pure reason, as it is sometimes called, puts itself down one stage, and expresses itself through the matter of the plane of Buddhi. The third aspect, that of intelligence, puts itself down two planes, and expresses itself through the matter of the higher mental plane.

This expression of the Monad, on the planes of Âtma., Buddhi and manas, is the ego, or individuality.

The ego expresses itself on the lower planes as a personality, which is also triple in its manifestation, and is, moreover, an accurate reflection of the arrangement of the ego. But, like other reflections, it reverses itself.

Intelligence, or higher manas, reflects itself in lower manas. Pure reason, or Buddhi, reflects itself in the astral body: and, in some way much more difficult to comprehend, the spirit of Âtma. reflects itself upon the physical plane.

There is always a link or line of communication (Page 190) between the higher self, or ego, and the lower self, or personality. This link is known as *antahkarana*. This Samskrit word means the inner organ, or inner instrument. H.P.Blavatsky spoke of it as the link, channel or bridge between higher manas and kama-manas during incarnation. Speaking of one who can unite kama-manas with higher manas, through the lower manas, she speaks of lower manas, *when pure and free from kama*, as the antahkarana.

The antahkarana may be regarded as the arm stretched out, between the little piece of the ego that is awakened, and the part put down, the hand. When the two are perfectly joined, i.e., when the ego and the personality are perfectly in

tune, and united, then the attenuated thread of antahkarana cease to exist. Its destruction implies that the ego no longer needs an *instrument*, but works directly on the personality: when one will operates the ego and the personality, then there is no longer any need for antahkarana.

The term antahkarana, or internal agency, is used also in another sense, to denote the whole of the triple higher self or ego, because this is the channel or bridge between the Monad and the lower self.

In its earlier stages, man's evolution consists in the opening of this antahkarana, or line of communication, so that the ego may be increasingly able to assert himself through it, and finally entirely to dominate the personality, so that it may have no separate thought or will, but may be merely, as it should be, an expression of the ego on the lower planes, so far, of course as the limitations of the lower planes permit.

The link that binds the lower to the higher self is often spoken of as a thread - a thread of silver, as befits an emblem of purity.

The heart is the centre in the body for the higher triad, Âtma., buddhi, manas, so that when the consciousness is centred in the heart, during meditation, it is most susceptible to the influence of the higher self, or ego. The head is the seat of the psycho-intellectual man; it has its various functions in seven cavities, including the (Page 191) pituitary body and the pineal gland. He who in concentration can take his consciousness from the brain to the heart should be able to unite kama-manas to the higher manas, through the lower manas, which, when pure and free from kama, is the antahkarana. He will then be in a position to catch some of the promptings of the higher triad.

The man who is absolutely untrained has practically no communication with the ego: the Initiate on the other hand, has full communication. Consequently we find, as is to be expected, that there are men at all stages between these two extremes.

The student will by this time have appreciated the enormous importance of realising the existence of this connection between the higher and lower self, and of doing everything that he can to strengthen that link so that the ego and the personality may gradually come to function as one entity. To help him in this task may, perhaps, be regarded as the *grand motif* of this series of four books, explanatory of man's constitution, and the various bodies through which he functions.

Whilst endeavouring in many ways and by many devices, to appreciate and realise the great difference between the viewpoints of the personality and the ego, we must ever bear in mind, as has been repeatedly said, that there is only one consciousness; yet often we clearly feel two, and are led to wonder, whether the ego is entirely dissociated from the physical body. We must, however, realise

that there is only one consciousness, the apparent difference being caused by the limitations of the various vehicles.

We should not therefore, imagine that there are two entities in man. There never is any lower self as a separate being, but, as we have seen, the ego puts down a tiny portion of himself into the personality, in order to experience the vibrations of the lower planes.

The fundamental identity between higher and lower manas must be kept constantly in mind. For convenience' sake, we distinguish between them; but the difference is one of functioning activity, not of nature. ([Page 192](#)) Lower manas is one with higher manas, in the same way that the ray is one with the sun.

The tiny fragment of the ego, which is put down into the personality, is the point of consciousness which clairvoyants can see moving about in the man.

According to one system of symbology, it is seen as "the golden man the size of a thumb," who dwells in the heart. Others, however, see it rather in the form of a star, a brilliant star of light.

A man may keep his Star of Consciousness where he will; that is to say, in any one of the seven principal chakrams or centres of the body. Which of these is most natural to a man depends largely upon his type or "ray", and probably also upon his race and sub-race.

Men of the Fifth Root Race nearly always keep this consciousness in the brain, in the centre dependent upon the pituitary body. There are, however men of other races to whom it comes more natural to keep it habitually in the heart, the throat or solar plexus.

The Star of Consciousness is thus the representative of the ego in the lower planes, and, as it manifests through the lower vehicles, we call it the personality, the man as he is known to his friends down here.

Although, as we have seen, the ego is but a fragment of the Monad, yet he is complete as an ego in his causal body, even when his powers are undeveloped; whereas in the personality there is but a touch of his life.

Furthermore, whilst in the case of the ordinary man, the consciousness of the ego on his own plane is only partial and vague, yet so far as it is active, it is always on the side of good, because it desires that which is favourable to its own evolution as a soul.

In fact, the never-changing desire of the ego is for progress, for the unfoldment of the higher self, and for bringing of the lower vehicles into tune as its instruments.

Any of those thoughts that we call evil are for the ego impossible; for, in the ego, so far as any quality is developed, it is pure. If, for example, affection is there, ([Page 193](#)) it is utterly untainted by jealousy, envy or selfishness. It is a mirror of

the divine love, in so far as the ego can reproduce it at his level.

Furthermore, the ego is never likely to be wrong. He is, apparently, not deceived, about anything; but that he is ignorant of certain matters is quite clear for indeed the very purpose of incarnation is to remove that ignorance.

But, as we have seen, the fragment of the ego, which has been put down into lower matter, becomes so keenly and vividly conscious in that matter, that it thinks and acts as though it were a separate being; it forgets that it belongs to the less developed, but far wider consciousness of the ego, and sets up in the business of life on its own account, and tries to go as it wants, rather than as the ego wishes.

Furthermore, the ego, with all his mighty powers, is very much less accurate than the lower mind, and the personality, valuing above all the discriminating, powers of the lower mind which it is intended to develop, often comes in consequence to despise the far higher but vaguer self, and acquires a habit of thinking of itself as an independent ego.

We may note here that all through the course of our evolution there is always a danger that a man should identify himself with that point at which, or that vehicle in which, he is most fully conscious.

Hence, as we have seen, sometimes it seems as though the fragment worked against the whole; but the man who is instructed declines to be deluded and reaches back through the keen, alert consciousness of the fragment, to the true consciousness behind, which is as yet so little developed. That is what Mr. Sinnett called "giving allegiance to the higher self".

We have already seen that in the nature of things, there can be no evil in the causal body, or in the ego. But wherever there is a gap in the causal body there is a possibility that the lower vehicles may run into some sort of evil action. Thus for example, the astral elemental may take possession of the man and rush him ([Page 194](#)) into the commission of a crime. In such a case the ego is not sufficiently awake to step in and prevent the action, or perhaps he does not understand that the passion or greed of the astral body may force the lower self into commission of the crime. Evil, therefore, does not come from the Higher Self : it comes from a *lack* in the Higher Self: because, if the ego were more developed, he would check the man on the brink of the evil thought, and the crime would not be committed.

In ordinary men, the ego has not much grasp of the personality, nor a clear conception of his purpose in sending it forth; and, as we have seen, the small piece which meets us in the personality grows to have ways and opinions of its own. It is developing by the experience it gains, and this is passed on to the ego; but, together with this real development , it usually gathers a good deal which is hardly worthy of that name. It acquires knowledge, but also prejudices, which are

not really knowledge at all. It does not become quite free of those prejudices—prejudices, be it noted, of knowledge, of feeling and of action - until the man reaches Adeptship. Gradually it discovers these things to be prejudices, and progresses through them; but it has always a great deal of limitation, from which the ego is entirely free.

In order to assist the ego in controlling his vehicles and to help to utilise them for his own purposes, a very great deal can be done by parents and teachers, during infancy and childhood. For it makes a vast difference when the good, rather than the evil germs in the child's bodies are aroused first. If by exceeding care before birth, and for several years after it, the parents are able to excite only the good tendencies, then the ego will naturally find it easy to express himself along those lines, and a decided habit is set up in that direction. Then, when an evil excitation comes, it finds a strong momentum in the direction of good, which strives in vain to overcome.

Similarly, if the evil tendencies have been aroused first, ([Page 195](#)) then excitations towards what is good have to struggle against the predisposition towards evil. In this case, there is in the personality a taste for evil, a readiness to receive and indulge in it. In the other case, however, there is strong natural distaste for evil, which makes the work of the ego much easier.

In the average man there is a perpetual strain going on between the astral and mental bodies, and also neither of these bodies is in the least in tune with the ego, or prepared to act as his vehicle. What is needed is the purification of the personality, and also the channel between it and the ego must be opened and widened.

Until this is done, the personality sees everything and everybody from its own very limited point of view. The ego cannot see what is really going on; he perceives only the distorted picture of the personality, which is like a camera, with a defective lens, that distorts the light-rays, and a faulty plate, which makes the result blurred, indistinct, and unequal.

Hence, in the case of most people, the ego cannot derive any satisfaction from the personality, until it is in the heaven-world. The ego himself knows the true from the false: he recognises truth when he sees it, and rejects the false. But, generally, when he casts an eye downwards into the personality, he finds so crazy a confusion of inconsequent thought-forms, that he can distinguish nothing definite. He turns away in despair, and decides to wait for the quietude of the heaven-world, before attempting to pick up the fragments of truth out of this unseemly chaos.

Under more peaceful conditions of devachan, as the emotions and thoughts of recent physical life come up one by one, and envisage themselves in the vivid light of that world, they are examined with clear vision, the dross is thrown away, and the treasure is kept.

The disciple should, of course, try to bring about that condition, while still in the physical body, body purifying the personality, and harmonising it with the ego or soul. ([Page 196](#))

Although the ego is undoubtedly only very partially expressed by his physical body, yet it would be inaccurate to speak of him as dissociated from that body. If we imagine the ego as a solid body, and the physical plane as a surface, then, if the solid is laid on the surface, obviously the plane figure, representing the contact of the solid with the surface, would be an exceedingly partial expression of the solid. Further, if the various sides of the solid were laid on the surface successively, we might obtain impressions which differed considerably from one another. All of them would be imperfect and partial, because in all cases the solid would have an extension in an entirely different direction, which could in no way be expressed on the flat surface.

In the case of an ordinary man, we shall obtain a nearly accurate symbolism of the facts if we suppose the solid to be conscious, only so far as it is in contact with the surface. Nevertheless, the results gained, through the expression, of such consciousness, would inhere in the solid considered as a whole, and would be present in any later expression of it, even though that might differ considerably from previous expressions.

When the ego is still undeveloped, he cannot respond to more than a very few of the extremely fine vibrations of the higher mental plane, so that they pass through him practically without affecting him. At first it needs powerful and comparatively coarse vibrations to affect him: as these do not exist on his own plane, he has to put himself down to lower levels in order to find them.

Hence full consciousness comes to him at first only in the lowest and densest of his vehicles, his attention being focussed for a long time in the physical plane; so that although that plane is so much lower than his own, and offers so much less scope for activity, yet in those early stages he feels himself much more alive when he is working there.

As his consciousness increases, and widens its scope, he gradually begins to work more and more in matter ([Page 197](#)) one stage higher, *i.e.*, in astral matter. At a much later stage, when he has attained to clear working in astral matter, he begins to be able also to express himself through the matter of his mental body. Still later, the end of his present effort is achieved when he works as fully and clearly in the matter of the causal body on the higher mental plane as he does now on the physical plane.

When an ego becomes sufficiently developed to come under the direct influence of a Master, the amount of that influence, which can be passed on to the personality, depends upon the connection between that personality and the ego, which is very different in different cases: there is, in fact, an infinite variety in human life.

As the spiritual force rays upon the ego, something of it must flow through to the personality always, because the lower is attached to the higher, just as the hand is attached to the body by the arm. But the personality can receive only what it has made itself able to receive.

There is also another important factor which comes into operation. The Master often plays upon the qualities in the ego which are much obscured in the personality, so that, in such a case, very little comes down to the personality. Just as only those experiences of the personality can be handed on to the ego, which are compatible with the nature and interests of the ego, so only those impulses, to which the personality can respond, can express themselves in it. We must also bear in mind that whilst the ego tends to exclude the material, and receive the spiritual, so the general tendency of the personality - at least in the earlier stages—is to exclude the spiritual, and receive the material.

A clairvoyant may sometimes see these influences at work. Thus, on a certain day, he may notice a characteristic of the personality much intensified, with no outward reason. The cause is often to be found in what is taking place at some higher level—the stimulation of that quality in the ego. A man may find himself for [\(Page 198\)](#) example, overflowing with affection or devotion, and quite unable on the physical plane to explain why. The cause is usually the stimulation of the ego or, on the other hand, it may be that the ego is taking some special interest in the personality for the time being.

The relationship between a pupil and his Master is not at all unlike that of the personality to the ego. Just as the ego may be considered to put down a small fragment of himself into the personality, and express himself - however imperfectly—through that personality, so in the same sort of way the pupil not merely represents the Master, but *is* the Master in a very real sense, but the Master under tremendous limitations; those limitations consist, not only of the conditions of the lower planes themselves, but also, of course, of the personality of the pupil, which is by no means transcended.

Furthermore, even if the pupil's ego had gained perfect control of his lower vehicles, there would still be the difference between the size of the ego of the pupil and of the ego of the Master, because the pupil is naturally a smaller ego than the Master whom he follows, and therefore can be only an incomplete, representative of Him.

Meditation is a method of drawing the attention of the ego: it should however be born in mind that, in the practice of meditation, instead of trying to interrupt the ego, and draw him down to the personality, we should strive to reach up to him in his higher activity. Higher influence is certainly invited by meditation, which is *always* effective, even though on the physical plane things may seem to be very dull, and quite without zest. The feeling of dullness in the personality may, in fact, be due to the reaching upwards of the ego, and his consequent neglect to send energy down to the personality.

Meditation and the study of spiritual subjects in this earthly life undoubtedly make a very great difference in the life of the ego: for meditation, conscientiously ([Page 199](#)) done, opens the channel between the personality and the ego, and keeps it open. It should, however, be borne in mind that the physical meditation is not directly for the ego, but for the training of the various vehicles to be a channel for the ego. In fact, during physical meditation, the ego regards the personality much as at any other time - he is usually slightly contemptuous. Nevertheless the force which comes down is always that of the ego, but as it is only a small part, it tends to give a one-sided conception of things.

The ordinary person, who has not taken up spiritual matters seriously, has a thread of connection between the personality and ego: in fact this channel is often so narrow that sometimes it appears to be almost choked up. On some special occasion - as, for example, that of "conversion"—the force may break through again. For more developed persons, there is a constant flow, in some measure, between ego and personality.

These considerations should bring home to us that it is by no means always accurate to judge the ego by his manifestation in the personality. Thus, for example, an ego of an intensely attractive type may make more show, on the physical plane, than another of far higher development, whose energy happens, to be concentrated almost exclusively upon the causal or buddhic levels. Hence people who judge merely by physical plane appearances are frequently entirely wrong, in their estimation of the relative development of others.

Each of the successive descents of the ego into the lower planes is a limitation so indescribable that the man, whom we meet down here on the physical plane, is at best a fragment of a fragment, and as an expression of the real man is so inadequate as to furnish us with nothing even remotely resembling, a conception of what that man will be at the end of his evolution.

Until one can see the ego, one has no conception of how great he really is, how infinitely wiser and stronger than the incarnate entity. Every one, in reality, ([Page 200](#)) is very much better than he ever seems to be. The greatest saint can never fully express his ego; on that higher plane he is a still greater saint than he can ever be down here. But, magnificent as he is, he is still, if we may say so, vague in his magnificence.

There are really three ways in which the ego may be developed, and may influence the life. [1] The way of the scientist and philosopher: these develop not only the lower mind, but also the higher, so that a great deal of its more abstract and comprehensive kind of thought comes down into their consciousness. For such as these, the development of the buddhic consciousness will come later.

[2] The method of using the higher emotions, such as affection, devotion or sympathy , and so awakening the buddhic principle to a great extent without

developing especially the intermediate causal body. Nevertheless, the causal body will be affected, since all buddhic development reacts very powerfully on the causal body. These people are not necessarily developing a buddhic vehicle in which they can permanently live: but the use of the higher emotions unquestionably evokes vibrations in the buddhic matter. Hence there is a stir in the as yet unformed buddhic vehicle, so that many of its vibrations come down and brood over the astral body. Thus the man may receive a considerable amount of influence from the buddhic plane before the vehicle is at all fully developed.

[3] The more obscure method in which the will is called into activity, the physical body in some way reacting on âtmic matter. Very little is known as to how this operates.

The method of most students is through devotion, and keen sympathy with their fellow men.

A fairly advanced ego may sometimes be rather inconsiderate of his body because whatever is put down into the personality means so much taken from the ego, and he may therefore grudge such expenditure of force. An ego may be somewhat impatient, and withdraw himself somewhat from the personality: in such cases, however, ([Page 201](#)) there would always be a flow between the ego and personality, which is not possible with the ordinary man. In the ordinary man the fragment of the ego is, as it were, put down, and left to fend for itself, though, it is not completely cut off. At the more advanced stage mentioned, however, there is a constant communication between the two along the channel. The ego can therefore, withdraw himself whenever he chooses, and leave a very poor representation of the real man behind. So we see that the relations between the lower and higher self vary much in different people, and at different stages of development.

An ego busy with his own occupations on his own plane, may forget for a time to pay his personality proper attention, just as even a good and thoughtful man may occasionally, under some special pressure of business, forget his horse or his dog. Sometimes, when that happens, the personality reminds him of its existence by blundering into some foolishness, which causes serious suffering.

One may notice that sometimes, after the completion of a special piece of work, that has needed the co-operation of the ego to a large extent - as for example, lecturing to a large audience - the ego takes away his energy, and leaves the personality with only enough to feel rather dispirited. For a time, he admitted that there was some importance in the work, and therefore poured down a little more of himself, but afterwards he leaves the unfortunate personality feeling rather depressed.

We must ever recollect that the ego puts down into the personality only a very small part of himself: and as that part constantly becomes entangled in the

interests which, because they are so partial, are often along lines different from the general activities of the ego himself, the ego does not pay any particular attention to the lower life of the personality, unless something rather unusual happens to it.

In the physical life of the ordinary man of the world ([Page 202](#)) there is little of interest to the ego, and it is only now and then that something of real importance occurs, that may for a moment attract his attention, so that from it he draws whatever is worth taking.

The ordinary man lives in patches; more than half the time he is not awake to the real and higher life at all. If a man complains that his ego takes very little notice of him, let him ask himself how much notice he has taken of his ego. How often, for example, in any given day, has he even thought of the ego?

If he wishes to attract the attention of the ego, he must make the personality useful to him. As soon as he begins to devote the greater part of his thought, to higher things - in other words, as soon as he really begins to live - the ego will be likely to take somewhat more notice of him.

The ego is well aware that certain necessary parts of his evolution can be achieved only through his personality, in its mental, astral and physical bodies. He knows, therefore, that he must some time attend to it, must take it in hand, and bring it under his control.

But we can well understand that the task may often seem uninviting, that a given personality may appear anything but attractive or hopeful. If we look at many of the personalities around us, their physical body full of drugs and poisons, their astral bodies reeking with greed and sensuality, and their mental bodies having no interests beyond moneymaking, and perhaps "sport" of the cruder varieties, it is not difficult to see why an ego, surveying them from his lofty height, might decide to postpone his serious effort to another incarnation, in the hope that the next set of vehicles might be more amenable to influence than those upon which his horrified gaze now rests. We can imagine that he might say to himself: "I can do nothing with that; I will take my chance of getting something better next time; it can hardly be worse, meantime I have much more important business to do up here".

A similar state of affairs not infrequently happens ([Page 203](#)) in the early stages of a new incarnation. As we have already seen, from the birth of the child the ego hovers over it, and, in some cases, begins to try to influence its development while it is still very young. But, as a general rule, he pays little attention to it until about the age of seven, by which time the work of the karmic elemental should be practically finished.

But children differ so widely, that it is not surprising to find that the relation between the egos, and the personalities involved, differs widely also. Some child personalities are quick and responsive, some are dull and wayward. When

dullness and unresponsiveness are prominent, the ego often withdraws his active interest for the time, hoping that, as the childish body grows, it may become cleverer or more responsive.

To us such a decision may seem unwise, because, if the ego neglects his present personality, it is unlikely that the next will be an improvement upon it; and if he allows the child body to develop without his influence, the undesirable qualities which have been manifested may quite possibly grow stronger, instead of dying out. But we are hardly in a position to judge, since our knowledge of the problem is so imperfect, and we can see nothing of the higher business, to which the ego is devoting himself.

From this it will be seen how impossible it is to judge, with any precision, the position in evolution of any one whom we see on the physical plane. In one case, karmic causes may have produced a very fair personality having an ego of only moderate advancement behind it. In another case those causes, may have given rise to an inferior or defective personality, belonging to a comparatively advanced ego.

When the ego decides to turn the full force of his energy upon the personality the change which he can produce is very great. No one who has not personally investigated the matter cannot imagine how wonderful, how rapid, how radical, such a change may be, when conditions are favourable - that is, when the ego is (Page 204) reasonably strong, and the personality not incurably vicious—more especially, when a determined effort is made by the personality, on its side, to become a perfect expression of the ego, and make itself attractive to him.

To understand how this can be, it is, of course, necessary to look at the matter simultaneously from two points of view. Most of us here are very emphatically personalities, and think and act exclusively as such; yet we know all the time that in reality we are egos, and those of us who, by many years of meditation, have rendered ourselves more sensitive to finer influences, are often conscious of the intervention of the higher self.

The more we can make a habit of identifying ourselves with the ego, the more clearly and sanely shall we view the problems of life. But, in so far as we feel ourselves to be personalities, it is obviously our duty, and our interest, to open ourselves to the ego, to reach up towards him, and persistently to set up within ourselves such vibrations as will be of use to him. At least we should be sure that we do not stand in the way of the ego, that we always do our best for him, according to our lights.

Since selfishness is the intensification of the personality, the first step should be to rid ourselves of that vice. Next, the mind should be kept filled with high thoughts; for, if it is continually occupied with lower matters—even though those lower matters may be quite estimable in their way—the ego cannot readily use it as a channel of expression.

When the ego makes a tentative effort, when he puts down, as we might say, an explanatory finger, he should be received with enthusiasm, and his behests, should be instantly obeyed that he may more and more take possession of the mind, and so come into his inheritance, so far as the lower planes are concerned.

The personality should, so to speak, stand aside, and let the ego, the "warrior", fight in him.

In so doing, however, the personality must take care ([Page 205](#)) that he is devoted to the *work*, and not to his *personal* share or part in it. He must take care that, in a rush of personality, he remembers all the time that it is the ego that is working in him.

Although the vagueness of the ego, unless he were developed, may perhaps preclude him from indicating a particular line of work, yet when the personality, being more definite, has found the work, the ego can and does pour himself down into it, and enables him to do it in a much better manner and in an altogether grander frame of mind than the personality could attain unaided.

"But if thou [the personality] look not for him [the ego], if thou pass him by, then there is no safeguard for thee. Thy brain will reel, thy heart grow uncertain, and in the dust of the battlefield thy sight and senses will fail, and thou wilt not know thy friends from thy enemies". [Light on the Path] This is what happens when the personality does not look for the higher guidance of the ego.

This is a step necessary to be taken, but man who intends to set his feet upon the Path which leads to Initiation, for, at Initiation, the lower and the higher become one, or rather the lesser is absorbed by the greater, so that there should be nothing left in the personality, which is not a representation of the ego, the lower being merely an expression of the higher. With this, however, we shall deal more fully in Chapter XXXI, which deals specifically with Initiation.

It is obvious, therefore, that the personality should endeavour to ascertain what the ego desires, and provide him with the opportunities he wants. The study of inner things, as mentioned, and living the spiritual life, wakes up the ego, and attracts his attention. To take an example: suppose you have an ego whose principal method of manifesting himself is by affection. That quality is what he wants to exhibit by his personality: consequently, if the personality tries to feel strong affection, and makes a specialty of that, the ego will promptly throw more of himself into the personality, ([Page 206](#)) because he finds in it exactly what he desires.

In the savage, the self expresses itself in all kinds of emotions and passions of which the ego could not possibly approve, but, in the developed man, there are no emotions but such as he chooses to have. Instead of being swayed by emotions, and carried off his feet, he simply selects them. He would say, for example: "Love is a good thing: I will allow myself to feel love. Devotion is a good

thing: I will allow myself to feel devotion. Sympathy is beautiful: I will allow myself to feel sympathy. "This he does with his eyes open, intentionally. The emotions are thus under the dominion of the mind, and that mind is an expression of the causal body, so that the man is coming very near to the condition of complete unity of the higher and lower self.

The connection between the ego and the mental body is of the greatest importance, and every effort should be made to keep it active and alive. For the ego is the force behind, which makes use of the qualities and powers of the personality. In order that we may think of anything we must remember it; in order that we may remember it, we must have paid attention to it; and *the paying attention is the descent of the ego into his vehicles* in order to look through them.

Many a man with a fine mental body and a good brain makes little use of them, because he pays little attention to life—that is to say, because the ego is putting but little of himself down into these lower planes, and so the vehicles, are left to run riot at their own will. The remedy for this has already been stated: it is to give the ego the conditions he requires, when there will be no reason to complain of his response.

It appears that the actual experiences of the personality cannot be transmitted to the ego: but the essence of them may be passed to him. The ego cares little for details, but does want the essence of experiences. This being so, it is evident ([Page 207](#)) that the ordinary man has in his life very little that appeals to the ego.

The system of yielding up results of the lower work, but not the detailed experiences, proceeds all the time until Adeptship is attained.

The student will do well to follow the advice given in Light on The Path : watch for the ego, and let him fight through you: but at the same time remember, always that you are the ego. Therefore identify yourself with him, and make the lower give way to the higher. Even if you fall many times, there is no reason to be disheartened, for even failure is to a certain extent success, since by failure we learn, and so are wiser to meet the next problem. It is not expected that we should invariably succeed, but only that we shall always do our best.

Moreover, we must recollect that the ego has associated himself with the personality because he has a hunger, or thirst [Trishna] for vivid experience. As he develops, the hunger abates little by little, and sometimes, when he is advanced, and has become more sensitive to the delights and activities of his own plane, he goes to the other extreme of neglecting his personality, caught as it is in the grip of karma, sunk in conditions which are now full of sorrow or of boredom to the ego, because he feels that he has outgrown them.

This diminution of the thirst has taken place as he developed his personality. When he gained full consciousness on the astral plane, the physical began to appear dull by comparison; reaching the lower mental world, he found the astral

dark and dismal; and all four of the lower levels lost their attraction when he began to enjoy the still more vivid and luminous life of the causal body.

As has already been pointed out, it is necessary ever to bear in mind that consciousness is *one*: it is, therefore, quite mistaken to conceive of the ego, or higher-self, as something "above", something essentially foreign to ourselves, and consequently hard to reach. ([Page 208](#)) Often we speak of the "tremendous effort" required to reach the higher self: at other times of the inspiration, etc., which comes from the higher self to us down below. In all these cases, we make the fundamental mistake of identifying, ourselves with that which we are not, instead of that which we fundamentally are. The first condition of spiritual achievement is the certainty, beyond any doubt that we are the ego of higher self: the second condition is that we have full confidence in our own powers as the ego, and the courage to use them freely.

Instead, therefore, of looking upon the consciousness of the personality as usual and normal, we should accustom ourselves to look upon the consciousness of the personality as abnormal and unnatural, and the life of the ego as our own true life, from which by continuous effort we keep ourselves estranged.

This attitude to the various bodies should be adopted in practical life. Thus, the physical body should not be permitted to work of its own accord, but should be deliberately and consciously trained to obey the behests of the ego. In this way will be brought about what the Hermetic philosophers called the "regeneration" of the body. This is a real change which, when accomplished for ever breaks the dominion of the physical body over the consciousness, making it instead an instrument for the use of the ego.

A similar change should be brought about with regard to the astral body. Instead of permitting the world of emotion to influence it and determine its activity, the ego should himself decide and determine what emotions he will entertain, what feelings he permits himself to radiate from his astral body. Thus the consciousness of the ego becomes disentangled from the astral body, and that body becomes subservient to the wishes of the ego.

Perhaps most essential of all is control of the mental body, because thought is the manifestation of the supreme Creative Energy. We should never allow thought images to be incited from without: ([Page 209](#)) instead, when thought images are made, they should be created by the deliberate, self-conscious action of the ego himself.

Great danger lies in the undisciplined imagination. Were it not for the imagination, external objects of desire would have no power over us. The ego should therefore acquire full control over the imagination, and permit it to exercise its function only in such directions as he determines.

Uncontrolled imagination acts also as a powerful factor in undermining and weakening the will. Only too often, after some resolution has been made, the

imagination is allowed to play with the unpleasant aspects of what it has been decided to do, until eventually it is made to appear so unpleasant that the idea of doing it is given up altogether. Shakespeare uttered deep psychological, truth when he made Hamlet say : "the native hue of resolution is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought."

The remedy for this unfortunate habit is obvious: the will and attention should be irrevocably concentrated, not on the difficulties or unpleasantnesses which we imagine confront us, but on the task which is to be done. "Nerve us with constant affirmatives", said Emerson.

Pursuing the analysis a little further, we should abandon the widespread idea that the will *does* things, that we carry through something by an effort of the will. To do and carry out is *not* the function of the will, but of a quite different aspect of the ego, the creative activity.

The will is the Ruler, the King who says "this shall be done," but who does not go and do things Himself. Psychologically speaking, the will is the power to hold the consciousness focussed on one thing and exclude everything else. In itself, it is perfectly serene, quiet, and unmoving, being, as said, just the power to hold one thing and exclude all else.

It is scarcely possible to fix the limits of the power of the human will when properly directed. It is so ([Page 210](#)) much more far-reaching than the ordinary man ever supposes, that the results, gained by its means appear to him astounding and supernatural. A study of its powers brings one gradually to realise what was meant by the statement that if faith were only sufficient, it could remove mountains, and cast them into the sea; and even that oriental description seems scarcely exaggerated when one examines authenticated instances of what has been achieved by this marvellous power. Perhaps the most important factor in a successful use of the will is perfect confidence, which of course, may be gained in various ways, according to the type of person concerned.

As soon as man realises that there is the inner and spiritual world of the ego, which is of enormously more importance in every way than that which is external, he may well adopt the attitude of an actor, who plays his part in the world, only because of the true life inside. An actor takes various parts at different times, just as we come back in other incarnations and wear other kinds of bodies. But all the time the actor has his real life as a man and as an artist as well, and, because he has that life of his own, he wants to play his part well, in the temporary life of the stage. Similarly, we should wish to do well, in our temporary life here, because of the great reality behind, of which it is a very small fragment.

If this is clearly realised, we shall see what is the relative importance of this outer life: that its only value to us is that we shall play our part well, whatever that part may be. What kind of part it is, and what happens to us in this mimic existence - these things matter little. It may be an actor's business to go through all sorts of pretended sorrows and difficulties; but these do not trouble him in the least. He

may, for example, have to be killed every night in a duel; what does the feigned death matter to him? The only thing that concerns him is that he should acquit himself well.

Hence, it should not be difficult to realise that the ([Page 211](#)) world about us is a mimic world, and that it really does not matter what experiences may come to us. All things that happen to people from the outside are a result of their karma. The causes were set up going long ago in other lives, and cannot now be altered. Therefore it is useless to worry about the things that happen: they should be borne philosophically. The way in which they are borne moulds the character for the future, and that is the only important thing. One should use karma to develop courage, endurance and various other good qualities, and then dismiss it from the mind.

Thus the groping, striving, struggling divine Self becomes, as evolution proceeds, the true Ruler, the inner Ruler Immortal. A man who grasps that he is himself that Immortal Ruler, seated within his Self-created vehicles of expression, gains a sense of dignity and power which grows ever stronger, and more compelling on the lower nature. The knowledge of the truth makes us free.

The Inner Ruler may still be hampered by the very forms he has shaped for self-expression, but, knowing himself as the Ruler, he can work steadfastly to bring his realm into complete subjection. He knows that he has come into the world for a certain purpose, to make himself fit to be a co-worker with the Supreme Will, and he can do and suffer all which is necessary to that end.

He knows himself divine, and that his Self-realisation is only a matter of time. Inwardly, the divinity is felt, though outwardly it is not yet expressed; his task is to become in manifestation what he is in essence. He is king *de jure*, not yet *de facto*.

As a Prince, born to a crown, patiently submits to the discipline which is fitting him to wear it, so the sovereign Will in us is evolving to the age when royal powers will pass into its grasp, and may therefore patiently submit to the necessary discipline of life.

A correct view of the relationship, between the ego and his successive personalities, should suffice to clear up ([Page 212](#)) the misunderstandings which have arisen regarding the teachings of the Lord Buddha. The Buddha preached constantly against the idea which was evidently prevalent in His time, of the continuation of the *personality*. But while He taught that nothing of all that, with which men generally identify themselves, lasts forever, He made most unequivocal statements about the successive lives of men. He gave examples of preceding lives, and compared, successive incarnations to days that one may have spent in this village or in that.

Nevertheless, the Southern Church of Buddhism now teaches that only karma persists, not an ego; as though man in one life made a certain amount of karma,

and then died, and nothing was left of him, but another person was born, and had to bear the karma which that person did not make.

With curious illogicality, however, in spite of the formal teaching to the contrary, a *practical* belief in the continued existence of the individual persists, because, for example, the Buddhist monks speak of attaining nirvana, and recognise that this will take many lives.

The real significance of this teaching of the Buddha lies in the great emphasis, He laid on the external temporary part of man which does *not* endure, and the implication that the parts of man which are not temporary or external, do survive as the enduring ego, the real man.

His teaching, however, went still deeper than this. There is a passage in the Shri Vakya Sudha which warns the aspirant that when he repeats the great formula "I am That", he must take care what he means by " I ". It explains that the separate individual should be understood as threefold, and that it is the union of Brahman *only of the highest of these three* that is proclaimed by "Thou art That", and such sayings. We have already abundantly seen that the personality is not "I": and even the "you" in me is not "I" : the " I " is some thing indistinguishable ([Page 213](#)) from the universal Self, in which the many and the One are one. The Lord Buddha's teaching denies the permanency of the "you", that men call " I ".

Much wisdom is often wrapped up in etymology. Thus the very word "person" is compounded of the two Latin words *per* and *sona*, and therefore signifies, "that through which the sound comes"- i.e., The mask worn by the Roman actor to indicate the part which he happened at the moment to be playing. Thus we very appropriately speak of the group of temporary lower vehicles, which an ego assumes when he descends into incarnation, as his "personality".

Almost equally instructive are the words *individual* and *individuality* which are highly appropriate when applied to the ego. For *individual* means that which is *not divisible without loss of identity: subsisting as one*; and *individuality* is defined as *separate and distinct existence*. Going a stage further still, the word *exist* derives from *ex* , out, and *sistere*, to make to stand. Thus the ego or individuality is *made to stand out* [ from the Monad ], and manifests itself *through* the mask of the personality.

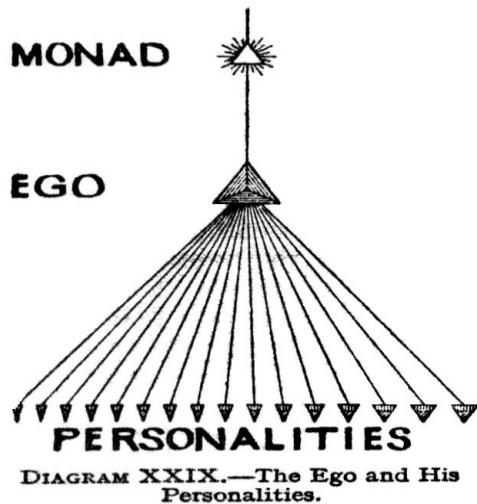


Diagram XXIX is an attempt to illustrate one aspect of the relationship between the ego and his successive personalities. We see in the diagram, first, the Monad deriving his life from the Unmanifest, and projecting below himself his ego, with his threefold characteristics or aspects. The ego in turn projects ([Page 214](#)) from himself into the lower planes a series of successive personalities. These are shown in the drawing as gradually

widening out, as they develop, until eventually the last personality is equilateral, being fully and symmetrically developed, thereby expressing, as fully as its inherent limitations permit, the nature and powers of the ego.

As people develop, the personal consciousness may be unified with the life of the ego—as far as that is possible - and then there is only one consciousness: even in the personal consciousness there will be the consciousness of the ego, who will know all that is going on. But, as already said, with many people, at the present day, there is often considerable opposition between the personality and the ego.

A man who has succeeded in raising his consciousness to the level of the causal body, and thereby unifying the consciousness of the lower and the higher selves, of the personality with the individuality or ego has, of course, the consciousness of the ego at his disposal during the whole of his physical life. This will not be at all affected by the death of the physical body, nor even by the second and third deaths in which he leaves behind him the astral and mental bodies respectively.

His consciousness, in fact, resides in the ego all the time, and plays through whatever vehicle he may happen at any given moment to be using.

For him the whole series of his incarnations is only one long life: what we call an incarnation is to him a day in that life. All through his human evolution, his consciousness is fully active. Incidentally, we may note that he is generating karma just as much at one period as at another; and while his condition at any given moment is the result of the causes he has set in motion in the past, yet there is no instant at which he is not modifying his conditions by the exercise of thought and will. Whilst this consideration applies to all men, yet it is clear that one who possesses the ego consciousness is in a position to modify his karma more deliberately, and with ([Page 215](#)) more calculated effect, than one who has not achieved continuous ego-consciousness.

H.P.Blavatsky speaks of the Higher Self as the "great Master", though she is here using the term Master in an unusual sense, different from that in which it is mostly employed today. It is, she says, the equivalent of Avalokiteshvara, and the same as Adi-Buddha with the Buddhist occultists, Âtma. with the Brahmanas, and Christos with the ancient Gnostics.

## CHAPTER XXVII

### THE EGO IN THE PERSONALITY

([Page 216](#)) There are a number of ways in which the activity of the ego may be more specifically observed as operating through the consciousness of the personality. In the first place, as has been pointed out more than once, anything evil or selfish cannot, by the very mechanism of the higher planes affect the ego, and we may therefore say that he has nothing to do with it. Unselfish thoughts and feelings alone can affect the ego: all the lower thoughts and feelings affect

the permanent atoms, not the ego: and as we have seen, corresponding to them we find gaps in the causal body, not "bad" colours. The ego is concerned only with purely unselfish feelings and thoughts.

Most people are conscious of times when they are filled with splendid inspiration, and exaltation, with glowing devotion and joy. These moments, of course, are precisely those when the ego succeeds in impressing himself upon the lower consciousness; but that which is then felt is, in reality, there all the time, though the personality is not always conscious of it. The aspirant should endeavour to realise, both by reason and by faith, that it is *always* there, and it will then appear as though he actually felt it, even at times when the link is imperfect, and when he does not feel it in the personal consciousness.

Moreover, it is obvious that while the mind is responding to the appeals of the physical, astral and lower mental planes, it is not likely to hear the message, that the ego is trying to transmit to the personality from his own higher planes.

An emotional impulse belonging to the astral plane, is sometimes mistaken for real spiritual aspiration ([Page 217](#)) because what happens in the buddhic vehicle, if brought down to the personality, is reflected in the astral body. A standard example of this phenomenon is to be found in religious revivalist meetings. Such great emotional upheavals, whilst sometimes beneficial, are in many instances harmful, tending to throw people off their mental balance.

Two simple but excellent rules may be given for differentiating between a true intuition and mere impulse. First: if the matter be laid aside for a while, and "slept on" an impulse will probably die away: a genuine intuition will remain as strong as ever. Second: true intuition is always connected with something unselfish; if there is any touch of selfishness it may be taken as certain that it is only an astral impulse, and not a true buddhic intuition.

The influence of the ego is often felt on occasions when one seems to know by inner conviction that a thing is true without being able to reason it out. The ego knows, and has good reason for his knowledge; but sometimes he cannot impress his reasons on the physical brain, though the bare fact that he knows manages to come through. Hence, when a new truth is presented to us, we know at once whether we can accept it or not.

That is not superstition, but an intense inner conviction. Superficially, it may appear to be abandoning reason in favour of intuition; but then it must be remembered that *buddhi*, which we translate "intuition" is as known in India as "*pure reason*". It is the reason of the ego, which is a type higher than that which we have on the lower planes.

More specifically, we may say that manas gives inspiration: buddhi gives intuition as to right and wrong: Âtma. is the directing conscience, *commanding* that the man should follow that which he knows to be best, often when the mind is trying to invent some excuse to do otherwise.

Again, the manifestation of genius are but the momentary grasping of the brain by the large ([Page 218](#)) consciousness of the ego, forcing it into an insight, a strength of grip, and a width of outlook, that causes its noble reach. This large consciousness *is* the real Self, the real man. Many things that we see around us, or that happen to us, are hints of this larger consciousness, whisperings, scarcely articulate as yet, but with all the promise of the future, that come from the land of our birth, from the world to which we truly belong. They are the voice of the living spirit, unborn, undying, ancient, perpetual, constant. They are the voice of the inner God, speaking in the body of man.

Life teaches us in two ways, by tuition that the world gives us, and by intuition the working of the inner self. As men develop, their intuition increases, and they do not depend so much as before on the instruction that the world gives. That is another way of saying that the man who uses his inner powers can learn much more from a little experience than other men can from a great deal. Because of the activity of his innate intelligence, the developed man is able to see the great significance of even small things; but the undeveloped mind is full of curiosity. It is eager for novelty, because, not being good at thinking, it soon exhausts the obvious significance of commonplace things. This mind is the one that craves miracles in connection with its religious experience, as it is blind to the countless miracles that surround it all the time.

What we call the dictates of conscience come from above, and represent usually the knowledge of the ego on the subject. But here a word of caution is necessary. The ego himself is as yet but partially developed. His knowledge on any given subject may be quite small, or even inaccurate, and he can reason only from the information before him.

Because of this, a man's conscience often misleads him, for an ego who is young, and knows but little, may yet be able to impress his will upon the personality. But as a general rule the undeveloped ego is also undeveloped in his power of impressing himself ([Page 219](#)) upon his lower vehicles; and perhaps this is just as well.

Sometimes however, as said, an ego, who lacks development in tolerance and wide knowledge, may yet have a will sufficiently strong to impress upon his physical brain orders which show that he is a very young ego, and does not understand.

Hence, when conscience seems to dictate something which is clearly against the great laws of mercy and truth and justice [as, possibly, was the case with some of the inquisitors], the man should think carefully whether the universal rule is not a greater thing than the particular application which seems to conflict with it. The intellect should always be used in such a way that it will be an instrument of the ego, not an obstacle in the path of his development.

A curious example of the way in which an ego may manifest himself to the personality is that described in *The Mental Body*, p.280. A certain orator whilst speaking one sentence of a lecture, habitually sees the next sentence actually materialise in the air before her, in three different forms, from which she consciously selects that one which she thinks the best. This is evidently the work of the ego, though it is a little difficult to see why he takes that method of communication, instead of himself selecting the form he thinks best, and impressing that form alone on the personal consciousness.

That which is known to mystics as the "Voice of the Silence" differs for people at different stages. The voice of the silence for any one is that which comes from the part of him which is higher than his consciousness can reach, and, naturally that changes as his evolution progresses.

For those now working with the personality, the voice of the ego is the voice of the silence, but when one has dominated the personality entirely, and has made it one with the ego, so that the ego may work perfectly through it, it is the voice of Âtma. - the triple spirit on the nirvanic plane. When this is ([Page 220](#)) reached, there will still be a voice of the silence—that of the Monad. When the man identifies the ego and the Monad, and attains Adeptship, he will still find a voice of the silence coming down to him from above, but then it will be the voice, perhaps, of one of the Ministers of the Deity, one of the Planetary Logoi. Perhaps for Him in turn it will be the voice of the Solar Logos Himself. The "Voice of the Silence", therefore, from whatever level it may come, is always essentially divine.

The ego works in the physical body through the two great divisions of the nervous system - the sympathetic and the cerebrospinal. The sympathetic system is connected mostly with the astral body, the cerebrospinal system with the mental body, this system coming more and more under the influence of the ego as he advances in intellectual power.

As the cerebrospinal system developed, the ego passed on to the sympathetic system more and more of the parts of his consciousness, definitely established, towards which he no longer needed to turn his attention, in order to keep them in working order. It is possible, by the methods of Hatha Yoga, for example for the ego to re-establish direct control over portions of the sympathetic system: to do so, however, is obviously not a step forward, but a step backward, in evolution.

The student should recollect that the ego is always striving upwards, trying to get rid of the lower planes, endeavouring to throw off the burdens which prevent his climbing. He does not want to be troubled, for example, with looking after the vital functions of the body, and gives his attention to the machinery only when anything goes wrong. As previously said, all such workings are recoverable, but it is not worth while to do so. On the contrary, the more we can hand over to that automatism, the better; for the less we have to utilise the waking consciousness, for the things that are constantly recurring, the more shall we have to work for the things that really need attention, ([Page 221](#)) and that are probably vastly more important, at any rate from the point of view of the ego.

Occasionally a man may become dominated by a "fixed idea", this resulting in some cases in madness, in other cases, in the unshakable devotion or determination of the saint or the martyr. These two classes of cases have diverse psychological origins, which we may now study.

A fixed idea that is madness is an idea which the ego has handed over to the sympathetic system, so that it has become part of the "subconscious". It may be a past mood or notion, that the ego has outgrown; or a forgotten fact, suddenly reasserting itself, unaccompanied by its proper surroundings; or the connection of two incongruous ideas; and so on.

There are countless such ideas, with which the ego has had to do in the past, and which he has not entirely thrown out of the mechanism of consciousness so that they have lingered there, though the ego himself has outgrown them. So long as any part of the mechanism of consciousness can respond to them, for so long those ideas may emerge above the horizon, or "threshold" of consciousness.

When such an idea comes up, as it does, without reason, without rationality, with the rush and surge and passionate strength of the past, it overbears the subtler mechanism that the ego has evolved for his higher purposes. For ideas, such as those we are considering, are stronger on the *physical* plane than those we call the ordinary mental ideas, because, their vibrations being slower and coarser, they produce more result in the denser matter. It is far easier to affect the physical body, for example, by the surge of a barbaric emotion, than by the subtle reasoning of a philosopher.

We may state, then, that the fixed idea of the madman is usually an idea which has left its trace on the sympathetic system, and which, during some disturbance or weakening of the cerebrospinal system, is able to assert itself in consciousness. It arises from below. ([Page 222](#))

The fixed idea of the saint or martyr, on the other hand, is a very different thing. This comes down from the ego himself, who is striving to impress upon the physical brain his own loftier emotion, his own wider knowledge. The ego, who can see further on the higher planes than he can in the physical encasement, tries to impress upon that physical encasement his own will, his own desire for the higher and nobler. It comes with all-dominating power; it cannot approve itself to the reason, for the brain is not yet ready to reason on those lines of higher knowledge and of deeper vision and intuition; but it comes down, with the force of the ego on a body prepared for it, and thus asserts itself as the dominant power, guiding the man to heroic action, to martyrdom, to saintship. Such fixed ideas come, not, as in the previous class, from below, but from above; not from the subconscious but from the super-conscious.

As was said in *The Mental Body*, p. 279, we need not shrink from the fact that there is frequently a psychological instability associated with genius, as expressed in the saying that genius is akin to madness, and in the statement of

Lombroso and others that many of the saints were neuropaths. The more delicate the machinery, the more easily may it be overstrained, or thrown out of gear; hence it is sometimes true that the very instability of the genius or the saint is the very condition of inspiration, the normal brain being not yet sufficiently developed, nor delicate enough, to answer to the subtle waves coming from the higher consciousness.

Thus those impulses, which we call the promptings of genius, come down from the super-conscious, from the realm of the ego himself. Not only do these inspirations from the higher consciousness sometimes cause brain instability, but, as is well known, they are frequently accompanied by great irregularity of moral conduct. The reason for this is interesting and important.

When any force comes down, from a higher to a lower plane, ([Page 223](#)) it is subject to transmutation in the vehicle into which it comes. According to the nature of the vehicle will be the transmutation of the force, a portion of the force being changed by the vehicle, into which it plays, *into the form of energy to which that vehicle lends itself most readily*.

Hence, for example, if an organism have a tendency to sexual excitement, the down flow of the force of genius will immensely increase the force of sexuality, by that part of which is transmitted into vitality. We may note here, as an example of the working of this principle, that in the Third Race, the down flow of the spiritual life, into the channels of the animal man, so enormously increased his animal powers, that it was necessary that the Sons of Mind should come to his assistance, or humanity would have plunged down into the vilest of animal excesses, the very force of the spiritual life increasing the depth of the plunge into degradation. The lesson to be learnt here is clearly, that before we invite the inflow of the higher forces, it is all-important first to purify the lower nature. As the Buddha taught, the first rule is: "Cease to do evil".

In the words of The Voice of the Silence: "Beware lest thou shouldst set a foot still soiled upon the ladder's lowest rung. Woe unto him who dares pollute one rung with miry feet. The foul and viscous mud will dry, become tenacious, then glue his feet unto the spot; and like a bird caught in the wily fowler's lime, he will be stayed from further progress. His vices will take shape and drag him down. His sins will raise their voices like as the jackal's laugh and sob after the sun goes down; his thoughts become an army, and bear him off a captive slave."

"Kill thy desires, Lanoo, make thy vices impotent, ere the first step is taken on the solemn journey.

"Strangle thy sins, and make them dumb forever, before thou dost lift one foot to mount the ladder.

"Silence thy thoughts, and fix thy whole attention on thy Master, whom yet thou dost not see, but whom thou feelest".

( Page 224 ) The student will scarcely need to be told that one meaning of "thy Master" is his own ego.

A man on the Path must do his work thoroughly. On the threshold mistakes can easily be corrected. But unless the disciple gets rid entirely, for example, of the desire for power, in the early stages of his spiritual apprenticeship, it will become stronger and stronger. If he does not weed it out where it is based in the physical, astral and mental planes, but allows it to take root in the spiritual plane of the ego, he will find it very difficult to eradicate. Ambition thus established in the causal body is carried on from life to life. So the pupil should beware of permitting spiritual ambition to touch the causal body, and so build into it elements of separateness, which more and more encase the life.

A man who is a genius on some line may often find it easy to apply tremendous, concentration to his particular line of work; but, when he relaxes from that, his ordinary life may quite possibly be still full of whirlpools in his mental and astral bodies. Such whirlpools may and do constantly crystallise into permanent prejudices, and make actual congestions of matter closely resembling warts upon the mental body [vide *The Mental Body*, p.31]. This of course is not what is required: the student of occultism aims at nothing less than the complete destruction of the whirlpools, so as to comb out the lower mind and make it the calm and obedient servant of the higher self *at all times*.

During the sleep of the physical body, although the ego leaves the body, yet he always maintains a close connection with it, so that under ordinary circumstances, he would be quickly recalled to it by any attempt that might be made upon it, e.g., to obsess it.

Whilst there are several widely different causes of sleepwalking [vide *The Astral Body* p.90-91] there are some instances in which it appears that the ego is able to act more directly upon his physical body during the absence of the intermediate mental and astral vehicles— ( Page 225 ) instances in which the man is able, during his sleep, to write poetry or to paint pictures, which would be far beyond his powers when awake.

The ego often impresses his ideas upon the personality in dreams, using sets of symbols, of which each ego has his own system, though some forms seem general in dreams. Thus it is said that to dream of water signifies trouble of some sort, although there does not seem any real connection between the two. But, even though there be no real connection, an ego - or for that matter some other entity who desires to communicate—may use the symbol, merely because it is understood by the personality, and, by means of it, warn the personality of some impending misfortune.

Prophetic dreams must be attributed exclusively to the action of the ego, who either foresees for himself, or is told of some future event, for which he wishes to prepare his lower consciousness. This may be of any degree of clearness and

accuracy, according to the power of the ego to assimilate it himself, and having done so, to impress it upon his waking brain.

Sometimes the event is one of serious moment, such as death or disaster, so that the motive of the ego, in endeavouring to impress it, is obvious. On other occasions, however, the fact foretold is apparently unimportant, so that it is difficult to understand why the ego should take any trouble about it. But in such cases, it must be borne in mind that the fact remembered may be merely a trifling detail of some far larger vision, the rest of which has not come through to the physical brain. Stories of such prophetic dreams are, of course, quite common. Several are to be found in *Dreams*, by C.W.Leadbeater, p. 52 et seq.

In order to bring through, into the physical brain, impressions from the ego, it is obvious that the brain must be calm. Everything from the causal body *must* pass through the mental and astral bodies, and, if either of these is disturbed it reflects imperfectly, just as the least rippling of the surface of a lake will break up and distort images reflected in it. It is necessary ([Page 226](#)) also to eradicate absolutely all prejudices, otherwise they will produce the effect of stained glass, colouring everything which is seen through them, and so giving a false impression.

If a man is to hear the "still small voice" with certainty and accuracy, he *must* be still: the outer man must be unshaken by all external things, by the clamour of the big breakers of life that dash against him, as well as by the delicate murmur of the softer ripples. He must learn to be very still, to have no desires and no aversions. Except on rare occasions, when it is unusually strong, it is only when personal desires and aversions have ceased to exist, when the voice of the outer world can no longer command him, that a man can hear the inner voice which should be his unfailing guide.

## CHAPTER XXVIII

### THE EGO AND THE PERSONALITY: SACRAMENTAL AIDS

([Page 227](#)) The sacraments of the Christian religion, and also the ceremonies of Freemasonry, have such an intimate bearing on the relationship between the ego and the personality, as to justify a separate chapter being devoted to considering this important aspect of our subject.

We will consider first the sacraments of Christianity, as they are performed in the Liberal Catholic Church.

The Christian Church sets out to meet the soul or ego, as soon as he comes into his new set of bodies, offering him welcome and assistance: this is achieved through the ceremony of baptism.

As it is not practicable to get at the ego himself, his vehicles are dealt with on the physical plane. As we have seen, what the ego most needs is to get his new set

of vehicles in order, so that he can work through them. Coming, as he does, laden with the results of his past lives, he has within him seeds of good qualities, and also seeds of evil qualities. Those seeds of evil have often, been called "original sin", and quite wrongly connected with the fabled action of Adam and Eve.

It is obviously of great importance to the child that everything possible should be done to starve out the germs of evil, and to encourage those of good: it is to this end that the sacrament of baptism is especially designed. The water used is magnetised, with a special view to the effect of its vibrations upon the higher vehicles, so that all the germs of good qualities, in the unformed astral and mental bodies of the child, may thereby receive a strong stimulus, while at the same time the germs of evil may be isolated and deadened.

( [Page 228](#) ) The ceremony has also another aspect, that of consecrating and setting apart the new vehicles to the true expression of the soul within, and when it is properly and intelligently performed, there can be no doubt that its effect is a powerful one, which may affect the whole future life of the child.

The baptismal ceremony brings a new force into activity, on the side of the ego, in order to influence his vehicles in the right direction. Underlying the belief, that at baptism a guardian angel is given to the child, is the fact that a new thought-form, or artificial elemental is built, which is filled by the divine force, and also ensouled by a higher kind of nature-spirit known as a sylph. This remains with the child as a factor on the side of good, so that to all intents and purposes it is a guardian angel. Incidentally, through this work the sylph becomes individualised, and grows from a sylph into a seraph, through its association with a thought-form, permeated by the life and thought of the Head of the Church Himself.

The sacrament of baptism cannot alter the disposition of the man, but it can make his vehicles a little easier to manage. It does not suddenly make a devil into an angel, or a very evil man into a good one, but it certainly gives the man a better chance. This is what it is intended to do, and that is the limit of its power.

In addition, and more specifically, the baptismal ceremony is intended to open up the chakrams, or force-centres, and to set them moving much more rapidly. When this has been done [for details the student is referred to *The Science of the Sacraments*], and the "guardian angel" thought form has been built, the pouring in of the triple spiritual force takes place at the actual baptism itself, through the medium of consecrated water.

As the names of the Trinity are invoked, the force unquestionably flows from the Three Persons of the Solar Deity Himself, though it reaches us through the intermediate stages of the Christ, Who is the Head of the Church, ( [Page 229](#) ) and the ordained priest. The thought which fills the guardian angel thought-form is, in fact really that of the Christ Himself.

Baptism is primarily intended for infants, and its commission in infancy cannot be fully supplied by baptism in later life. This adult has necessarily long ago verified the matter of his vehicles for himself, and his currents are flowing much in the same way as baptism would have caused them to flow; but it will usually be found that the "corners" are not cleaned up, much of the aura seems unvivified, and there is a large amount of indeterminate matter, with which nothing is being done; it has, therefore, a tendency to get out of the general circulation, to settle and form a deposit, and so gradually to clog the machinery and interfere with its efficient working. Baptism in infancy obviates much of this unpleasant result.

In the case of older people, quite a different type of sylph is given, a more worldly-wise entity, capable of development into a keener intelligence. About him there is something half-cynical: he has unwearying patience, but he does not seem to be expecting much, while the angel of the baby is optimistic - vaguer , it may be, than the other, but full of love and hope, and schemes for the future.

Still, a wholesome and beneficent influence is exercised by the baptism of adults; the anointing with the sacred chrism is not without its use, in cleansing the gateway through which the man passes in and out of his body in sleep, and even in the making of the shield, before and behind, is good, especially for those who are young and unmarried.

In the sacrament of Confirmation, the bishop pronounces a preliminary blessing, which is intended to widen out the connection between the ego and his vehicles, in order to prepare the way for what is coming. We might say that the object is to stretch both soul and vehicles to their utmost capacity, that they may be able to receive more of the Divine outpouring. ([Page 230](#))

As he makes the sign of the cross, at the appropriate places, the bishop pours into the candidate power, which is definitely that of the Third Person of the Trinity. This comes in three waves, and acts at the three levels, upon the principles of the candidate.

The divine power rushes through the ego of the bishop, into the higher mind of the candidate: then it pushes upward into Buddhi and finally presses upwards into the Âtma. In each case, it is through the Third-Person aspect of each of these principles that the work is done.

Some candidates are, of course, far more susceptible to the process of opening-up than others. Upon some the effect produced is enormous and lasting; in the case of others, it is often but slight, because as yet that which has to be awokened is so little developed as to be barely capable of any response.

When the awakening, so far as it may be, has been achieved, there comes what may be called the filling and sealing of Âtma., buddhi and manas. The effect on Âtma. is reflected in the etheric double, so far as the development allows, that on buddhi is reproduced in the astral body, and that on higher manas is mirrored in the mental body.

The intention of Confirmation is thus to tighten the links all the way up, to bring about a closer connection between the ego and the personality, and also between the ego and the monad. The result is not merely temporary; the opening up of the connections makes a wider channel, through which a constant flow can be kept going. Confirmation arms and equips a boy or girl for life, and makes it easier for the ego to act on and through his vehicles.

Passing to the Minor Orders, we find the Cleric is intended to aim at the control of his physical body: the Doorkeeper to purify and control his astral body; the Reader has to learn to wield the forces of his mind: the ordination of the Exorcist is aimed at the causal body, and is intended to develop the will, and to give the ego fuller control of the lower vehicles. The degree of Acolyte ([Page 231](#)) is intended to help the man to quicken his intuition, the buddhic faculty.

In this series of diagrams, the following symbols are employed:--

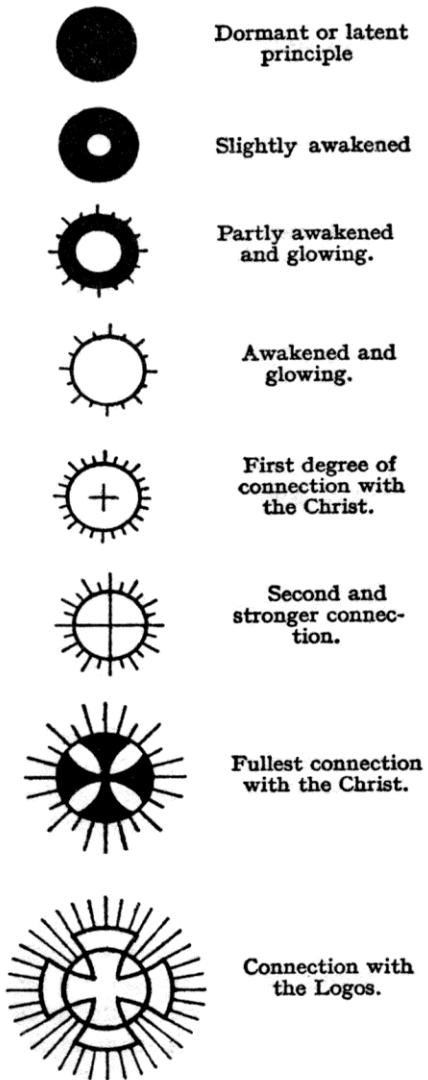
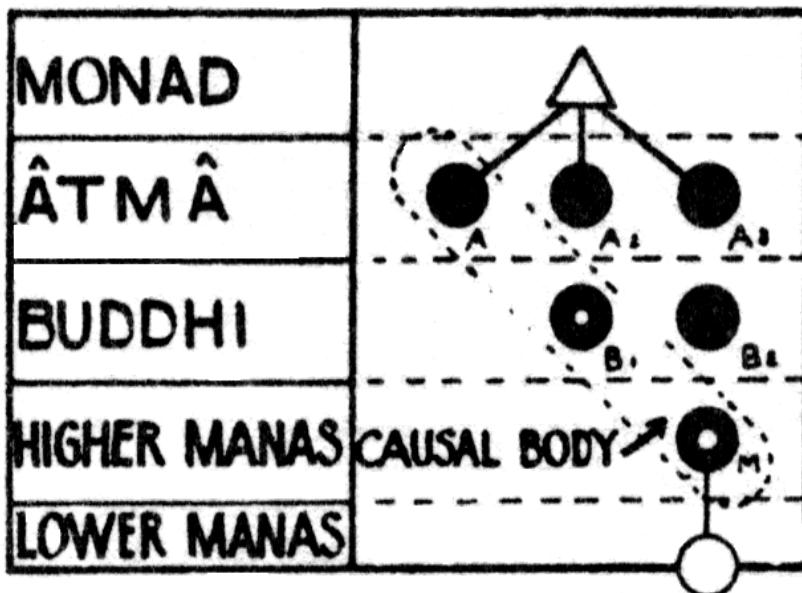


DIAGRAM XXX.—Symbols used in Diagrams XXXI-XXXV.

(Page 232) In Diagram XXXI we have illustrated the condition of an intelligent and cultured, layman. The true man, the Monad, is shown on his own plane, that of Anupadaka. He expresses, or manifests himself in his three aspects on the plane of Âtma.: these we will term Âtma. [1], Âtma. [2] and Âtma. [3], and have marked on the diagrams as A1, A2 and A3 respectively.



**DIAGRAM XXXI.—The Principles of an "Intelligent and Cultured Layman."**

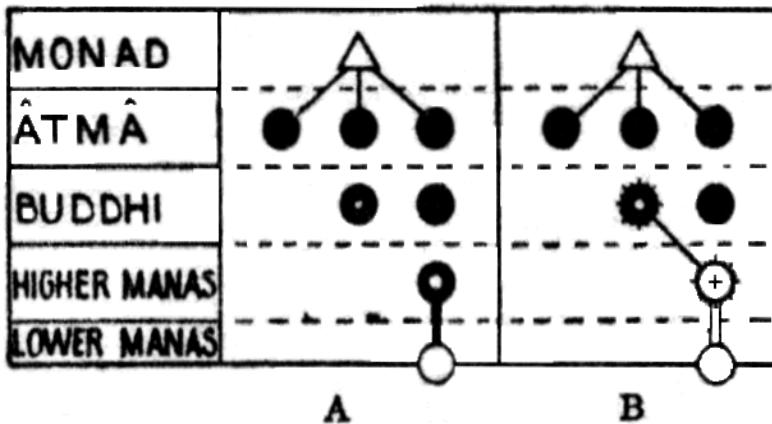
Of these three aspects, the first [A1] remains on the plane of Âtma.: the second descends, or moves outwards, to the plane of buddhi, where we will call it Buddhi [1], marking it B1. The third descends or moves out through the two planes, and shows itself in the higher mental world as Manas, or M: this aspect, also, as it descends or moves through the plane of Buddhi, we will call it Buddhi [2] or B2.

These three outer or lower manifestations, A1, B1 and M, taken together, constitute, as we know, the soul or ego, in his causal body, as indicated in the diagram by the dotted line which encloses them.

Thus we see that, in addition to the principles of Âtma., buddhi and manas, expressed in the ego as A1, B1 and M, there is also, still latent and undeveloped, another aspect of Buddhi [B2], and two aspects of Âtma. [A1 and A2], making three further aspects still to be brought out of latency, and developed into activity.

Now in the Christ Himself, the Perfect Man, these principles also exist, in exactly the same order: but in His case, they are, of course, fully developed, and, moreover, mystically one with the second Person of the Trinity. One of the gifts conferred by ordination is the linking of certain of these principles, in the ordinand, ([Page 233](#)) with the corresponding principles of the Christ, so that a definite channel is made, down which spiritual strength and wisdom flow, up to the fullest limit of the ordinand's receptivity.

The Ordination to the degree of Sub-Deacon confers no powers, but assists in preparing the way for Ordination to the degrees of Deacon, the lowest of the three Major Orders. The bishop therefore attempts gently to widen the connection [the antahkarana, see p.190] between the ego and the lower vehicles of the Sub-Deacon [see [Diagram XXXII-A](#)].



**DIAGRAM XXXII.—The Principles of a Sub-Deacon and Deacon.**

At the Ordination of a deacon, the link between the ego and his vehicles is widened, to become a channel, and also the higher manas [M] is linked with the corresponding principle of the Christ. In some cases buddhi [B1] may also be awakened, and made to glow slightly, thereby establishing a slight line of connection between it and the higher

manas. These effects are indicated in **Diagram XXXII-B**.

This opening of the channel is so great a departure from ordinary life that it can be done only by stages, and the first step towards it, in the Ordination of a deacon, may be regarded as practically a psychic surgical operation.

The threefold influence, of which a bishop is so especially the custodian [as we shall see presently], is called strongly into manifestation, and poured forth, so that, by playing upon the corresponding principles of the ordinand, it stirs them into sympathetic vibration; they therefore become, at any rate for the time, enormously more active and receptive than ever before.

At the conclusion of the ceremony of ordination the bishop makes a final cross, of which the express purpose is to thicken the walls of the much-expanded link between the ego and the personality, to harden ([Page 234](#)) them, and hold them more firmly in their new form. It is as though a sort of framework were erected within, a lining to prevent the widened channel from contracting.

The establishment of the link between the deacon and the Christ enables the higher manas of the Christ to influence that of the deacon, and to stir it into beneficent activity. Needless to say, it does not all follow that it *will* so affect it; that depends on the deacon. At least the way is laid open, the communication is established, and it is for him to make of it what he can.

In the case of the priest, the connection is carried a stage further, and several important developments take place.

At the first imposition of the hands, Atma. and buddhi in the priest [A1,B1 and M] are made to glow with indescribable fervour, by sympathetic vibration, in

harmony with the blinding light of the corresponding principles in the Christ. The glow is usually slight in Âtma., but more marked in buddhi. The influx rushes into the ordinand's Âtma., buddhi and manas, through the corresponding principles of the bishop himself.

Further, a line between Âtma. and buddhi is established, while that already existing between buddhi and higher manas is intensified. The channel between higher manas and the lower vehicles is also widened [see **Diagram-XXXIII-C**].

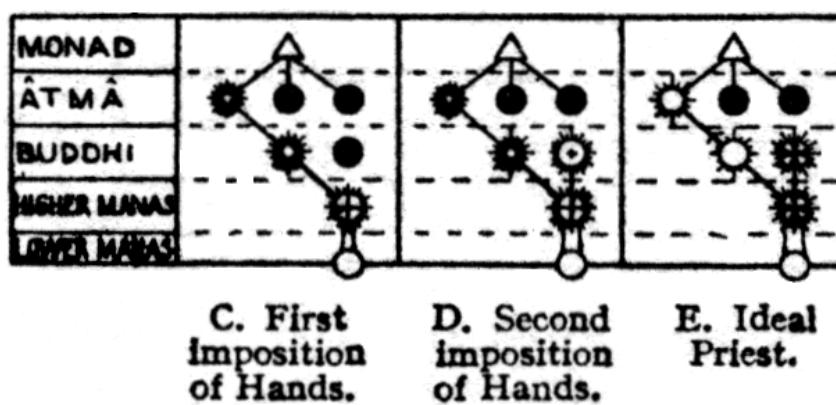
At the second imposition of the hands, the hitherto latent principle of buddhi [B2] is called into activity, and linked with that of the Christ, while the link between it and higher manas is strengthened.

The link between the priest's own Âtma., buddhi and manas, [A1,B1 and M] is opened still more, to permit the flow of more force [see **Diagram XXXIII-D**].

Thus the priest becomes, in a very real sense, an outpost of the consciousness of the Christ, so that he becomes "His man"—the "parson" in fact, that word meaning the same as the *person* [see p.213] who represents the Christ in a certain parish.

At the ordination of the priest, his ego is more ([Page 235](#)) definitely awakened, so that he can act directly upon other egos at the level of the causal body. It is, in fact, this relation which gives him that power to straighten out the distortion, caused by deviation from the path of right, which in ecclesiastical terminology, is known as the power to "remit sin".

The anointing of the hands of the priest, with oil of catechumens, which is constructive in its effects, is a setting of them apart for the purpose of his office and a moulding of them for the transmission of the power of the Christ. The hand of the priest is thus a specialised instrument that can transmit a blessing. The anointing brings the opening forces to bear upon the hands, and endues them with power, whereby, along the lines that are made in the anointing, the influence can pour out.



The process is something like the magnetisation of steel: the anointing operates so that forces can pass through the hands, and at the same time

**DIAGRAM XXXIII.—The Principles of a Priest.**

tempers the hands, so that they can bear the forces, and transmit the power safely.

The bishop makes one cross, which is intended to arrange for the distribution, of the force which rushes down the diagonal line between Âtma.[1], Buddhi[1] and Manas, and a second cross which arranges for the dispensing of the force which flows from Buddhi [2].

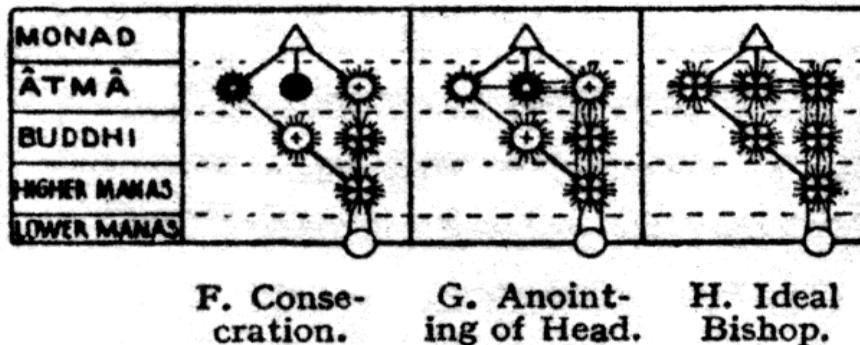
The development of an ideal priest is possible to a man of great determination, who for years works at strengthening the connections between his own principles and those of the Christ. He can intensify the link made with Buddhi[2] and Manas, and can arouse to vigorous action Âtma.[1] and Buddhi[1], thereby making himself a channel of extraordinary power [*vide Diagram XXXIII E*].

At the consecration of a bishop, when the actual ([Page 236](#)) words of consecration are said, a connection is made between Buddhi [2] and Âtma. [3], and the channels between Buddhi [2] and Manas, and the corresponding principles of the Christ, are enormously widened [*vide Diagram, XXXIV-F*].

Thus through Âtma. [3]- Buddhi is linked directly with the Triple Spirit of the Christ, so that blessing from that level flows through him for those Three Aspects are of course, truly one: hence the rationale of the bishop signing the people with a triple cross, instead of with one, as the priest does.

The priest draws his blessing down through his own principles, Âtma.[1], Buddhi[1] and Manas, and emits through his causal body. The bishop, being more fully developed, is able to let the power shine through more immediately,

and therefore far more strongly.



**DIAGRAM XXXIV.—The Principles of a Bishop.**

the potentiality of a development far beyond our imagination.. It is this wonderful Christ-force which enables him to hand on his powers to others.

Next, the way is opened for the influence of the amazing development of Buddhi,

In the case of the bishop, an entirely new line is also opened, linking the bishop's Buddhi[1] directly with that of the Christ, and thus giving it

which has just been made possible, to pour down into the mental and astral vehicles.

At the anointing of the head of the bishop with chrism, the power of reflection of the triple spirit in the lower vehicles is intensified, the triple spirit Âtma. [1] Âtma. [2] and Âtma. [3], glowing, and the way being cleared, down into the physical brain, for the flow of the new forces [see **Diagram XXXIV-G**]

The three lines connecting Âtma.[3], Buddhi [2] and Manas [see Diagram XXXIV], indicate that a bishop can draw ([Page 237](#)) into the causal body, and thus ray forth in blessing, the threefold power of the Triple Spirit.

The action of the chrism tends in the direction of making the force-centre at the top of the head—the brahmaṇḍa chakram - which in most men is a saucer-like depression - into a rapidly rotating cone, projecting upwards from the head.

The anointing of the hands of the bishop with chrism arranges the mechanism, of the distribution of the three kinds of force, from the Three Aspects of the Trinity.

The direct line of communication between Buddhi and the astral body is opened fully, so that if and when that Buddhi, or intuition, is developed, it may flow through at once, into what is intended to be its expression in physical life.

The development of the ideal bishop is possible to one who takes advantage, of every opportunity. All of his principles become responsive channels to the power of the Christ, and he becomes a veritable sun of spiritual energy and blessing. This stage is indicated in **Diagram XXXIV-H**.

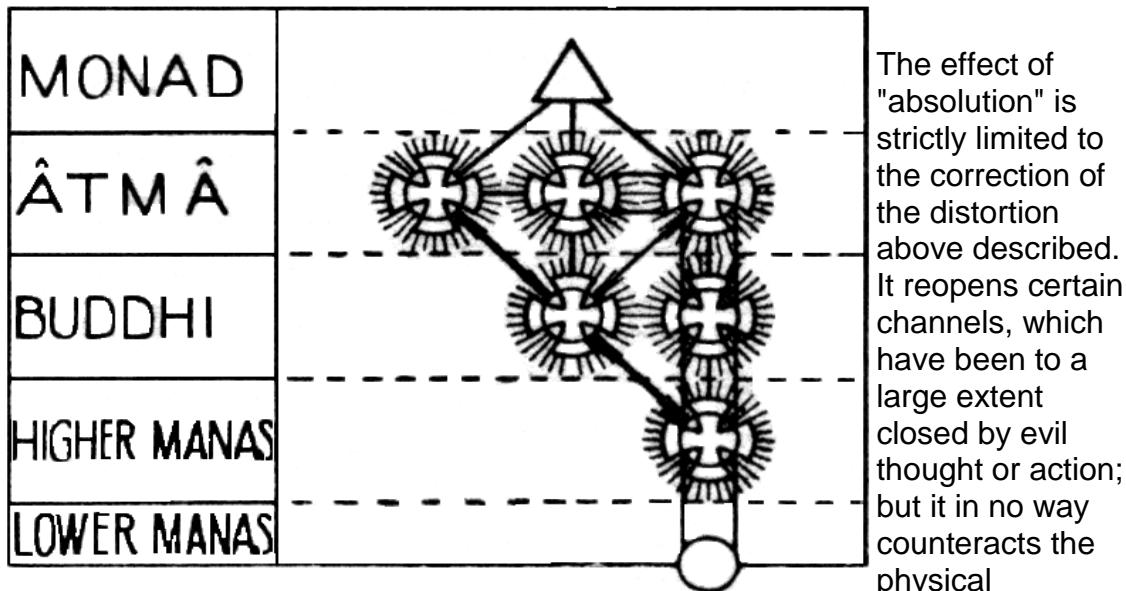
The Perfect Man is not only linked with the Christ, and with his own Highest Self, the Monad, but becomes ever more and more an epiphany of the Logos Or Deity, who brought forth the solar system. He becomes the Master, for Whom incarnation is no longer necessary. **Diagram XXXV** indicates this stage.

Another provision in the Christian religion is the power of Absolution, vested in the priests. As this affects the relations between the various bodies of man, we may usefully consider it briefly here.

The bodies of man are not, of course, separate in space, but interpenetrating. Looked at from below, however, they give the impression of being joined by innumerable fine wires or lines of fire. Every action which works against evolution puts an unequal strain upon these twists and entangles them. When a man goes badly wrong, the confusion becomes such that communication between the higher and lower bodies is seriously impeded; he is no longer his real self, ([Page 238](#)) and only the lower side of the character is able to manifest itself fully.

Whilst the natural forces will straighten out the distortion in due time, yet the Church provides for the work being done more speedily, for the power of straightening out this tangle in higher matter is one of those powers specifically conferred upon a priest at ordination. The co-operation of the man himself is, of

course, also needed: for, "if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."



**DIAGRAM XXXV.—The Perfect Man.**

does it obviate the necessity of restitution, where wrong has been done. The priest's action straightens out the etheric, astral and mental entanglement, produced by the wrong action, or rather by the mental attitude which made that action possible; but it does not in any way relieve the man from the karmic penalty of his action. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap".

One other item of information, regarding the work of the priest in the Holy Eucharist, may be mentioned. In making the three crosses, at "bless, approve, and ratify," over the offerings, the priest pushes his "tube" through the etheric, astral and lower mental matter respectively, and the two crosses made separately over the wafer and the chalice, carry the same tube, now in two branches, on through the higher mental into the plane above. ([Page 239](#)) In doing this, he should use the forces of his own causal body, pressing his thought upward to the highest possible level.

Turning now to Freemasonry, we find that the three Principal Officers represent, Âtma., Buddhi and Manas in man, and that the three Assistant Officers represent the lower mind, the emotional nature or the astral body, and the etheric double: the O.G. or Tyler represents the physical body. As we are in this book concerned principally with the causal body, we may note especially, that the higher mind is represented by the J.W.

In the devas, nature-spirits and elementals associated with the J.W., a golden hue predominates.

When the R.W.M creates ,receives and constitutes the candidate as an E.A.F., the three touches of the f...s... convey different aspects of power, corresponding to the three Aspects of Trinity, the first conveying strength to the brain, the second love to the heart, and the third executive ability to the right arm.

The general effect of this downpouring of force is to widen somewhat the channel of communication between the ego and the personality of the candidate.

The degree of E.A.F. corresponds to the sub-deacon in the Christian system.

At a similar point in the Second Degree ceremony, there is a more decided widening of the link between the ego and the personality, so that it is opened up as a definite channel for the downpouring of force. This channel the candidate can utilise with marked effect, if he sets himself to work upon it and through it.

In this Degree, there is a certain parallel between the Passing of a F.C and the ecclesiastical ordination to the diaconate. At the same time, a link is made between the candidate and the H.O.A.T.F, in those Lodges where He is acknowledged.

As in the case of the widening of consciousness, the link that is made is for the candidate to utilise as he pleases. It may be of greatest benefit to him; it may change the whole of his life, and enable him to ([Page 240](#)) make rapid progress along the path that leads to Initiation. Or, on the other hand, if he entirely neglects it, it may make but very little difference to him.

The proving of the M.M. by the square and the compasses indicate that a M.M may be tested and known by the fact that both the higher self and the lower self are in working order, are functioning together and in harmony.

The M.M. is symbolical of the Initiate of the fourth degree, the Arhat. At that stage of attainment, on the occult path, the battle against the lower quaternary is practically over, and the latter has become an obedient instrument in the hands of the higher triad, which is awake and active in all its three parts.

The M.M. has to find the g..s...on the c...: in other words, it is by finding in himself that deeper Self, which is the Monad, beyond even the higher triad, that the M.M. will at last discover the supreme secret of life, and will then find in very truth, by his own living experience, that he is, and always has been, one with God.

In earlier Degrees, the consciousness of the candidate had to be raised from the s... to the c... , that is, from the quadrilateral to the triangle, from the lower to the higher self. But now, as a M.M. it has to be raised from the triangle, to the point - as is clearly indicated by the W.T. - from the higher self to the Monad.

The Monad is now beginning to work his will in the higher self, as before the higher self worked his will in the lower. The s... t represents the action of that Monad, as it turns upon a centre pin, and sends out a line from its own body as it spins the web of life, just as a spider spins its web from its own body.

The p... marks that chosen path, or ray of the Monad, the line of life and work which the Arhat must discover, and on which he must specialise, in order to make rapid progress. And the c... once more represent the triangle, the powers of the triple spirit, which he must use in his work.

The currents of etheric force, which flow through and ([Page 241](#)) around the spine of every human being, are stimulated into activity, in Freemasonry, in order that the evolution of the candidate may be quickened. This stimulation is applied at the moment when the R.W.M. creates, receives and constitutes. In the First Degree, it affects Ida, the feminine aspect of the force, thus making it easier for the candidate to control passion and emotion. In the Second Degree, it is the Pingala, or masculine aspect, which is strengthened, in order to facilitate the control of mind. The Third Degree, the central energy itself ,the Sushumna, is aroused, thereby opening the way for the pure spirit from on high.

It is by passing up this channel of the Sushumna that a *yogi* leaves his physical body at will, in such a manner that he can retain full consciousness on higher planes, and bring back into his physical brain a clear memory of his experiences.

Ida is crimson in colour, Pingala is yellow and Sushumna is deep blue.

The stimulation of these nerves, and the forces which flow through them, is only a small part of the benefit conferred by the R.W.M.,when he wields the sword at the moment of admission. The widening of the connection between the individuality and the personality has already been mentioned, also the formation, of a link between certain principles of the candidate and the corresponding, vehicles of the H.O.A.T.F. The changes induced are somewhat of the same nature as those described on p.233 et seq.,but of less pronounced character.

Whilst these effects are real, unmistakable and universal, yet their result in the spiritual life of the candidate depends, of course, on himself.

The E.A. should , as a personality, be employed on organising his physical life for higher use; but at the same time, as an ago, he should be developing active intelligence in his causal body, exactly as does the pupil of a Master, who is preparing himself for Initiation.

In the same way, the F.C. is organising his emotional life, ([Page 242](#)) while he unfolds intuition love, in his buddhic body.

The M.M., while arranging his mental life down here, should, as an ego, be strengthening his spiritual will, or Âtma.

## CHAPTER XXIX

### MEMORY OF PAST LIVES

([Page 243](#)) A glance at **Diagram XXV** on p.147 should be sufficient to indicate the mechanical reason why the physical brain of a man cannot normally remember his past lives. For it is obvious that the physical body can have neither a memory, nor a record, of a past incarnation in which it did not participate. Precisely the same consideration applies to his astral and mental bodies, since all these vehicles are new for each incarnation.

We thus see that, as the causal body is the only one that persists from one incarnation to another, the lowest level, at which we can hope to get really reliable information about past lives, is that of the causal body, for nothing below, that can give us first hand evidence.

In these past lives, the ego in his causal body was present - or rather a certain small part of him was present - and so he is an actual witness. All the lower vehicles, *not* being witness, can report only what they may receive from the ego. Consequently, when we bear in mind how imperfect is the communication between the ego and the personality in the ordinary man, we shall see at once how entirely unreliable such second, third, or fourth-hand testimony is likely to be.

Although one may sometimes obtain from the astral and mental bodies isolated pictures of events in a man's past life, we cannot get a sequential and coherent account of it; and even those pictures are but reflections from the causal body, and probably very dim and blurred reflections, which occasionally find their way through to the lower consciousness.

It is thus abundantly clear that, in order to read accurately past lives, it is necessary first of all ([Page 244](#)) to develop the faculties of the causal body. The thing, however, could be done at lower levels, by psychometrisation of the permanent atoms, but, as this would be a much more difficult feat than unfolding of the senses of the causal body, it is not at all likely to be attempted successfully.

Including the method just mentioned, there are four methods of reading past Lives:---

[1] Psychometrisation of the permanent atoms

[2] To take the ego's own memory of what happened

[3] To psychometrise the ego, or rather his causal body, and see for ourselves the experiences through which he has passed. This method is safer than [2], because even an ego, having seen things through a past personality, may have imperfect or prejudiced impressions of them.

[4] To use the buddhic faculties, becoming completely one with the ego under investigation, and to read his experiences as though they were our own *i.e.*, from within, instead of from without. This method obviously demands much higher development.

Methods [3] and [4] have been employed by those who prepared the series of incarnations, which have been published during the past few years in *The Theosophist*, some of them having also been produced in book form. The investigators had also the advantage of the intelligent co-operation of the ego, whose incarnations were described.

The physical presence of the subject, whose lives are being read, is an advantage, but not a necessity. He is useful, provided he can keep his vehicles perfectly calm, but, if he becomes excited, he spoils everything.

The surroundings are not specially important, but quiet is essential, because, if impressions are to be brought through clearly, the physical brain must be calm.

It is necessary also to eradicate absolutely all prejudices, otherwise they will produce the effect of stained glass, colouring everything which is seen through them, and so giving a false impression. ([Page 245](#))

We may say that there are two sources of error possible: [1] personal bias; [2] limited views.

In view of the fact that there are fundamental differences of temperament, these cannot but colour the views taken of other planes. Every one below the level of an Adept is sure to be influenced in this manner to some extent. The man of the world magnifies unimportant details, and omits the important things being in the habit of doing this in daily life. On the other hand, a man starting on the Path may, in his enthusiasm lose for a time his touch with the ordinary human life, from which he has emerged. But even so, he has the advantage, for those who see the inside of things are nearer the truth than those who see only the outside.

In order to minimise this sort of error, it is usual for people, of radically different types, to work together at these investigations.

The second danger we have mentioned is that of a limited view, of taking a part for the whole. Thus, one may take a view of a small portion of a given community, and apply it to the whole community, *i.e.*, one may fall into the common error of generalising on insufficient basis of observation.

There is however, a general aura of a time or a country, which usually prevents any great mistakes of this sort. A psychic, who has not been trained to sense this general aura, is often unconscious of it, and may thus fall into many errors. Long continued observation shows that all untrained psychics are sometimes reliable,

and sometimes unreliable, and those who consult them therefore run the risk of being misled.

In looking at past lives, it is safer to retain full physical consciousness, so as to be able to make a note of everything, while it is being observed, than to leave the physical body during the observations, and trust to memory to their reproduction. This latter plan, however, has to be adopted when the student, though able to use the causal body, can do so only while the physical body is asleep. ([Page 246](#))

The identification of egos is sometimes difficult, because egos naturally change considerably in the course of some thousands of years. Some investigators feel an intuition as to the identity of a particular ego, and, although such an intuition may often be right, it may certainly also sometimes be wrong. The safer, but more laborious, method of identification, is to pass the records rapidly in review, and trace the ego concerned through them, until he is found at the present day.

In some cases, the egos of ordinary people are instantly recognisable, even after thousands of years: that does not speak particularly well of the people concerned, because it means that they have made but little progress. To try to recognise, twenty thousand years ago, one whom one knows at the present day, is somewhat like meeting as an adult some one whom one knew long ago as a child. Sometimes recognition is possible, sometimes the change has been too great.

Those who have since become Masters of the Wisdom are often instantly recognisable, even thousands of years ago, but that is for a different reason. For, when the lower vehicles are already fully in harmony with the ego, they form themselves into the likeness of the Augoeides, and so change little from life to life. Similarly, when the ego himself is becoming a perfect reflection of the Monad, he also changes but little, though he gradually grows: hence he is readily recognisable.

The nature of the Akashic Records having been already described in *The Mental Body*, a few of the more immediately relevant points only will be mentioned here.

In examining a past life, the easiest way is to let the record drift past at its natural rate: but, as this would mean a day's work to look up the events of each day, it is clearly impracticable, except for short periods. It is, however, possible to accelerate or retard the passage of events to any degree required, so that a period of thousands of years may be run through rapidly, ([Page 247](#)) or any particular picture may be held as long as desired.

What is described as the unrolling of the record is, in reality, not a movement of the record, but of the consciousness of the seer. But the impression which it gives is exactly as though the record itself were unrolled. The records may be said to lie upon one another in layers, the more recent on top and the older ones behind. Yet even this simile is misleading, because it suggests the idea of thickness, whereas the records occupy no more space than does the reflection

on the surface of a mirror. The consciousness does not really move in space at all, but rather puts on itself, as a kind of cloak, one or other of the layers of the record, and, in doing so, it finds itself in the midst of the action of the story.

The method of arriving at dates has been described in *The Mental Body*, page 242.

It is, on the whole, somewhat easier to read lives forwards than backwards, because in that case we are working with the natural flow of time, instead of against it.

The languages employed are almost always unintelligible to the investigator but, as the thoughts behind the words lie open before him, that matters little. On several occasions, investigators have copied down public inscriptions, which they could not understand, and have afterwards had them translated on the physical plane, by someone to whom the ancient language was familiar.

The records must not be thought of as originally inhering in matter of any kind, though they are reflected in it. In order to read them, it is not necessary to come into direct contact with any particular grouping of matter, since they can be read from any distance, when a connection has once been made.

Nevertheless, it is true that each atom contains the record, or perhaps possesses the power to put a clairvoyant *en rapport* with the record, of all that has ever ([Page 248](#)) happened within sight of it. It is in fact, on account of this phenomenon that psychometry is possible.

But there is attached to it a very curious limitation, in that the psychometer sees, by means of it, only what he would have seen if he had been standing at the spot from which the object psychometrised has been taken.

For example, if a man psychometrises a pebble, which has been lying for ages in a valley, he will see only what has passed during those ages in that valley. His view will be limited by the surrounding hills, just as if he had stood for all those ages where the stone lay, and had witnessed all those things.

There is, however, an extension of psychometric power, by which a man may see the thoughts and feelings of the actors in his drama, as well as their physical, bodies. There is also another extension by which, having first established himself in that valley, he may make it the basis of further operations, and so pass over the surrounding hills and see what lies beyond them, and also what has happened there since the stone was removed, and even what occurred before it in some manner arrived there.

But the man who can do all this will soon be able to dispense with the stone altogether.

When using the senses of the causal body, it is seen that every object is throwing off pictures of the past.

We have already seen that, as the inner faculties are developed, life becomes continuous. Not only can the consciousness of the ego be reached but it is possible to travel back, even as far as the animal group-soul, and look through animal eyes at the world which then existed. The difference of outlook is said to be so different as to make description impossible.

Short of such continuous consciousness, there is no detailed memory of the past, not even of the most important facts. There is, however, this fact, that whatever we have known in the past we are almost sure to recognise and instantly accept, as soon as it is again presented to us in the present. ([Page 249](#))

Hence, though one may appreciate intellectually the truth of reincarnation, actual proof can be obtained only in the causal body, where the ego is cognisant of his past.

When a man, using the consciousness of his causal body, has always with him the memory of all his past lives, he is of course, capable of consciously directing the various lower manifestations of himself at all points of his progress.

During the stages in which the man is not yet fully capable of this, the ego can nevertheless impress his purpose upon his permanent atoms, so that that purpose will be carried over from life to life. Knowledge of this will not be born inherent in the man, as part of his stock-in-trade, so to speak , but the moment it comes before him, in any form, in his next incarnation, he will immediately recognise its truth, seize upon it, and act accordingly.

In the case of a very quick rebirth, the possibility of recovering the memory of the past incarnation is considerably increased. **Diagram XXV**,p.147, should make the mechanism of this possibility easy to understand. There have been a large number of atoms and molecules, in the old mental and astral bodies, which have preserved a certain affinity with the mental unit and astral permanent atom, and consequently a good deal of the old material may be used in building the new mental and astral bodies. With their assistance, it is clear that memory of the last incarnation should be more easily attained than in cases where there has been a long interval between lives, and the old materials have all been dissipated and spread through the various planes.

We do not yet understand the laws which govern the power to impress the detailed knowledge of one life upon the physical brain of the next. Such evidence as is at present available seems to show that details are usually forgotten, but that broad principles appear to the new mind as self-evident.

It is a common experience, on hearing of a truth ([Page 250](#)) for the first time, to feel that one has known it before, though one has never been able to formulate it in words. In other cases, there is scarcely even that degree of memory: yet when the new truth is presented, it is instantly recognised as true.

Assuming the truth of tradition, even the Buddha Himself, who incarnated with the definite intention of helping the world, knew nothing clearly of His mission after He had entered His new body, but regained full knowledge only after years of searching for it. Undoubtedly He could have known from the first, had He so chosen, but He did not so choose, submitting Himself rather to what seems to be the common lot.

On the other hand, it may be that the Buddha did not take the body of Prince Siddartha from birth, but only when it fainted, after the long austerities of the six years searching for truth. If this be so, there would be no memory, because the entity in the body was not the Buddha, but some one else.

In any case, however, we may be sure that the ego, who is the true man, always knows what he has once learned: but he is not always able to impress it upon his new brain without the help of a suggestion from without.

It seems to be an invariable rule that one who has accepted occult truth in one life always comes into contact with it in the next, and so revives his dormant memory. We may say, perhaps, that the opportunity of thus recovering the truth is the direct karma of having accepted and of having earnestly tried to live according to it in the previous incarnation.

## **CHAPTER XXX**

### **THE EGO ON HIS OWN PLANE**

(**Page 251**) We come now to consider the ego as a conscious entity on his own plane, i.e., in the higher mental or causal world, quite apart from the partial expressions of himself on the lower planes.

From the moment that the ego breaks off from his group-soul, and commences his separate existence as a human being, he is a conscious entity: but the consciousness is of an exceedingly vague nature. The forces of the higher mental world pass through him practically without affecting him, because he cannot as yet respond to more than a very few of such extremely fine vibrations. The only physical sensation, to which this condition is at all comparable, is that which occasionally comes to some persons, at the moment of awakening in the morning. There is a state, intermediate between sleeping and waking, in which a man is blissfully conscious that he exists, and yet is not conscious of any surrounding objects, nor capable of any movement. Indeed, he sometimes knows that any movement would break the spell of happiness, and bring him down into the ordinary waking world, and so he endeavours to remain still as long as possible.

This condition, which is a consciousness of existence, and of intense bliss, closely resembles that of the ego of the average man upon the higher mental plane. As we have seen previously, he is wholly centred there, only for the short

time intervening between the end of one life in devachan and the commencement, of his next descent into incarnation. During that short period, he obtains a fleeting glimpse of his past and his future, a flash of retrospect and prospect, and for many ages these glimpses are his only moments of full-awakening: and, ([Page 252](#)) after this momentary awakening, he falls asleep again. As we have seen, it is his desire for a more perfect manifestation, his desire to feel himself more thoroughly alive, that drives him into the effort of incarnation.

A stanza in the Book of Dzyan states that "Those who received but a spark remained destitute of knowledge: the spark burned low"; H.P.Blavatsky then explains that "those who received but a spark constitute the average humanity, which have to acquire their intellectuality during the present manvantaric evolution." [*Secret Doctrine, II, 177*]. In the case of most men the spark is still smouldering, and it will be many an age before its slow increase brings it to the stage of steady and brilliant flame.

The causal body of the average man has thus as yet almost no consciousness of anything, external to itself, on its own plane. The immense majority of egos are but dreamily semi-conscious, though few are now in the condition of mere colourless films. The majority are not yet sufficiently definite, even in such consciousness as they possess, to understand the purpose or the laws of the evolution in which they are engaged.

Although the ordinary ego is still in a sleepy condition, he is yet, during physical life, capable to some extent of brooding watchfully over the personality, and of a little effort.

The average ego in his causal body may be compared to the chicken within the egg, the chicken being entirely unconscious of the source of the heat, which nevertheless stimulates its growth.

When an ego reaches the stage where he breaks through his shell, and becomes capable of some sort of response, the whole process takes on a different form, and is enormously quickened.

The awakening process is greatly helped by the Masters of Wisdom, who pour out their spiritual force like sunlight, flooding the entire plane, and affecting to some extent everything within its radius. As mentioned in Chapter XXI, even the group-souls of ([Page 253](#)) animals on the lower mental plane are greatly affected and assisted by this influence.

It is on the mental plane that much of the most important work of the Masters is done: this is more especially the case upon the causal plane, where the individuality, or ego, can be acted upon directly. It is from this plane that They shower the grandest spiritual influences upon the world of thought: from it. They impel great and beneficial movements of all kinds. Here, again, much of the

spiritual force poured out by the glorious self-sacrifice of the Nirmanakayas is distributed. Here also direct teaching is given to those pupils who are sufficiently advanced to receive it in this way, since it can be imparted far more readily and completely here than on the lower planes.

With a developed man, the ego is fully awake. In course of time the ego discovers that there are a good many things which he can do, and, when this happens, he may rise into a condition in which he has a definite life on his own plane, though in many cases it is even then but dreamy.

The ego of the ordinary person, as we have seen, has rather a vegetable consciousness or life, and seems to be only just aware of other egos. But, as the ego becomes sufficiently developed, he can not only help other egos, but lives a life of his own among his peers, among the great Arupadevas, among all kinds of splendid Angels or Devas. The young ego is probably but little awake, as yet, to all that glorious life, just as a baby in arms knows little of the interests of the world surrounding him; but, as his consciousness gradually unfolds, he awakens to all this magnificence, and becomes fascinated by its vividness and beauty.

Such a developed ego enjoys the companionship of all the brightest intellects that the world has ever produced ,including, as said, the Deva or angel kingdom as well as the human. The life of the ego on his own plane is glorious beyond any conception possible to the personality. If one could imagine an existence in the company of the great men of the world - artists, poets, ([Page 254](#)) scientists, and even the Masters Themselves - and add to all that an understanding unattainable down here - then only would one begin to have some idea of the life of the ego.

The personality would not, of course, know what the ego does, unless the personality and ego have been unified. Thus, the ego may know the Master, while the personality does not. The ego must have been fully conscious and active on his own plane for a long time before any knowledge of that existence can come through into his physical life.

This ego-consciousness must not be confused with the consciousness which comes from the *unification* of the higher and lower selves, mentioned in Chapter XXVI. When unification has been achieved, the man's consciousness resides in the ego all the time, and from the ego it plays through whatever vehicle he may happen to be using. But, in the case of a man who has not yet achieved that union, the consciousness of the ego on his own plane comes into activity only when he is no longer hampered by any lower vehicles, and exists only until he puts himself down into incarnation; for as soon as he takes up a lower body, his consciousness can manifest for the time only through that body.

The causal plane is the true and relatively permanent home of the ego , for here he is free of the limitations of the personality, and is simply himself, the reincarnating entity. Although his consciousness may be dim, dreamily unobservant, and scarcely awake, yet his vision is true, however limited it may

be. Not only is he free from the illusions of the personality, and the refracting medium of the lower self, but thought itself no longer assumes the same limited forms which it takes upon itself, at levels below the causal.

In some of the older literature, there are statements which seem to imply that the higher ego needs no evolution, being already perfect and godlike on his own plane. Whatever such expressions are used, whatever may be the terminology employed, they must be taken to apply only to the Âtma, the true "god" within man, ([Page 255](#)) which is certainly far beyond the necessity of any kind of evolution of which we can know anything.

Again, H.P. Blavatsky states that Manas, or the higher Ego, as "part of the Universal Mind, is unconditionally omniscient on its own plane" : the meaning of course, is that this is so only when it has fully developed self-consciousness, by its evolutionary experiences, and "is the vehicle of all knowledge of the past and present and future".

The reincarnating ego most undoubtedly does evolve, as is perfectly evident to those who possess causal sight. At first, he has very little active power on any plane, and it is his purpose to become fully active on all planes, even the physical.

An ego who is awakened, and is truly alive upon his own plane, is a glorious object, giving us for the first time some idea of what man is intended to be. Such developed egos are still separate , yet intellectually they fully realise their inner unity, for they see one another as they are, and can no longer blunder, or fail to comprehend.

It is not easy to explain, in physical words, the differences which exist between egos, since all of them are in many ways much greater than anything to which we are accustomed down here. Some faint reflection of the impression, produced by intercourse with them, may be conveyed by saying that an advanced ego reminds one of a dignified, stately and most courteous ambassador,, full of wisdom and kindness, while the less developed man has more of the type of the bluff, hearty, country squire. An ego who is already on the Path, and is nearing Adeptship, has much in common with the great Angels, and radiates spiritual influences of prodigious power.

It is, therefore, not to be wondered at that the ego throws himself energetically into the whirl of intense activity on his own plane, and that it seems to him immensely more important and interesting than the faint, far-distant struggles of a cramped and half-formed personality, veiled in the dense obscurity of the lower world. ([Page 256](#) )

One ego has been described, by a person who saw him as a radiant youth, like a Greek Apollo carved out of glistening marble, and yet immaterial, with inspiration as his keynote. Another ego appeared somewhat like the sculpture of Demeter in the British Museum, a dignified, serene and peaceful figure, brooding as it were

over the world which he helped to foster and protect. Thus every ego has his own radiantly beautiful appearance, expressing his particular mission or genius.

Among such beings, thoughts no longer take form and float about as they do at lower levels, but pass like lightning flashes from one to another. Here we are face to face with the enduring body of the ego, a body older than the hills, an actual expression of the Divine Glory which ever rests behind it, and shines through it more and more in the gradual unfolding of its powers. Here we deal no longer with outer forms, but we see the things in themselves, the reality which lies behind the imperfect expression. Here cause and effect are one, clearly visible in their unity, like two sides of the same coin. Here we have left the concrete for the abstract; we no longer have the multiplicity of forms, but the idea which lies behind all those forms.

The ego, on his own plane, is able to perceive with absolute instantaneity, without, of course, the use of nerves: hence arises a certain class of dream, where a man is awakened from sleep by a physical sound or touch. In the minute space of time, between the impact and awakening of the man, the ego will often compose a kind of drama, or series of scenes ,leading up to and culminating in the event which awakens the physical body. This habit, however, seems to be peculiar to the ego which, as far as spirituality is concerned, is still comparatively undeveloped. As the ego develops, and comes to understand his position and his responsibilities , he rises beyond these graceful sports of his childhood.

It seems that, just as primitive man casts every natural phenomenon into the form of a myth, so the primitive ego dramatises every event that comes under his notice. ([Page 257](#)) But the man who has attained full consciousness finds himself so fully occupied in the work of the higher planes that he devotes no energy to such matters, and therefore dreams no more in this fashion.

The use of symbols seems to be a characteristic of the ego, when out of the body during sleep: that is to say, that what in the physical world would be an idea, requiring many words to express, is perfectly conveyed to the ego by a single symbolical image. When such a thought is remembered in the physical, brain unless its key is recollected, there is likely to be confusion. The activities of the ego on his own plane thus sometimes give rise to another class of dream; but there are, of course, many other causes of dreams [*vide The Astral Body*, page 93].

The ego on his own plane uses abstractions just as we on the physical plane deal with concrete facts. On his plane, the essence of everything is available; he is no longer concerned with details: he need no longer talk round a subject or endeavour to explain it. He takes up the essence or the idea of a subject and moves it as a whole, as one moves a piece when playing chess. His world is a world of realities, where not only is deception impossible, but also unthinkable. He no longer deals with emotions, ideas, or conceptions, but with the thing in itself.

It is impossible to express in words the ordinary traffic between men in fully developed causal bodies. What down here would be a system of philosophy, needing many volumes to explain it, is there a single definite object — a thought which can be thrown down as one throws a card upon a table.

An opera or an oratorio, which here would occupy a full orchestra for many hours in the rendering, is there a single mighty chord. The methods of a whole school of painting are condensed into one magnificent idea. And ideas such as these are the intellectual counters, which are used by egos in their converse with one with another.

On this plane, as we have said previously, ([Page 258](#)) the ego has fully unrolled before him all the lives he has lived on this globe, the actual living records of the past. He sees his lives as one vast whole, of which his descents into incarnation have been but the passing days. He sees the karmic causes which have made him what he is: he sees what karma still lies in front of him, to be worked out before "the long sad count is closed", and thus he realises, with unerring certainty, his exact place in evolution. Here he perceives the great scheme of evolution, and what is the Divine will for him.

When dealing with matters on his own plane, and those below him, all the ideas of the ego are complete ideas, properly rounded off and perfect.

Furthermore, anything incomplete would be to him unsatisfactory, would, in fact, hardly be counted as an idea at all. For him a cause includes its effect, and therefore, in the longer view which he is able to take, poetic justice is always done, and no story can ever end badly.

These characteristics of his reflect themselves to a certain extent in his lower vehicles, and we find them appearing in ourselves in various ways. Thus, children always demand that fairy tales shall end well, that virtue be rewarded, and that vice shall be vanquished; and all unsophisticated and healthy-minded people feel a similar desire. Those who clamour for an evil realism are precisely those whose views of life have become unhealthy and unnatural, because, in their short-sighted philosophy, they can never see the whole of any incident, but only the fragment of it which shows in one incarnation, and usually only the merest outside husk even of that.

In the Fourth Root-Race, which is concerned chiefly with the development of the astral body and its emotions, this characteristic of rounding off stories, and exaggeration, is often very marked: this is clearly seen for example, in old Keltic stories. The desire for scientific accuracy and truth is comparatively a recent development, and belongs more specifically to the Fifth Root-Race which is concerned principally ([Page 259](#)) with the development of mind and the mental body. Fifth Race people thus demand first that a thing shall be true, otherwise it is of little interest to them: the old races, on the other hand, demand first of all that it shall be pleasing, and decline to be limited in their appreciation, by any

such consideration as whether the thing had ever materialised, or could ever materialise, on the physical plane.

The desire for accuracy is thus the coming through of another quality of the ego, of his power to see truly, to see a thing as it is, as a whole and not only in part. Understanding this, we should clearly encourage and insist on the quality of accuracy, and keep our record of facts distinct from our thoughts and desires with regards to those facts.

Yet, in cultivating truthfulness ,there is no need to extinguish romance. It is necessary to be accurate: it is not necessary to be a Gradgrind. We need not lose sight of the beauty and romance which lie behind things, merely because we have acquired a scientific knowledge of details, many of which may be arid and superficial. Thus sugar does not cease to be sweet and pleasant to the taste because we have learned that its chemical formula is C<sub>12</sub>H<sub>22</sub>O<sub>11</sub>.

The ego's measure of time and space is so entirely different from that which we use in waking life, that from our point of view it seems as though neither time nor space existed for him.

Events which, on the physical plane, take place in succession, appear on the mental plane to be occurring simultaneously, and at the same point. That, at least, is the effect on the consciousness of the ego, though it appears probable that absolute simultaneity is the attribute of a still higher plane, and that the sensation of it on the mental plane is simply the result of a succession, so rapid that the infinitesimally minute spaces of time are indistinguishable, just as the eye receives the impression of a continuous ring of fire, if a stick with one end burning, is whirled round rapidly. The reason for this, of course , is that ([Page 260](#)) the human eye is not able to distinguish, as separate, similar impressions which follow one another at intervals of less than about a tenth part of a second.

Particular examples of what we may call the immense speed, at which the consciousness of the ego operates on its own plane, may be found in Dreams by C.W.Leadbeater, pages 36-40, where a number of dreams dependent on this phenomenon, are recounted and explained.

A result, which follows from the ego's supernormal method of time-measurement, is that in some degree prevision is possible to him. If he knows how to read them, the present, the past and to a certain extent the future lie , is open before him. He undoubtedly thus foresees, occasionally, events that will be of interest or importance to the lower personality, and makes more or less successful endeavours to impress them upon it.

Man undoubtedly possesses freewill: hence prevision is possible only to a certain extent. In the case of the ordinary man, it is probably possible to a very large extent, since the man has developed no will of his own worth speaking of, and is consequently very largely the creature of circumstances. His karma places him amid certain surroundings, and their action upon him is so much the most

important factor in his history, that his future course may be foreseen with almost mathematical certainty.

When we consider the vast number of events which can be but little affected by human action, and also the complex and wide-spreading relation of causes to their effects, it should not seem wonderful to us that, on the plane where the result of all causes at present in action is visible, a very large portion of the future may be foretold with considerable accuracy, even as to detail. That this can be done, has been proved again and again, not only by prophetic dreams, but by the second-sight of the Highlanders, and the predictions of clairvoyants; and it is on the forecasting of effects, from the causes already in existence, that the scheme of astrology is largely based. ([Page 261](#))

When, however, we come to deal with a developed man, then prophecy fails us, for he is no longer the creature of circumstances, but to a great extent their master. The main events of his life may certainly be arranged beforehand, by his past karma; but the way in which he will allow them to affect him, the method by which he will deal with them, and perhaps triumph over them - these are his own, and they cannot be foreseen, except as probabilities. Such actions of his, in their turn, becomes causes, and thus there are produced, in his life chains of effect which were not provided for by the original arrangement, and, therefore, could not have been foretold with any exactitude.

We may say, therefore, that the course of the ordinary undeveloped man, who has practically no will of his own worth speaking of, may often be foreseen clearly enough, but, when the ego boldly takes his future in his own hands, exact prevision becomes impossible.

An ego, who is at all developed, will meditate upon his own level, such meditation not necessarily synchronising with any meditation that the personality may be performing. The yoga of a fairly well-developed ego is to try to raise his consciousness, first into the buddhic plane, and then through its various stages. This he does, without reference to what the personality may be doing at the time. Such an ego would probably also send down a little of himself at the personal meditation, though his own meditations are very different.

It should ever be remembered that the ego is not manas or mind only, but the spiritual Triad of Atma-Buddhi-Manas. At our present stage of consciousness, the ego rests in the causal body on the higher mental plane, but, as he develops, his consciousness will be centred on the buddhic plane: later still, when he attains Adeptship, it will be centred on the plane of Âtma

But it is not to be supposed, that when this further development takes place, the manas is in any way lost. For, ([Page 262](#)) when the ego draws himself up into the buddhic plane, he draws up manas with him, into that expression of manas which has all the time existed on the buddhic plane, but has not been fully vivified until now.

Similarly, when he draws himself up into the plane of Âtma, manas and buddhi exist within him, just as fully as ever, so that now the triple spirit is in full manifestation, on its own plane, in all three aspects.

The spirit is, therefore, truly sevenfold, for he is triple on his own plane, that of Âtma, dual on the buddhic, and single on the mental, the unity which is his synthesis making seven. Thus, though he draws himself into the higher, he retains, the definiteness on the lower.

What has been stated to be the clearest and best description of the human trinity, Atma-Buddhi-Manas, is to be found in *The Key to Theosophy* by H.P.Blavatsky:--

THE HIGHER SELF is Âtma, the inseparable ray of the Universal and ONE SELF. It is the God above more than within us. Happy the man who succeeds, in saturating his inner Ego with it.

THE SPIRITUAL *divine EGO* is the spiritual soul, or *Buddhi*, in close union with *Manas*, the mind principle, without which it is no Ego at all, but only the Atmic vehicle.

THE INNER OR HIGHER EGO is *Manas*, the fifth principle, so called, independently of Buddhi. The mind-principle is the Spiritual Ego only when merged, into one with Buddhi.....It is the permanent individuality, or the reincarnating Ego [*The Key to Theosophy*, pages, 175-176.]

As soon as an ego becomes at least partially conscious of his surroundings, and other egos, he leads a life , and has interests and activities, on his own plane. But even then we must remember, as we have seen in earlier chapters, that he puts down into the personality only a very small part of himself, and that, that part constantly becomes entangled in interests which, because they are so partial, are often along lines different ([Page 263](#)) from the general activities of the ego himself, who consequently does not pay any particular attention to the lower life of the personality unless something rather unusual happens to it.

When this stage is reached, the ego usually comes under the influence of a Master. In fact often his first clear consciousness, of anything outside himself, is his touch with that Master. The tremendous power of the Master's influence magnetises him, draws his vibrations into harmony with its own, and multiplies many-fold the rate of his development. It rays upon him like sunshine upon a flower, and he evolves rapidly under its influence. This is why, while the earlier stages of progress are so slow as to be almost imperceptible, when the Master turns His attention upon the man, develops him, and arouses his own will to take part in the work, the speed of his advancement increases in geometrical progression.

In the chapters on devachan, we saw that an ego, who is much loved by many people, may have part in many heavens simultaneously, ensouling the thought

images which his friends make of him. These images are, of course, of great evolutionary benefit to the ego concerned, affording him additional opportunities of developing qualities, such, for example, as affection. This is clearly the direct result and reward of those loveable qualities, which draw towards the man the affectionate regard of so many of his fellowmen.

Occasionally the action of such a force, upon the ego of a surviving friend, may manifest even in the personality of that friend upon the physical plane. For, while the action is upon the ego, through the special thought-image, yet the personality of the surviving friend is a manifestation of that same ego, and, if the ego be considerably modified it is at least possible that that modification may show itself in the physical manifestation on this lower plane.

It is obvious, however, that there are two possible limitations to the perfection of the intercourse between the ego concerned, and those who make images of him. ([Page 264](#)) First, the image may be partial and imperfect, so that many of the higher qualities of the ego may not be represented, and may therefore be unable to show themselves through it.

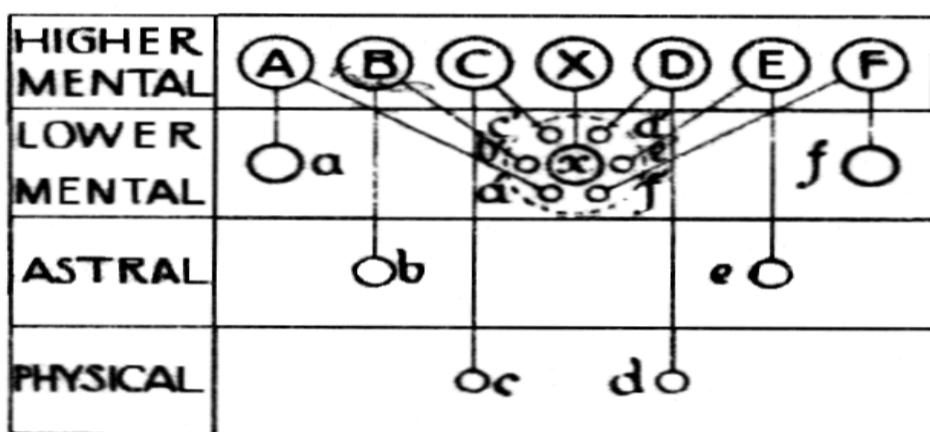
Secondly, it is just possible that the ego is not in reality, so to speak, as good as the image which has been made of him, so that he is unable to fill it completely. This, however, is unlikely to occur, and could take place only when a quite unworthy object had been unwisely idolised. These aspects of the matter have, however, been fully dealt with in *The Mental Body*, pages 197-198.

The more highly the ego is developed, the more fully is he able to express himself through the thought-images, these becoming steadily fuller expressions of himself. When he gains the level of a Master, he consciously employs them as a means of helping and instructing his pupils.

To assist the student in obtaining a thoroughly clear grasp of the mechanism and

results of  
thought-  
images in  
devachan,  
**Diagrams**  
**XXXVI** and  
**XXXVII** are  
appended

Diagram  
**XXXVI**  
illustrates  
an ego X,  
in his  
mental  
body x, in  
devachan,



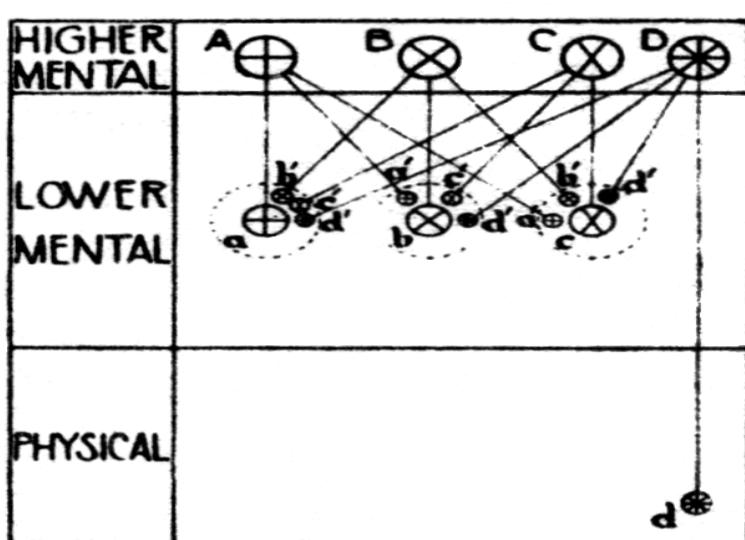
**DIAGRAM XXXVI.—An Ego and his Thought-Images in Devachan.**

surrounded by thought images a', b', c', d', e', and f' of his six friends A, B, C, D, E, and F respectively.

Of these A and F are also in devachan, in their respective mental bodies a and f : B and E are on the astral plane, in their respective astral bodies b and e; C and D are still "alive" in the physical world in their physical bodies c and d.

The diagram shows that the thought-images, made by X, of his six friends, are ensouled by, and therefore directly connected with, the egos A, B, C, D, E and F, not with the personal expressions ([Page 265](#)) of those egos, whether those personal expressions be on the physical, astral or mental planes.

It is also clear from the diagram that the personalities a,b,c, etc., can know nothing of what is happening through the thought-images a', b', c', etc., except, through their own egos A, B, C, etc..



**DIAGRAM XXXVII.—Egos in Devachan.**

**Diagram XXXVII**  
illustrates four egos A, B, C and D, all mutual friends, A, B, and C being in devachan, whilst D is still in his physical body.

Each of A, B and C makes a thought-image of each of his three friends, these images being ensouled by the respective egos.

A, B and C each possess three expressions of themselves: one

through their own mental bodies, and two through the thought-images in the devachan of the others.

D, on the other hand, possesses four expressions of himself: one through his own physical personality, and three more through the thought-images which his three friends have made of him.

An understanding of the way in which an ego can appear simultaneously in the devachanic images of a number of people [as well, of course, as other phenomena of the ego world] shows that, in order to go from one place to another, travelling is not necessary for the ego.

In *The Mental Body* [page 236] we described the chord of a man, and explained, how this chord is used to find a man, wherever in the three worlds he may be.

That chord consists of his own note, ([Page 266](#)) and those of the three lower vehicles - mental , astral and physical. If the man has none of these lower vehicles at the time, the same mechanism holds good, for the causal body has always attached to it the mental unit, and the astral and physical permanent atoms, these being quite sufficient to give out the distinctive sound.

The combination of sounds, which produce a man's chord, is his true occult name. This must not be confused with the hidden name of the Augoeides, which is the chord of the three principles of the ego, produced by the vibrations of the atoms of Âtma, buddhi and manas, and the Monad behind them.

## CHAPTER XXXI

### INITIATION

([Page 267](#)) In *The Astral Body* and *The Mental Body* the subject of Discipleship was dealt with, so far as it concerns the astral and mental bodies of the disciple, or pupil, of a Master. It will now be desirable briefly to recapitulate the leading facts concerning the stages of Probation, Acceptance and Sonship, because, in each of these the causal body is also in some degree affected: then we shall proceed to describe, so far as the ego is his causal body is concerned, the great step of Initiation, which is the culmination of Discipleship.

In the stage of *Probation*, the Master makes a living image of the pupil, moulding out of mental, astral and etheric matter an exact counterpart of the causal, mental, astral and etheric bodies of the neophyte, and keeps this image at hand, so that He may look at it periodically. This image is placed in magnetic *rapport* with the man himself, so that every modification of thought or feeling, in the man's own vehicles, is faithfully reproduced in the image. The Master is thus able to follow the progress of the pupil, and estimate when he will be ready to take the next step.

When the pupil is *Accepted*, the Master dissolves the "living images", because, they are no longer necessary. The consciousness of the pupil is then united with that of his Master, in such a way that whatever the pupil feels or thinks is within the astral and mental bodies of his Master. If and when necessary, the Master can erect a barrier, and so for the time shut off the consciousness of the pupil from His own consciousness.

At the stage of *Sonship*, the link with the Master is such that not only the lower mind, but also the ego in the causal body of the pupil, is enfolded within that ([Page 268](#)) of the Master, and the Master can no longer draw a veil to shut off the pupil.

Whilst these stages naturally help very greatly , in preparing a man to take the first great Initiation, yet, technically speaking, they have nothing to do with Initiation, or steps on the Path, which belong to an entirely different category. Probation, Acceptance and Sonship represent the relationship of the pupil to his

own Master : Initiations, on the other hand, are tokens of his relation to the Great White Brotherhood, and to its august Head.

Strictly speaking, therefore, the Great White Brotherhood has nothing to do with the relations between the Master and His pupil; that is a matter solely for the private consideration of the Master Himself.

Whenever the Master considers that the pupil is fit for the first Initiation, He gives notice of that fact, and presents him for it, and the Brotherhood asks only whether he is ready for Initiation, and not what is the relationship between him and any Master.

At the same time, it is true that a candidate for Initiation must be proposed and seconded by two of the higher members of the Brotherhood, and it is certain, that the Master would not propose a man for the tests of Initiation unless He had, with regard to him, the certainty of his fitness, which could come only from such close identification with his consciousness as that of which we have spoken.

It has already been mentioned [see Chapter XIII page 80] that, in a man's existence, there are three great stages which outweigh in importance all others: they are:--

I-INDIVIDUALISATION when the man begins his career as a human ego

II THE FIRST INITIATION: when the man becomes a member of the Great White Brotherhood

III THE FIFTH INITIATION : when he leaves the human kingdom, and enters the superhuman stage: this is the goal which is set before all humanity.

A man who has taken the First Initiation is said to ([Page 269](#)) "enter the stream." The words used in admitting the candidate to the Brotherhood include this statement: "You are now safe for ever; you have entered upon the stream; may you soon reach the further shore". The Christian calls him the man who is "saved" or "safe". The meaning is, that he is quite sure to go on, in this present stream of evolution, that he is certain not to drop out at the "day of judgement", or the "great separation" in the next [fifth] Round, like a child in school who is too backward to go on with the rest of his class.

The importance of Initiation does *not* lie in the exaltation of the individual, but in the fact that he has now become definitely one with a great Order, the "Communion of Saints", as it is called in the Christian terminology.

The candidate has now become more than individual man, because he is a unit in a tremendous force. The Brotherhood is not only a body of men, each of whom has his own duties to perform; it is also a stupendous unity - a flexible instrument in the hand of the Lord of the World, a mighty weapon that He can wield. No unit in the whole scheme loses the least fraction of his individuality, but he has added to it something a thousand times greater.

When an ego is Initiated— the student will notice that it is the ego who is initiated, not the personality - he becomes part of the closest organisation in the

world, one with the great sea of consciousness of the Great White Brotherhood. For a long time the new Initiate will not be able to understand all that this union implies, and he must penetrate far into the sanctuaries before he can realise how close is the link, and how great is the consciousness of the King Himself, the Lord of the World, which all Brothers to a certain extent share with Him. It is incomprehensible and inexpressible down here; metaphysical and subtle it is beyond words, but, nevertheless, a glorious reality, real to such an extent that, when we begin to grasp it, everything else seems unreal. ([Page 270](#))

We saw previously [*vide The Mental Body*, page 302] that the Accepted pupil may lay his thought beside that of his Master; so now the Initiate may place his thought beside of the Brotherhood, and draw into himself just as much of that tremendous consciousness as he, at his level, is able to respond to.

At the point of the great ceremony when the Star of Initiation appears, a line of dazzling light extends from the Star to the heart of the Initiator, and from Him to the heart of the candidate. Under the influence of that tremendous magnetism, the tiny Silver Star of Consciousness, which represents the Monad, in the candidate, swells out in glowing brilliancy, until it fills his causal body, and for a wonderful moment the Monad and the ego are one, even as they will be permanently one when Adeptship is attained.

On this occasion, the Monad identifies himself for the time with the fraction of himself that is the ego, and it is he, the Monad, who takes the vows.

The effect of Initiation on the astral body has already been described in *The Astral Body*, page 254.

So wonderful is the expansion of the consciousness of the Initiate, that it is most apt to speak of the change as a new birth. He begins to lead a new life "as a little child", the life of the Christ ; the Christ, the buddhic or intuition conscious, is born within his heart.

He has now also the power to give the blessing of the Brotherhood, a tremendous and overwhelming force, which he is able to give or send to anyone, as he judges to be most appropriate and useful. The power of the Brotherhood will flow through him just as much as he will let it flow. It is for him to use the power, and to remember that he has the entire responsibility of directing it, for whatever purpose he may choose. The blessing given by the Officiant at Initiation means: "I bless you; I pour my force and blessing into you; see that you in your turn constantly pour out this blessing to others".

If the Initiate possesses the qualification of Shraddha - perfect trust ([Page 271](#)) in his Master and in the Brotherhood, and the utter certainty that, because he is one with Them, all things are possible to him - he may go through the world as a veritable Angel of light, shedding joy and benediction around his path.

Before Initiation, the pupil has probably already practised himself in the development of the buddhic consciousness, so that he has usually had

experience at that level. But if he has not, then at Initiation his first experience takes place.

Nevertheless, at Initiation the man does not attain the full buddhic consciousness, nor does he in any way develop a buddhic vehicle at that time. But in view of the fact that some of the teachings which must be given at the buddhic level could not otherwise be understood, a certain amount of development of the buddhic vehicles seems to be required.

When the consciousness is raised to the buddhic vehicle, a very remarkable thing happens to the causal body: *it vanishes*, and the Initiate is under no compulsion ever again to take it up; but naturally this cannot be done until all the karma of the lower planes is exhausted.

For a man is not free from binding results, on lower planes until he is perfectly selfless on those planes. If a man, when helping another, feels perfectly the unity with him, then he obtains the result of his action on the buddhic plane only, and not on any of the lower planes.

Another interesting factor to bear in mind is that there is always a general karma, belonging to an order or a nation, and that each individual is, to a certain extent, responsible for the action of the whole. Thus, for example, a priest has a certain responsibility for all that the collective priesthood does, even though he may not personally approve of it.

It is the mere act of focussing oneself in the buddhic vehicle that causes the causal body to vanish. As soon, however, as the consciousness is brought down again on to the higher mental plane, the causal body reappears. ([Page 272](#)) It is not the same as it was before, because the particles have been dissipated, but it seems in every way exactly the same body.

On the buddhic plane, the finest thread which we can conceive represents the ordinary man. As soon as he regularly thinks of higher matters, and turns his attention to them, the thread begins to thicken. It becomes more and more like a cable, and later on it appears as a funnel, because, as it seems to clairvoyant vision, it widens out above, and comes down into the causal body. Later on, the causal body is enlarged by the in-rushing of forces, and the funnel becomes very much larger, widening out at the bottom as well as the top. At the First Initiation [for many, however, this experience comes before that], the man, as we have seen, abandons the causal body, and plunges into the buddhic plane. When that occurs, the funnel shapes itself into a sphere. At that level there are, of course, more dimensions, so that the phenomenon cannot be fully described, but this is how it appears to one who is able to see it.

In view of what was said above *i.e.*.. that there is no compulsion to re-form the causal body, it follows that the time which remains to the Initiate, before he reaches the level of Adeptship, need not involve a descent to the physical plane at all, and therefore he may not take what we ordinarily mean by incarnations.

Nevertheless, in the great majority of cases, incarnations upon the physical plane are taken, because the man has work to do, upon that plane, for the Great Brotherhood.

The buddhic consciousness gives one a realisation of the One Consciousness, penetrating all—the One Consciousness of God, in fact. Such realisation gives a sense of the utmost safety and confidence ,the most tremendous impulse and stimulus imaginable. Yet at first it might be alarming, because a man might feel that he was losing himself. This is, of course, not the case. The Christ said : "He that loseth his life for My sake shall find it". Christ represents the buddhic ([Page 273](#)) principle, and is saying : "He who, for My sake - i.e., for the development of the Christ within him - will put aside the causal vehicle, in which he has been living for so long, will find himself, will find the far grander and higher life". To do this needs some courage, and it is a startling experience the first time that one is wholly in the buddhic vehicle, and finds that the causal body, upon which one has been depending for thousands of years, has vanished. But, when the experience does come, the man will know with absolute certainty that the Self is one. The idea cannot be conveyed, but it will be known when experienced, and nothing will ever again shake that certainty.

When the buddhic consciousness fully impresses the physical brain, it gives such a new value to the factors of life that a man no longer *looks upon* a person or object, but *is* that person or object. He is able to recognise the motives of others as his own motives, even though he perfectly understands that another part of himself, possessing more knowledge, or a different view point, may act quite differently.

It must not, however, be supposed that when a man enters upon the lowest subdivision of the buddhic plane he is at once *fully* conscious of his unity with all that lives. That perfection of sense comes only as the result of much toil and trouble, when he has reached the highest subdivision of the buddhic plane. Step by step, sub-plane by sub-plane, the aspirant must win his way for himself, for, even at that level, exertion and effort are still necessary, if progress is to be made.

This work of developing himself on sub-plane after sub-plane now lies before the candidate. He is now definitely upon the Path of Holiness, and is described in the Buddhist system as the Sotapatti or Sohan, "he who has entered the stream"; among the Hindus he is called the Parivrajaka, which means the "wanderer", one who no longer feels that any place in the three lower worlds is his abiding-place or refuge.

The subject of buddhic consciousness will be considered rather more fully in the next chapter. ([Page 274](#))

Three factors, all interdependent, are involved in a man's fitness for first Initiation. *First* : he must be in possession of a sufficient amount of the well known "Qualifications" [vide *The Mental Body*, page 294]. *Second* : the ego must have

so trained his lower vehicles that he can function perfectly through them, when he wishes to do so: expressed in another way, he must have effected what is called the junction of the lower and higher selves. *Third*: he must be strong enough to stand the great strain involved, which extends even to the physical body.

All Initiates, however, are by no means equal in development, any more than all men who take the degree of Master of Arts are equal in knowledge. Whilst there is a certain attainment required for Initiation, some may have achieved far more than the minimum demanded in some directions.

Hence, for similar reasons, there may be considerable variation in the interval between Initiations. A man who has just taken the First Initiation may, nevertheless, possess a considerable share of the qualifications for the Second; therefore for him the interval between the two may be unusually short. On the other hand, a candidate who had only just sufficient strength in all directions to enable him to pass through the First, would have slowly to develop within himself all the additional faculties and knowledge necessary for the Second, so his interval would probably be long.

Initiation has the effect of altering the "polarity" of the man's mental and causal vehicles, so that he can be used as others cannot, however highly they may be developed along other lines.

Comparing the First with the Fifth Initiation, we have seen that for the First the higher and lower self must be unified, so that there shall be nothing but the ego working in the personality: for the Fifth, there shall be nothing in the ego that is not approved or inspired by the Monad.

Whenever the Monad touches our lives down here, he comes as a god from above. In all cases of Initiation he ([Page 275](#)) flashes down, and for a moment becomes one with the ego, just as the Monad and ego will be permanently one when Adeptship is attained. At certain other important and critical times the Monad flashes down, as in the case mentioned in *The Lives of Alcyone*, when Alcyone took a pledge to the Lord Buddha.

Thus, at the First Initiation, the personality ceases to have a will of its own—except when it forgets - and lives only to serve the higher. The ego is now active through the personality in the lower planes, and is beginning to realise the existence of the Monad, and to live according to its will. The Monad himself has determined the path for the ego's evolution; and he can choose no other, because he is becoming himself, gaining release from the bondage even of the higher planes.

Another way of expressing this truth is to say that, just as the man on the Probationary Path has to learn to get rid of all that we speak of as the personality, so the Initiate must get rid of his individuality, of the reincarnating

ego, so that at the end of the Path his life will be entirely under the direction of the Monad.

The individuality, or ego, is a very wonderful thing - complex , exceedingly beautiful and marvellously adapted to its surroundings, a glorious being indeed. The idea of the separated self is ingrained in us, and is part of the very ego which is the one permanent thing about us, so far as we know. In the earlier stages this idea of the separated self had to be developed and strengthened, it being, in fact, the source of our strength in the past. But nevertheless, this "giant weed" has to be killed out at one time or another. The strong can tear it out from themselves at the beginning of their development. The weak must wait and let it go on growing while they are developing sufficient strength to kill it out. For them that is unfortunate, because the longer it is allowed to persist the more closely it becomes intertwined with the nature of the man.

Hence, all systems of occult teaching agree in advising students to try from the very beginning to get rid of the ([Page 276](#)) illusion of separateness. The man has to learn that behind the individuality itself there is the Monad; that will seem the true Self, when he has laid aside the individuality. Beyond even that he will in due time learn to realise for himself that even the Monad is but a spark in the Eternal Flame.

Only as the lower self or personality becomes pure from all breath of passion as the lower manas frees itself from kama, can the "shining one" impress it. H.P.Blavatsky writes : "It is when the trinity - Atma-Buddhi-Manas - in anticipation of the final triumphant reunion beyond the gates of corporeal death became for a few seconds a unity, that the candidate is allowed, at the moment, of initiation, to behold his future self. Thus we read in the Persian *Desatir* of the "resplendent one"; in the Greek philosopher- Initiates of the Augoeides—the self-shining "blessed vision resident in the pure light"; in Porphyry, that Plotinus was united to his 'god' six times during his lifetime, and so on." [*Isis Unveiled II*, pages 114-115].

This "trinity" made into unity is the "Christ" of all mystics. When, in the final Initiation, the candidate has been outstretched on the floor, or altar stone, and has thus typified the crucifixion of the flesh, or lower nature, and when from this "death" he has "risen again" as the triumphant conqueror over sin and death, he then, in the supreme moment, sees before him the glorious presence, and becomes "one with Christ", is himself the Christ. Thenceforth he may live in the body, but it has become his obedient instrument; he is united to his true Self, Manas made one with Atma-Buddhi, and, through the personality which he inhabits, he wields his full powers, as an immortal spiritual intelligence.

While he was struggling in the toils of the lower nature, Christ, the spiritual ego, was daily crucified in him; but, in the full adept, the Christ has risen triumphant, lord of himself and of nature. The long pilgrimage of manas is over, the cycle of necessity is ([Page 277](#)) trodden, the wheel of rebirth ceases to turn, the Son of Man has been made perfect by suffering.

Until this point is reached, "the Christ" is the object of aspiration. The "ray" is ever struggling to return to its source, the lower manas ever aspiring to rebecome one with the higher. It is this continual yearning towards reunion which clothes itself as prayer, as inspiration, as "seeking after God". "My soul is athirst for God, for the living God", cries the eager Christian. This cry is the inextinguishable impulse upwards of the lower self to the higher. Whether the person pray to the Buddha, to Vishnu, to Christ, to the Virgin, to the Father, is of course, merely a question of dialect, not of essential fact.

In all, the Manas united to Atma-Buddhi is the real object, variously called the ideal man, the personal God, the God-Man, God Incarnate, the Word made flesh, the Christ who must be "born in" each, with Whom the believer must be made one.

When once a man enters upon the Path, and converges all his energies upon it, his rate of progress is enormously accelerated. His progress will not be by arithmetical progression, *i.e.*, in the ratio 2,4,6,8 etc., nor by geometrical progression, *i.e.*, in the ratio 2,4,8,16, etc., but by powers, in the ratio 2,4,16,256, etc.,. This fact should afford great encouragement to the serious student.

## CHAPTER - XXXII

### BUDDHIC - CONSCIOUSNESS

(**Page 278**) In view of the fact that the First Initiation involves experiencing the buddhic consciousness, it is desirable to amplify what was said in the preceding chapter regarding the nature of consciousness on the buddhic plane.

The student will scarcely need to be told that all description of buddhic consciousness is necessarily and essentially defective. It is impossible in physical words to give more than the merest hint of what the higher consciousness, is, for the physical brain is incapable of grasping the reality.

It is difficult enough to form a conception even of astral plane phenomena, there being four dimensions in the astral world. In the buddhic world there are no less than six dimensions, so that the difficulties are evidently enormously, enhanced.

There is an ingenious diagram [for which the present writer is indebted to the unknown designer], reproduced as **Diagram XXXVIII**,on p.279, which illustrates graphically the fundamental difference between the buddhic plane and all the planes below it.

The diagram is seen to consist of a number of spikes or spokes which *overlap at a certain point*. That point of overlap is the beginning of the buddhic plane.

The tips of the spokes represent the physical consciousness of men: they are separate and distinct from one another. Passing up the spokes towards the centre, we see that the astral consciousness is a little wider, so that the

consciousness of separate men approach a little nearer to one another. The lower mental consciousness approach still more nearly to one another, whilst the higher mental consciousness at their very ([Page 279](#)) highest level, meet at the point where the buddhic consciousness commences.

It will now be seen that the buddhic consciousness, of each individual and separate "man" overlaps that of the other separate consciousness on either side of him. This is a graphic illustration of the "overlapping" aspect of buddhic consciousness, where a sense of union with others is experienced.

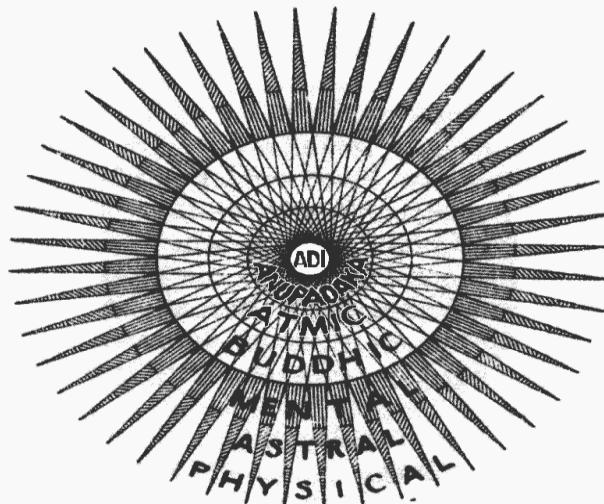


DIAGRAM XXXVIII.—Unity in Diversity

As the consciousness rises still further up into the higher planes, it will be seen that it overlaps those on either side of it more and more, until eventually when the "centre" is reached, there is practically a complete merging of consciousness. Nevertheless, each separate spoke still exists, and has its own individual direction and outlook. Looking out towards the lower worlds, each consciousness looks in a different direction :it is an aspect of the one central consciousness. Looking inwards,

on the other hand, these diverging directions all meet together, and become one with one another.

The sense of union is characteristic of the buddhic plane. On this plane, all limitations begin to fall away, and the consciousness ([Page 280](#)) of man expands until he realises, no longer in theory only, that the consciousness of his fellows is included within his own, and he feels and knows and experiences, with an absolute perfection of sympathy, all that is in them, because it is in reality a part of himself.

On this plane a man knows, not by mere intellectual appreciation, but by definite experience, the fact that humanity is a brotherhood, because of the spiritual unity which underlies it all. Though he is still himself, and his own consciousness is his own, yet it has widened out into such perfect sympathy with the consciousness of others that he realises he is truly only part of a mighty whole.

As a being, standing in the sun, suffused with its light, and pouring it forth, would feel no difference between ray and ray, but would pour forth along one as readily and easily as along another, so does a man on the buddhic plane *feel* brotherhood and pours himself into any one who needs his help. He sees all beings as himself, and feels that all he has is theirs as much as his: in many cases, more theirs than his, because their need is greater, their strength being less.

As the predominant element in the causal body is knowledge, and ultimately wisdom, so the predominant element of consciousness in the buddhic body is bliss and love. The serenity of wisdom marks the one, whilst tenderest compassion streams forth inexhaustibly from the other.

Hence the buddhic body is called by the Vedantins the Anandamayakosha, or bliss sheath. This is "the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens", of which St. Paul, the Christian Initiate spoke. He raised charity, pure love, above all other virtues, because by that alone can man on earth contribute to that glorious dwelling. For a similar reason is separateness called the "great heresy" by the Buddhists, and "union" or yoga is the goal of the Hindu.

A selfish man could not function on the buddhic ([Page 281](#)) plane, for the essence of that plane is sympathy and perfect comprehension, which excludes selfishness.

There is a close connection between the astral and the buddhic bodies, the astral being in some ways a reflection of the buddhic. But it must not therefore be supposed that a man, can leap from the astral consciousness to the buddhic, without developing the intervening vehicles.

Although, on the highest levels of the buddhic plane, a man becomes one with all others, we must not therefore assume that he feels alike to all. There is, in fact, no reason to suppose that we shall ever feel absolutely alike towards everybody. For even the Lord Buddha had His favourite disciple Ananda, and the Christ regarded St John the Beloved in a different way from the rest. What is true is that presently men will love every one as much as they now love their nearest and dearest, but by that time they will have developed, for those nearest and dearest, a type of love of which they have no conception now.

There is no separation on the buddhic plane. On that plane, as said, consciousnesses do not necessarily merge instantly at the lowest level, but they gradually grow wider and wider until, when the highest level is reached, a man finds himself consciously one with humanity. That is the lowest level at which the separateness is absolutely non-existent; in its fullness the conscious *unity* with all belongs to the atmic or nirvanic plane.

To each ego, who can reach this state of consciousness, it would seem that he had absorbed or included all others; he perceives that all are facets of a greater Consciousness ; he has , in fact , arrived at the realisation of the ancient formula : "Thou art That".

It must be recollected that, whilst the buddhic consciousness brings a man in to union with all that is glorious and wonderful in others, into union, in fact, with the Masters Themselves, yet it also, and necessarily, brings him into harmony with the vicious and the criminal. Their feelings must be experienced, ([Page 282](#)) as well as the glory and the splendour of the higher life. When separateness is abandoned, and unity is realised, a man finds that he is merged in the Divine

Life, and that the attitude of love is the only one which he can adopt, towards any of his fellowmen, whether they be high or low.

An ego, whilst living in the causal body, already recognises the Divine Consciousness in all; when he looks upon another ego, his consciousness leaps up, as it were, to recognise the Divine in him.

But, on the buddhic plane, it no longer leaps to greet him from *without*, for it is already enshrined in his heart. He *is* that consciousness, and it is *his*. There is no longer the "you" and the "I", for both are one—facets of something which transcends, and yet include them both.

It is not only that we understand another man, but that we feel ourselves to be acting through him, and we appreciate his motives as our own motives, even though, as said in the preceding chapter, we may perfectly understand that another part of ourselves, possessing more knowledge, or a different viewpoint, might act quite differently.

The sense of personal property in qualities and in ideas is entirely lost, because we see that these things are truly common to all, because they are part of the great reality which lies equally behind all.

Hence personal pride in individual development becomes an utter impossibility, for we see now that personal development is but as the growth of one leaf, among the thousands of leaves on one tree, and that the important fact is not the size or shape of that particular leaf, but its relation to the tree as a whole; for it is only of the tree as a whole that we can really predicate permanent, growth.

We have ceased altogether to blame others for their differences from ourselves,: instead we simply note them as other manifestations of our own activity, for now we see reasons which before were hidden from us. Even the evil man is seen to be part of ourselves ([Page 283](#)) a weak part; so our desire is not to blame him, but to help him by pouring strength into that weak part of ourselves - , so that the whole body of humanity may be vigorous and healthy.

Thus, when a man rises to the buddhic plane, he can gain the experience of others ; hence it is not necessary for every ego to go through every experience, as a separate individual. If he did not want to feel the suffering of another, he could withdraw: but he would choose to feel it, because he wants to help. He enfolds in his own consciousness one who is suffering, and although the sufferer would know nothing of such enfoldment, yet it will, to a certain extent, lessen his sufferings.

On the buddhic plane there is a quite new faculty, having nothing in common with faculties on the lower planes. For a man recognises objects by an entirely different method, in which external vibrations play no part. The object becomes part of himself, and he studies it from the inside instead of from the outside.

With such a method of apprehension, it is clear that many familiar objects become entirely unrecognisable. Even astral sight enables one to see objects from all sides at once, as well as from above and below: adding to that the further complication that the whole inside of the body is laid out before us, as though every particle were separately placed upon a table: adding to that again the fact that, while we look at these particles, we are yet at the same time within each particle, and are looking through it, it is apparent that it becomes impossible to trace any resemblance to the object which we knew in the physical world.

Whilst the intuition of the causal body recognises the *outer*, the intuition of buddhi recognises the inner. Intellectual intuition enables one to realise a thing *outside* oneself: with buddhic intuition, one sees a thing from *inside*.

Thus if, when working in the causal body, we want to understand another person, in order to help him, we turn our consciousness upon his causal body, and ([Page 284](#)) study its peculiarities; they are quite well marked, and plainly to be seen, but they are always seen from without. If, wanting the same knowledge, we raise our consciousness to the buddhic level, we find the consciousness of the other man as part of ourselves. We find a point of consciousness which represents him - we might call it a hole rather than a point. We can pour ourselves down that hole, and enter into his consciousness, at any lower level that we wish, and therefore can see everything precisely as he sees it - from inside him, instead of from outside. It will easily be understood how much that lends itself to perfect understanding and sympathy.

Yet, as has been said, in all this strange advance, there is no sense of loss of individuality, even though there is an utter loss of sense of separateness. Whilst that may seem a paradox, yet it is true. The man remembers all that lies behind him. He is himself the same man who did this action, or that, in the far-off past. He is in no way changed, except that now he is much more than he was then, and feels that he *includes* within himself many other manifestations as well.

If, here and now, a hundred of us could simultaneously raise our consciousness into the buddhic world, we should all be one consciousness, but to each man, that consciousness would seem to be his own, absolutely unchanged, except that now it included all others as well.

Buddhic vision reveals a person, not as an enclosure, but as a Star radiating out in all directions : the rays of that star pierce the consciousness of the observer, so that it is felt to be a part of himself, and yet not perfectly so. All observers agree that it is impossible, except by a series of contradictions to describe the buddhic state of consciousness.

The power of identification is gained, not only with regard to the consciousness of people, but with regard to everything else, on the buddhic plane. Everything is learnt, as said, from the inside, instead of from the outside. That which we are examining has become a ([Page 285](#)) part of ourselves; we examine it as a kind of

symptom in ourselves. This characteristic obviously constitutes a fundamental difference. Before it can be attained, utter selflessness must be acquired, because so long as there is anything personal in the disciple's point of view, he cannot make any progress with the buddhic consciousness, which depends on the suppression of the personality.

H.P.Blavatsky states that : "Buddhi is the faculty of cognising, the channel through which divine knowledge reaches the Ego, the discernment of good and evil, also divine conscience, and the spiritual Soul, which is the vehicle of Âtma" [*The Secret Doctrine* , I, p. 2]. It is often spoken of as the principle of spiritual discernment.

In the Yoga system, turiya, a lofty state of trance, is related to the buddhi consciousness, just as sushupti is related to the mental consciousness,svapna to the astral, and jagrat to the physical. These terms, however, are used also with other significances, being relative rather than absolute, vide *The Mental Body*, p. 146.

In the Six Stages of Mind, given in *The Mental Body*, p. 146, that of niruddha , or Self-controlled, corresponds to activity on the buddhic plane.

In the physical body, the yellow prana which enters the heart chakram or force centre represents the principle of buddhi.

Although at the buddhic level, a man still has a definite body, yet his consciousness seems equally present in vast numbers of other bodies. The web of life, which is constructed of buddhic matter, is extended so that it includes these other people, so that, instead of many small separate webs there is one vast web, which enfolds them all in one common life.

Many of these others may, of course, be entirely unconscious of this change, and to them their own private little part of the web will still seem as much separated as ever—or would do so if they knew anything about the web of life. So, from ([Page 286](#)) this standpoint, and at this level, it seems that all mankind are bound together by golden threads, and make one complex unit, no longer a man, but *man* in the abstract.

On the buddhic plane, in some manner which is naturally quite incomprehensible to the physical brain ,past, present and future all exist simultaneously. Neither is a man, on this plane, any longer subject to limitations of space such as we know on the physical plane. Hence, in reading the Akashic Records, [vide *The Mental Body*, p.238] he no longer needs, as on the mental plane, to pass a series of events in review because, as said, past, present and future are simultaneously present to him.

With consciousness fully developed on the buddhic plane, therefore, perfect prevision is possible, though, of course, the man may not - in fact, will not—be

able to bring the whole result fully through into his lower consciousness. Nevertheless, a great deal of clear foresight is obviously within his power, whenever he chooses to exercise it; and even when he is not exercising it, frequent flashes of foreknowledge come through into his ordinary life, so that he often has an instantaneous intuition as to how things will turn out, even before their inception.

The extension of the buddhic plane is so great, that what may be called the buddhic bodies of the different planets of our chain meet one another, so that there is one buddhic body for the whole chain. Hence it is possible for a man, in his buddhic body, to pass from one of these planets to another.

We may note here that an atom of buddhic matter contains 49 to the 3rd or 117,649 "bubbles in kolon."

A man who can raise his consciousness to the atomic level of the buddhic plane finds himself so absolutely in union with all other men that, if he wishes to find another man, he has only to put himself out along the line of that other person in order to find him.

The following may be taken as an example of the working of buddhic consciousness. All beauty, whether it be of form or colour, whether it be in nature or ([Page 287](#)) in the human frame, in high achievements of art or in the humblest household utensil, is but an expression of the One Beauty; and therefore, in the lowliest thing that is beautiful, all beauty is implicitly contained, and so, through it, all beauty may be realised, and He Who Himself is Beauty, may be reached. To understand this fully needs the buddhic consciousness, but even at much lower levels the idea may be useful and fruitful.

As a Master has expressed it : "Do you not see that there is but One Love, so there is but One Beauty? Whatever is beautiful, on any plane, is so because, it is part of that Beauty, and, if it is pushed back far enough, its connection will become manifest. All Beauty is of God, as all Love is of God; and through these His Qualities the pure in heart may always reach Him".

The full development of the buddhic vehicle, however, belongs to the stage of the Arhat, though those who are as yet far from that level can gain in various ways touches of the buddhic consciousness.

Buddhi in the human spirit is the pure and compassionate Reason, which is the Wisdom Aspect, the Christ in man.

In the normal course of evolution, the buddhic consciousness will be gradually unfolded in the sixth sub-race of the Fifth Root Race, and still more so in the Sixth Root Race itself.

One may trace the coming of the sixth sub-race in the scattered people found in the fifth sub-race, in whom tenderness is the mark of power. It is a synthesising spirit which characterises the sixth-sub race; its members are able to unite diversity of opinion and of character, to gather round them the most unlike elements, and blend them into a common whole, having the capacity to take into themselves diversities, and send them out again as unities, utilising the most different capacities, finding each its place, and welding all together into a strong whole.

Compassion is strongly marked; it is that quality which is at once affected by the presence of weakness answering ([Page 288](#)) to it with patience, with tenderness, and with protection. The sense of unity and compassion will be a strength and a power which will be used for service, the measure of strength being the measure of responsibility and of duty.

## CHAPTER - XXXIII-

### THE EGO AND THE MONAD

([Page 289](#)) In chapter III we studied the Coming Forth of the Monads, and considered briefly the general nature of the Monads. In the chapter on Initiation, we dealt with the effects which Initiation produces on the relation between the Monad and the ego. It will now be fitting to consider such further information as is available regarding the relation between the ego and the Monad, and also deal a little more fully with the nature of the Monad himself, and his attitude towards his manifestations in the lower worlds.

Turning first to the nature of the Monad himself, we are confronted with the difficulty that no direct observation of the Monad, on his own plane, is at present, possible to our investigators. The plane on which the Monad resides—the Anupadaka plane - is at present beyond the reach of our clairvoyant investigators, the highest which those investigators can actually know of man, from direct observation, being the manifestation of the Monad as the Triple Spirit on the plane of Âtma Even at that stage he is incomprehensible : for his three aspects are quite distinct and apparently separate, and yet are all fundamentally one and the same.

Whilst no one below the rank of the Adept can see the Monad, yet the Arhat can know of its existence. For, on the plane of Âtma, the triple manifestation can be perceived, and the rays which make that triple manifestation are obviously converging as they rise to the highest point. It can therefore be seen that they must become one, though the actual unity is out of the sight.

We have already referred [*vide p. 124*] to the ([Page 290](#)) possibility of focussing the consciousness in the highest level of the causal body, looking up the line that joins the ego and the Monad, and, through that vision , realising the identity with the Deity.

Perhaps the least misleading manner, in which we can imagine the true nature, of the Monad to ourselves, is to think of him as part of God - a part, however, of That which cannot be divided. Although, unfortunately, this is a paradox, to the finite intellect, yet it enshrines an eternal truth which is far beyond our comprehension.

For each Monad is literally a part of God, apparently temporarily separated from Him, while he is enclosed in the veils of matter, though in truth never for one moment really separated. He can never be apart from God, for the very matter in which he veils himself is also a manifestation of the Divine. Although matter seems to us evil, because it weighs us down, clogs our faculties, and holds us back upon the road, yet this is only because as yet we have not learned to control it, because we have not realised that it also is divine in its essence, because there is nothing but God.

It is a mistake to think of the Monad as something very far away. For the Monad is very near to us, is our SELF, the very root of our being, the one and only reality. Hidden, unmanifest, wrapt in silence and darkness though he be, yet our consciousness is the limited manifestation of that SELF, the manifested God in our bodies, which are his garments.

The Monad has been variously described as the Eternal Man: a fragment of the Life of God: a Son of God, made in His image: a spark *in* the Divine Fire : the "hidden God" as he was known to the Egyptians : he is the God within us, our personal God: our true Self : a fragment of the Eternal : the real and *only* permanent "I" in man. The Monads have been described also as centres of force in the Logos.

Instead of speaking of human Monads, it might perhaps be more accurate to speak of "the Monad manifesting in the human kingdom", though such pedantic ([Page 291](#)) accuracy might be still more puzzling. H.P.Blavatsky wrote : "The Spiritual Monad is one, universal, boundless, and impartite, whose rays, nevertheless, form what we, in our ignorance, call the "individual Monads' of men". [The Secret Doctrine, I, 200].

At the Occult Catechism expresses it :-

"I sense one Flame, O Gurudeva; I see countless undetached sparks burning in it ."

Thou sayest well. And now look around and into thyself. That light which burns inside thee, dost thou feel it different in any wise from the light that shines in thy brother-men?

"It is in no way different, though the prisoner is held in bondage by Karma, and though its garments delude the ignorant into saying, 'thy soul' and 'my soul'." [The Secret Doctrine, I , 145]

To take a physical plane analogy, we recognise that electricity is *one* all the world over; and though it may be active in this machine or in that, the owner of no machine can claim it as distinctively *his* electricity. So also is the Monad *one* everywhere, though manifesting in different directions, through apparently separate and different human beings.

But, in spite of having the same source, and the same fundamental nature, yet each Monad possesses a very distinct individuality of his own : in his manifestation on the plane of Âtma, as a triple light of blinding glory, even at that stage, each Monad possesses certain qualities which make him distinct from every other Monad.

The Consciousness of the Monad on his own plane is complete: he shares the divine knowledge in his own world. But, in the lower world, he is to all intents and purposes unconscious: he cannot in any way touch the lower planes of life, the matter there being of a character which is not amenable to his influences. He, who has been in union with all around him, would, if plunged into denser matter, find himself in uttermost isolation, as in empty space, unconscious of all impacts and contacts of matter.( [Page 292](#) )

Nevertheless, everything is in him, by virtue of the One Life that he shares: but it has to be brought out : hence we speak of awakening the latent consciousness into life. Literally everything is in the Monad, all divine knowledge ; but, to bring that out, so that on any plane of matter he may *know*, is the whole work of evolution.

Hence the rationale of his evolutionary journey, down and again upwards, is for the purpose of acquiring that consciousness, of subjugating matter completely as a vehicle, until on each plane he answers to the vibrations of similar matter outside, and is able to bring out *moods* of consciousness, which answer to those outside impressions, and thereby make it possible for him to be conscious of them.

Geo.S.Arundale gives an interesting account of the appearance and evolution of the Monads. Looking upon the world, he writes, he sees our Lord the Sun expressed in myriad suns. Each Monad is a sun in miniature, the Sun Divine throwing off sparkling suns, charged with all His attributes . The process of evolution begins, and these sparks burst into colour ; rainbows with sun hearts, or centres. Every atom of light is an atom of unconscious Divinity, slowly but surely fulfilling the will of the Sun that it shall become unfolded into self-conscious Divinity. Every atom is a Sun unconscious, and shall become a Sun self-conscious.

When manifestation begins, the Monad is "thrown downwards into matter",to propel forwards and force evolution [vide *The Secret Doctrine*. II, 115]: it is the mainspring of all evolution, the impelling force at the root of all things.

This accounts for that mysterious pressure, which so much puzzles orthodox science, as to why things move onwards : as to what is the force which makes evolution : as to what gives rise to all the variety we find in this world, and the ever-present "tendency to variation".

The Monad knows from the first what is his object ([Page 293](#)) in evolution, and he grasps the general trend of it. But, until that portion of him, which expresses itself in the ego, has reached a fairly high stage, he is scarcely conscious of the details down here, or at any rate he takes little interest in them. He seems at that stage not to know other Monads, but rests in indescribable bliss, without any active consciousness of his surroundings.

The purpose, then, of the descent of the Monad into matter, is that through his descent he may obtain definiteness and accuracy in material detail. To this end, as we have seen in the earlier chapters of this book, an atom of each of the planes of Âtma, Buddhi and Manas is attached to the Monad : the distinction of these atoms gives a precision that did not exist in the consciousness, of the Monad on his own plane.

But, it may be asked, if the Monad is of the essence of divinity in the beginning, and returns to divinity at the end of his long pilgrimage, if the Monad is all-wise and all-good, when he starts on his journey through matter, why is it necessary for him to go through all this evolution, including, as it does, much sorrow and suffering, simply to return to his source in the end?

The question is based on a misconception of the facts. When that which we call the human Monad came forth from the Divine, it was not, in reality, a human Monad, still less an all-wise and all-good Monad: it returns, eventually, in the form of thousands of millions of mighty Adepts, each capable of himself, developing into a Logos.

As a man who cannot swim, flung into deep water, at first is helpless, yet eventually learns to swim and move freely in the water, so is the Monad. At the end of his pilgrimage of immersion in matter, he will be free of the Solar System, able to function in any part of it, to create at will, to move at pleasure. Every power that he unfolds through denser matter, he retains for ever under all conditions: the implicit has become explicit, the potential the actual. It is his own Will to ([Page 294](#)) live in all spheres, and not in one only, that draws him into manifestation.

For there was no developed individualisation in the Monad at first: it was simply a mass of monadic essence. The difference between its condition when issuing forth, and when returning, is exactly like that between a great mass of shining nebulous matter, and the solar system which eventually formed out of it. The nebula is beautiful, undoubtedly, but vague and, in a certain sense, useless. The sun formed from it by slow evolution pours forth life, heat and light upon many worlds and their inhabitants.

Or we may take another analogy. The human body is composed of countless millions of tiny particles, and some of them are constantly being thrown off from it. Suppose that it were possible for each of these particles to go through some kind of evolution, by means of which it would in time become a human being, we would not say that, because it had been, in a certain sense, human at the beginning of that evolution, it had therefore not gained anything when it reached the end.

So, the monadic essence comes forth as a mere outpouring of force, even though it be Divine force.

The appearance and evolutionary course of the Monad may be compared with the appearance of the long day of Brahma, of the Saguna-Brahman Sachchidananda, the Divine Triplicity. That coming forth into cosmic manifestation we have reproduced, in our solar system, by the Solar Logos, and again by the Monad, who is a fragment of the Logos. When the human evolution, is over, he gathers himself up again, and the superhuman evolution begins. Thus we have the long swing of the opening life, from the nirvanic, back to the nirvanic, the whole of human evolution lying between these two. It is completed with the Initiation of the Jivanmukta, the Master, where superhuman evolution begins.

Whilst the Monad in his own world is practically without limitations, at least so far as our solar system is concerned, ([Page 295](#)) yet at every stage of his descent into matter he not only veils himself more and more deeply in illusion, but he actually loses his powers.

If, in the beginning of his evolution, we may suppose the Monad able to move and to see, in an infinite number of those directions in space which we call dimensions, than at each downward step he cuts off one of these, until, for the consciousness of the physical brain, only three of them are left. Thus, by involution into matter, the Monad is cut off from the knowledge of all but a minute part of the worlds which surround him. Furthermore, even what is left to him is but imperfectly seen. For those who can train themselves to appreciate more than three dimensions, there is available an excellent method of arriving at some sort of comprehension of what consciousness on planes higher than the physical is like, and what it involves : though at the same time such a method of approach brings home the hopelessness of expecting fully to understand the Monad, who is raised by many planes and dimensions above the point from which we are attempting to regard him.

All the sacrifices and limitations, caused by descent into matter, may rightly be described as necessitating suffering. But as soon as the ego fully understands the situation, they are undertaken gladly : the ego has not the perfection of the Monad, and so he does not fully understand at first: he has to learn. Thus the quite tremendous limitation at each further descent into matter is an unavoidable fact, so that there is that much of suffering inseparable, from manifestation. We have to accept that limitation as a means to an end, as part of the Divine Scheme.

There are two senses in which all manifested life is sorrowful, unless man knows how to live it. One of these is to a certain extent inevitable, but the other is an entire mistake, and is easily to be avoided. As we have seen, to the Monad, who is the true Spirit of man, all manifested life is a sorrow, just because it is a limitation: a limitation which we in our physical ([Page 296](#)) brain cannot in the least conceive, because we have no idea of the glorious freedom of the higher life.

It is in this sense that it has always been said that the Christ - the Second Person of the Trinity - offers Himself as a Sacrifice, when He descends into matter. Undoubtedly it is a sacrifice, because it is an inexpressibly great limitation, for it shuts off from Him all the glorious powers which are His, on His own level.

The same is true of the Monad of man ; undoubtedly he makes a great sacrifice, when he brings himself in connection with lower matter, when he hovers over it through the long ages of its development up to the human level, when he puts down a tiny fragment of himself, a fingertip as it were, and thereby makes an ego, or individual soul.

The second kind of sorrow, which it is possible entirely to avoid, is due to "desire", using that word in the wide sense to include all desires for lower things, such as craving for power, money, position, and so forth. All such desires necessarily cause disturbance and suffering: hence, from this point of view, what is most needed for progress is serenity.

Hence we have the two first of the Four Noble Truths which the Lord Buddha taught : the Existence of Sorrow, and the Cause of Sorrow.

Passing now to consider, more specifically, the ego in his relation to the Monad, we should realise that the individualising process, by means of which the ego comes into being, *does not take place on the spiritual plane*, but that Atma-Buddhi, as seen through Manas, *appears* to share in the individuality of Manas.

Even the ego is not the true, eternal man : for the ego had a beginning—he came into existence at the moment of individualisation : and whatever has a beginning must also have an end. Therefore even the ego, which has lasted since emergence from the animal kingdom, is also impermanent. The Monad, and the Monad alone, is the only real, permanent man.

We may look upon the ego as a manifestation of the Monad on the higher mental plane: but we ([Page 297](#)) must understand that he is infinitely far from being a perfect manifestation. Each descent from plane to plane means much more than a mere veiling of the Spirit: it means also an actual diminution in the *amount* of Spirit expressed.

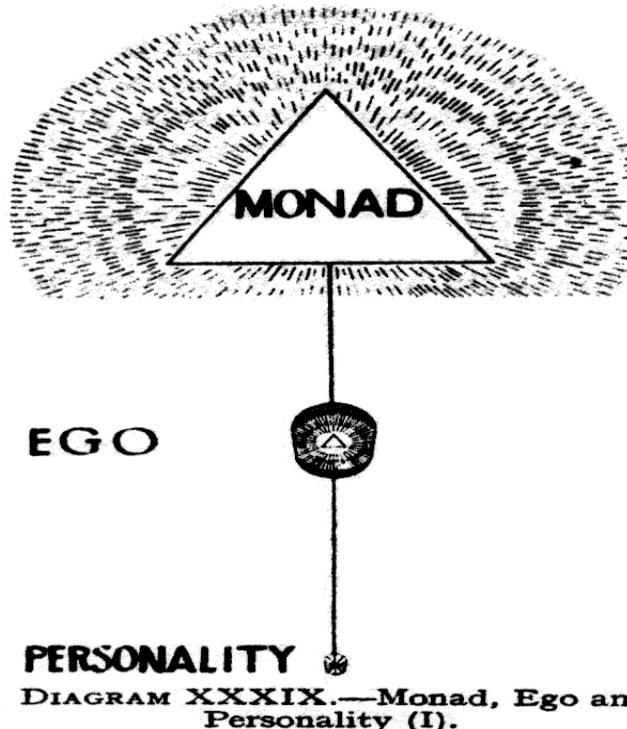
Although to speak of Spirit in terms of quantity is inaccurate and misleading, yet, if an attempt is to be made to express these higher matters in human words at all, such incongruities cannot be wholly avoided. The nearest that we can come, in the physical brain, to a conception of what happens to the Monad, when he

involves himself in matter, is to say that only part of him can be shown, and even that part must be shown in three separate aspects, instead of in the glorious totality which he really *is* in his own world.

So, when the second aspect of the triple spirit comes down a stage, and manifests as buddhi or intuition, it is not the whole of that aspect which so manifests, but only a fraction of it. So again when the third aspect descends two planes, and manifests as intellect, it is only a fraction of a fraction of what the intellect aspect of the the Monad really is. Therefore the ego is not a veiled manifestation of the Monad, but a veiled representation of a minute fraction of the Monad.

Following the ancient maxim, "as above, so below", as the ego is to the Monad, so is the personality to the ego. By the time we have reached the personality, the fractionisation has been carried so far that the part we are able to see bears no appreciable proportion to the reality of which, nevertheless, it is the only possible representation, to us. Yet with and from this hopelessly inadequate fragment, we strive to comprehend the whole. Our difficulty in trying to understand the Monad is the same in kind, but much greater in degree, as that which we found when we tried really to grasp the idea of the ego.

**Diagram XXXIX** is an attempt, however inadequate, to represent graphically the relationship between the Monad, the ego and the personality.



The Monad has been compared with the flame : ([Page 298](#)) the ego or triple spirit with the fire : and the personality with the fuel.

The correspondence between the Monad in its relation to the ego, and the ego in its relation to personality, will bear a little further amplification. As the ego is triple, so is the Monad : the three constituents of the Monad exist on the first three planes of our System, viz., the Adi, the Anupadaka and the Âtma planes. On the atmic plane the Monad takes to itself a manifestation, which we call the Monad in its atmic vesture, or sometimes the triple Âtma, or triple spirit. *This is*

*for the Monad what the causal body is for the ego.*

Just as the ego takes on three lower bodies [mental, astral, and physical] the first of which [the mental] is on the lower part of his own plane, and the lowest [the

physical] two planes below, so the Monad—regarding him now as the triple Âtma or spirit—takes on three lower manifestations [ Âtma, buddhi manas ] the first of which is on the lower part of his own plane, and the lowest two planes below that.

It will thus be seen that the causal body is to the Monad what the physical body is to the ego. If we think of the ego as the soul of the physical body, we may consider the Monad as the soul of the ego in turn.

For, just as the causal body takes, from the personality, whatever is of a nature to help its growth, ([Page 299](#)) so the causal body, through its inner or upper side, passes on, into the third aspect of Âtma, the essence of all experiences which may have entered into it. What is thus poured into the mânasic aspect of Âtma renders it capable of acting without the causal body, that is, without a permanent vehicle which limits it. This throws light on the phenomenon of the perishing of the causal body, or individuality, with which we have already dealt in Chapter XXXI.

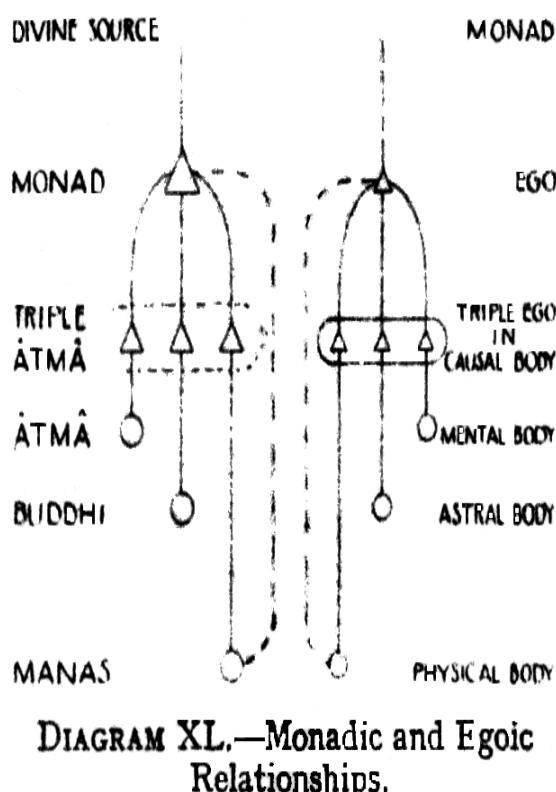


Diagram XL is an attempt to illustrate these somewhat complex correspondences and relationships.

The entire higher triad, atma-buddhi-manas, may also be regarded as the buddhi of the still more inclusive triad of Monad, Ego and Personality. That larger buddhi is triple - will , wisdom and activity—and its third aspect, Kriyashakti, in due course comes into operation in the body, to awaken its organs and liberate its latent powers.

The statement, in Light On The Path, that the "warrior" in man is "eternal and sure", may be taken as *relatively* true of the ego in relation to the lower self and *absolutely* true with regard to the Monad in relation to the ego. The ego, as we have seen, may make mistakes at an earlier stage, but is far less likely to do so than is

the personality. The Monad, on the other hand, makes no mistakes, although his knowledge of conditions down here may be somewhat vague. But his instinct must be on the side of right, for he is divine. Neither the ego nor the Monad have as yet accurate knowledge, because their evolution is not complete. They are for us as guides, and one cannot ([Page 300](#)) do other than follow them. But even as guides they are themselves unfolding.

We may note here that the triple manifestations of the Monad is that which Christianity speaks of as the "three persons in one God," teaching, in the Athanasian creed, that men should worship "One God in Trinity and Trinity in Unity, neither confounding the persons nor dividing the substance"---that is to say, never confusing the work and function of the three separate manifestations, each on its own plane, yet never for a moment forgetting the eternal unity of the "substance" that which lives behind all alike, on the highest plane, where these three are one.

Such considerations are not merely of theoretical value, but have also some practical bearing on life. Although we cannot grasp the full meaning of such teaching ,yet we should at least know that there are these three lines of force and yet that all the force is one and the same. Without knowing that, we cannot grasp the method by which our world came into existence, nor can we understand man, whom "God made in His own image," and who therefore is also three and yet one - atma-buddhi-manas, and yet one Spirit.

We may regard the three parts of the higher self as three aspects of a great consciousness or mind. They are all three modes of cognition. Âtma is not the Self, but is this consciousness knowing the Self. Buddhi is this consciousness, knowing the *life in the forms*, by its own direct perception. Manas is the same consciousness looking out upon the world of *objects*. Kama-Manas is a portion of the last, immersed in that world, and affected by it. The true self is the Monad, whose life is something greater than consciousness, which is the life of this complete mind, the Higher Self.

The same truth may be expressed in a slightly different form—indeed in many forms. Âtma, Buddhi and Manas in man reflect in their smaller spheres the characteristics of the great Trinity. Âtma is the consciousness of *self*, and also the *will*, which gives ([Page 301](#))self-direction. Manas, at the other pole, is consciousness of the *world*, and its *thought power* does all our work, even that which is effected through the hands. But buddhi, between the two, is the very essence of consciousness, of *subjectivity*.

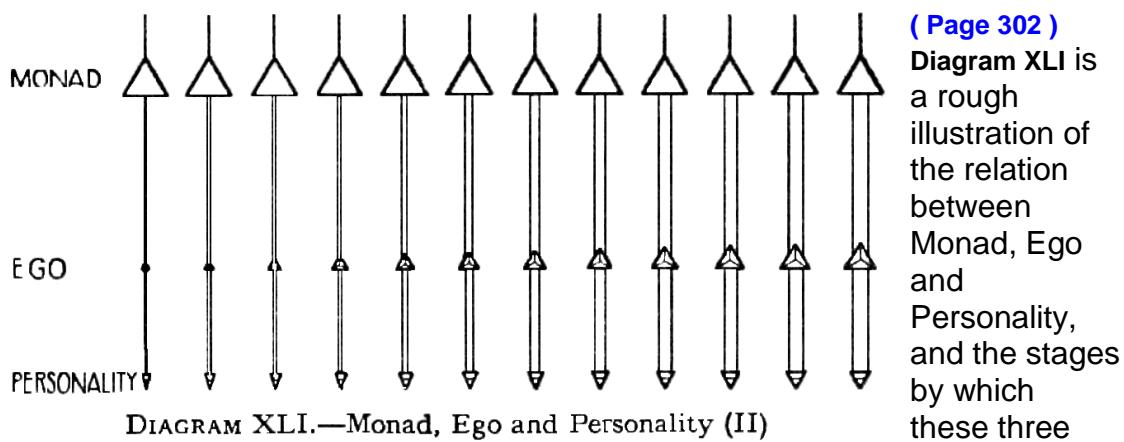
Beyond this middle member, triple in character, is the Monad in man,representative of Him Parabrahman, the state of his true and absolute nirvana, beyond consciousness. The Âtma is the state of his false and relative nirvana, of the nirvanic or atmic plane, his last illusion, that persists between the Fourth [Arhat] and Fifth [Adept] Initiations.

As the Monad lies *above* the trinity of consciousness, so the personal bodies lie outside or *beneath it* - they are known only in reflection in manas.

We may perhaps presume - though here we are going far beyond actual knowledge - that when we have finally and fully realised that the Monad is the true man, we shall find, beyond that again, a yet further and more glorious extension. We shall find that the Spark has never been separated from the Fire, but that, as the ego stands behind the personality, as the Monad stands behind

the ego, so a Planetary Angel stands behind the Monad, and the Solar Deity Himself stands behind the Planetary Angel. Perhaps, even further still, it may be that, in some way infinitely higher, and so at present utterly incomprehensible, a greater Deity stands behind the Solar Deity, and behind even that, through many stages, there must rest the Supreme over all. But here even thought fails us, and silence is the only true reverence.

In the average man the Monad is, of course, but little in touch with the ego and the lower personality, although both of these are yet somehow expressions of him. Just as it is evolution for the personality to learn to express the ego more fully, so it is evolution for the ego to learn to express the Monad more fully. And just as the ego in time learns to control and dominate the personality, so the Monad, in his turn, learns to dominate the ego.



(Page 302)  
Diagram XLI is a rough illustration of the relation between Monad, Ego and Personality, and the stages by which these three gradually

come more and more into touch with one another.

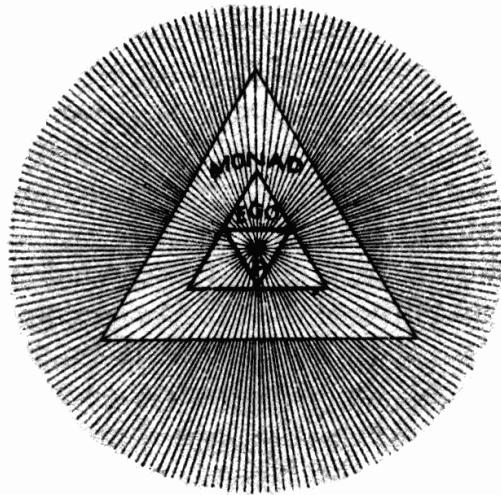
At the left-hand side of the diagram, we see the ego represented as very small : he is just a baby ego : complete, but small and undeveloped: the personality is also slender, indicating its primitive condition. As evolution proceeds, the personality gradually widens out, until eventually it becomes equilateral, indicating that it is well developed, all-round, symmetrical. Also, it will be observed, the link between the personality and the ego, at first very narrow, has widened out, until it becomes almost as wide as the full width of the personality.

Whilst this has been going on, at the same time, the ego has been steadily growing in size, and the channel between him and the Monad has also been steadily increasing in width.

Thus, at the right-hand side of the diagram, we have a strong and wide channel between the Monad and Ego, the Ego himself being fully developed, exercising, through a wide and well-developed link, full control over a symmetrically developed personality.

Finally, the time will come when, just as the personality and ego have become one, the Monad and ego also become one. This is the unification of the ego with

the Monad, and when that is achieved the man has attained ([Page 303](#)) the object of his descent into matter, he has become the Superman, the Adept.



**DIAGRAM XLII.—Monad, Ego and Personality : "At-one-ment."**

**Diagram XLII- Monad, Ego and Personality: "At-one-ment".**

This diagram is an attempt to indicate:-

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 | The complete alignment, or unification of Monad, Ego and Personality   |
| 2 | The consequent one centre of consciousness   |
| 3 | The one life flowing through all three   |
| 4 | The limitation imposed upon the manifestations of the one life by the outline-barriers of Personality, Ego and Monad.  |
| 5 | The fact that Personality, Ego and even Monad are but mayavic or illusory veils imposed upon the Divine Life   |
| 6 | The fact that the One Life itself is unlimited and universal, as indicated by the circularity of the aura of radiation, thus transcending its expressions through Monad, Ego and Personality. "With one portion of Myself I manifest, but I remain". |

Diagram XLII illustrates this consummation. Here we see the Monad, Ego and Personality in perfect alignment, veritably an "at-one-ment" The same life permeates all three of its manifestations, but the personality, owing to its size and its constitution, is able to express less of the one life than the ego is able to do, and the ego, in his turn , for similar reasons, is able to express less than can the Monad.

Even the Monad cannot confine, contain, or express the whole of the divine life which radiates out from and beyond that veil, however thin, of separative matter - which makes him a distinct being.

When this consummation is reached, then only, for the first time, does the entity enter upon ([Page 304](#)) his real life, for the whole of this stupendous process of evolution is but a preparation for that true life of the spirit, which begins only when man becomes more than man. Humanity is the final class of the world-

school, and, when a man passes out of this, he enters the life of the glorified Spirit, the life of the Christ.

That life has a glory and a splendour beyond all comparison and all comprehension, : but the attainment of it by every one of us is an absolute certainty, from which we cannot escape even if we would. If we act selfishly, if we set ourselves against the current of evolution, we can delay our progress: but we cannot finally prevent it.

There is thus a very close correspondence between the relationship of the Monad to the ego, and the ego to the personality. Just as the ego is for long ages the ensouling force of the personality, so there comes a time eventually when the ego himself becomes a vehicle, ensouled by the Monad, now fully active and awakened. All the manifold experiences of the ego, all the splendid qualities developed in him, all these pass into the Monad himself, and find there a vastly fuller realisation than even the ego could have given them.

The question arises, does the Monad, in the case of the ordinary man, ever do anything which affects, or can affect, his personality down here? Such interference appears to be most unusual. The ego is trying on behalf of the Monad, to obtain perfect control of the personality, and to use it as an instrument, : but, because that object is not yet fully achieved, the Monad may well feel that the time has not yet come for him to intervene from his own level, and to bring the whole of his force to bear, when that which is already in action is more than strong enough for the required purpose. But, when the ego is already beginning to succeed, in his effort to manage his lower vehicles, then the Monad does sometimes intervene.

In the course of investigating some thousands of human beings, traces of such intervention were found in only in a few. The most prominent instance is that ([Page 305](#)) given in the twenty-ninth life of Alcyone, when he pledged himself to the Lord Buddha to devote himself in future lives to the attainment of the Buddhahood in order to help humanity.

This being a promise for the far-distant future, it was obvious that the personality, through which it was given, could by no means keep it. Investigation revealed that even the ego, though full of enthusiasm at the idea, was being impelled by a mightier force from within which , he could not have resisted, even had he wished to do so. Following the clue still further, it was found that the impelling force came forth unmistakably from the Monad. He had decided, and he registered his decision. His will, working through the ego, will clearly have no difficulty in bringing all future personalities into harmony with his great intention.

Other examples of the same phenomenon were found. Certain Monads had already responded to the call of the higher Authorities, and had decided that their representative personalities should assist in the work of the Sixth Root Race in California, some hundreds of years hence. Because of that decision nothing that

these personalities might do during the intervening time could possibly interfere with the carrying out of that decision.

The compelling force is thus not from without, but from within, from the real man himself. When the Monad has decided, the thing will be done, and it is well for the personality to yield gracefully and readily, recognising the voice from above, and co-operating gladly. If he does not do this, then he will lay up for himself much useless suffering. It is always the man himself who is doing this thing; and he, in the personality has to realise that the ego *is* himself, and he has for the moment to take it for granted that the Monad is still more himself—the final and greatest expression, of him.

What is known as the great Company of Servers affords another instance; the Servers are a type apart, to which Monads seem to be attached *ab initio*, however ([Page 306](#)) long it may take for the type to be expressed in the outer consciousness. In a certain sense, it is a kind of predestination, the Monad having taken the resolve. [For further account of the Servers, *vide article*, entitled *The Servers* by C.W Leadbeater, in *The Theosophist*, September 1913.]

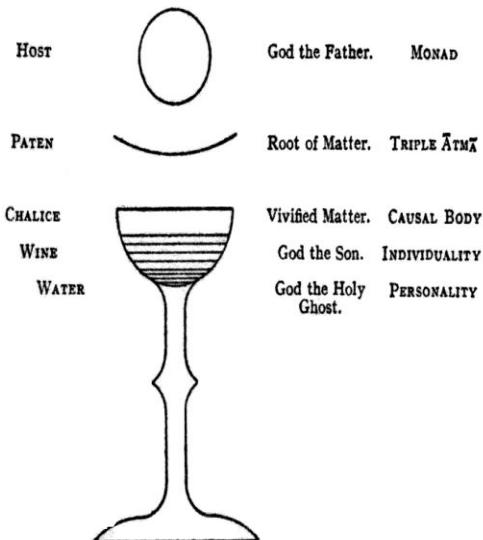
In view of the general consideration that in a perfectly ordered universe there is no room for chance, it seems probable that the very mode of individualisation, from the animal kingdom was somehow predetermined, either for or by the Monad himself, with a view to preparation for whatever portion of the great work he is to undertake in the future.

For there will come a time when we shall all be part of the great Heavenly Man: not in the least as a myth or a poetic symbol, but as a vivid and actual fact, which certain investigators have themselves seen. That celestial body has many members ; each of these members has its own function to fulfil, and the living cells which are to form part of them need widely different experiences to prepare them. It may well be that, from the dawn of evolution, the parts have been chosen, that each Monad has his destined line of evolution, and his freedom of action is concerned chiefly with the rate at which he shall move along that line.

In the Celebration of the Holy Eucharist, there is a good deal of symbolism concerned with the Monad, the Ego and the Personality. Briefly speaking first of the Three Persons of the Trinity, the Host typifies God the Father, and also stands for the Deity, whole and indivisible; the Wine stands for God the Son , Whose life is poured down into the chalice of material form ; the Water represents God the Holy Ghost, the Spirit Who brooded over the face of the waters , and yet at the same time is Himself symbolised by water.

Speaking next of the Deity in man, the Host signifies the Monad, the totality, the unseen cause of all: the paten means the Triple Âtma or Spirit through which the Monad acts on matter : the Wine indicates ([Page 307](#))the individuality, poured into the chalice of the causal body : the Water represents the personality which is so intimately mixed with it.

Passing to the effect of Communion upon the communicant, the force of the Host is essentially Monadic, and acts most powerfully upon whatever within the man represents the direct action of the Monad : the force of the Chalice is more that of the ego : the Wine has a very powerful force upon the higher astral levels, and the Water sends out even etheric vibrations.



When the priest makes the three crosses with the Host over the Chalice, he wills strongly that the influence from the Monadic level should descend into the ego in its threefold manifestation of Ātma, Buddhi and Manas: and then, as he makes the two crosses between the Chalice and his own breast, he draws that influence into his own mental and astral bodies, that through him it may radiate fully upon his people.

This symbolises the earlier stages of evolution, when the Monad hovers over his lower manifestations, brooding ([Page 308](#)) over them, acting upon them, but never touching them. So the priest holds the Host above the Chalice, yet never touches the one with the other until the appointed time

has come.

When the priest drops the fragment of the Host into the Chalice, he thereby signifies the descent of a ray of the Monad into the ego.

To facilitate memorisation of this system of symbols, Diagram XLIII is appended.

## CHAPTER -XXXIV -

### THE SECOND AND HIGHER INITIATIONS

([Page 309](#)) Each stage of the Path proper is divided into four steps :--

The first is its *Maggo*, or way, during which the student is striving to cast off the fetters.

The Second is its *Phala*, literally fruit or result, when the man finds the result of his efforts showing themselves more and more.

The Third is its *Bhavagga*, or consummation, the period when, the result having culminated, he is able to fulfil satisfactorily the work belonging to the step on which he now firmly stands.

The Fourth is its *Gotrabhu*, which means the time when he has arrived at a fit state to receive the next Initiation. This means complete and entire freedom from the fetters of his stage on the Path.

The first of the three fetters, or *Samyojana*, which have to be cast off, before the candidate can take the Second Initiation, is *Sakkayaditthi*, the delusion of self. This is the "I - am - I" consciousness which, as connected with the personality, is nothing but an illusion, and must be got rid of at the very first step of the real upward Path. But to cast off the fetter completely means even more than this, for it involves the realisation of the fact that the individuality also is, in very truth, one with the All, that it can therefore never have any interests opposed to those of its brethren, and that it is most truly progressing when it most assists the progress of others.

The second fetter is *Vichikichcha*, doubt or uncertainty. The candidate must arrive at the certainty of conviction, founded on individual experiment, or mathematical reasoning. He believes, not ([Page 310](#)) because he has been told, but because facts are now self-evident. This is the only method of resolving doubt known to occultism.

The third fetter is *Silabbataparamasa*, or superstition. This includes all kinds of unreasoning and mistaken belief, and all dependence upon outward rites and ceremonies to purify the heart. The man must realise that within himself deliverance must be sought, and that, however valuable aids such as ceremonies, etc., may be in developing will, wisdom and love, yet they can never take the place of that personal effort by which alone he can achieve. The knowledge of the spiritual permanence of the true ego brings reliance on one's own spiritual strength, and so dispels superstition.

The buddhic consciousness is directly related to these three fetters, for they are all dispelled by that consciousness. Recognising the unity, the man can have no delusion of separateness. Seeing for himself the great laws of life in operation, he can no longer doubt. He sees all the roads that lead to the one Bliss, and that all roads are good, so that he can no longer hold to the superstition that any one form of belief is necessary, to one who has attained that level.

The Second Initiation takes place in the lower mental world, so that the candidate must have developed the power to function freely in his mental body.

This Initiation rapidly continues the development of the mental body, and at or near this point the pupil learns to use the mayavirupa [vide *The Mental Body*, p. 169].

At the Second Initiation, the Key of Knowledge is given, the Initiator pouring out, from His own mental and causal bodies, rays of power which, falling on the mental and causal bodies of the Initiate, stimulate into sudden and splendid growth, the germs of similar powers therein existing. As though a bud, stimulated by the sun-rays, should suddenly burst into all the glory of the opened flower, so

do the mental and causal bodies suddenly unfold the powers latent within them, ([Page 311](#)) expanding into radiant beauty. Through them, now expanded, buddhi or intuition can play freely, the great new power being thus set free to work.

The period after the Second Initiation is in many ways the most dangerous anywhere on the Path : it is at this stage that, if there is any weakness in a candidate's character, it will find him out. In nearly all cases, the danger comes through pride. It is indicated in the Gospel story by the temptation in the wilderness.

As the First Initiation corresponds to a new birth, so may the Second Initiation, be compared to the baptism of the Holy Ghost and Fire, for it is the power of the Third Person of the Trinity that is outpoured at that moment, in what may but inadequately be described as a flood of fire.

The man at this stage is known to the Buddhists as a Sakadagamin, the man who returns but once, the meaning being that he should need but one more incarnation before attaining Arhatship, the Fourth Initiation.

The Hindu name for this step is the Kitichaka, the man who builds a hut, he who builds a hut, he who has reached a place of peace.

At this stage no additional fetters are cast off, but it is usually a period of considerable psychic and intellectual advancement. The man must have the astral consciousness at his command during physical waking life, and, during sleep, the heaven-world will be open before him.

When the Third Initiation is passed, the man becomes the Anagamin, which means literally, "he who does not return", for it is expected of him that he will attain the next Initiation in the same incarnation. The Hindu name for this stage is the Hamsa, which means a swan, but the word is also considered to be a form of the sentence So-Ham , "That am I ". There is a tradition, too, that the swan is able to separate milk from water, and the Sage is similarly able to realise the true value, for living beings, of the phenomenon of life.

This Initiation is typified, in the Christian symbolism, ([Page 312](#)) by the Transfiguration of the Christ. He went up into a high mountain apart, and was transfigured before His disciples : "his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light", exceeding white as snow, so as no fuller on earth can white them". This description suggests the Augoeides, the glorified man, and it is an accurate picture of what happens at this Initiation, for, just as the Second Initiation is principally concerned with the quickening of the lower mental body, so at this stage the causal body is especially developed. The ego is brought more closely into touch with the Monad, and is thus transfigured in very truth.

Even the personality is affected by that wondrous outpouring. The higher and the lower self became one at the First Initiation, and that unity is never lost but the

development of the higher self, that now takes place, can never be measured in the lower worlds of form, although the two are one to the greatest, possible extent.

At this stage, the man is brought before the Spiritual King of the World, the Head of the Occult Hierarchy, Who, at this step, either confers the initiation Himself , or deputes one of His Pupils, the three Lords of the Flame, to do so. In the latter event, the man is presented to the king soon after the Initiation has taken place. Thus the "Christ" is brought into the presence of His "Father" ; the buddhi in the Initiate is raised, until it becomes one with its origin on the nirvanic plane, and a very wonderful union between the first and second principles in man is thus effected.

The Anagamin enjoys, while moving through the round of his daily work, all the splendid possibilities given by full possession of the faculties of the higher mental plane, and during the sleep of the body, he enters the buddhic plane.

In this stage, he has to throw off any lingering remains of the fourth and fifth fetters- attachment to the enjoyment of sensation, typified by earthly love, and all possibility of anger or hatred. He must become free from the possibility of being enslaved in ([Page 313](#)) any way by external things. He must rise above all considerations connected with the mere personality of those around him, recognising that the affection which flourishes upon the Path is an affection between egos. Therefore it is strong and permanent, without fear of diminution or fluctuation, for it is that "perfect love which casteth out fear".

The Fourth Initiation is known as that of the Arhat, which means the worthy, the capable, the venerable or perfect. The Hindus call the Arhat the Paramahamsa, the one above and beyond the Hamsa. In the Christian system the Fourth Initiation is indicated by the suffering in the Garden of Gethsemane, the Crucifixion and the Resurrection of the Christ.

This Initiation differs from the others in that it has the double aspect of suffering, and victory, hence a series of events has been employed to represent it. The type of suffering, which accompanies the Initiation, clears off any arrears of karma which may still stand in the Initiate's way. The patience and joyousness, with which he endures them, have great value in the strengthening, of his character, and help to determine the extent of his usefulness in the work which lies before him.

The Initiate has to experience for a moment the condition called *Avichi*, which means the "waveless", that which is without vibration. The man stands absolutely alone in space, and feels cut off from all life, even from that of the Logos; it is without doubt the most ghastly experience that it is possible for any human, being to have. It seems to have two results:

[1] that the candidate may be able to sympathise with those to whom *Avichi* comes as a result of their actions: and--

[2] that he may learn to stand cut off from everything external, and test and realise his own utter certainty that he is one with the Logos, and that any such feeling of loneliness must be but an illusion.

Avichi for the black magician corresponds to nirvana for the White Adept. Both of these types of men, antithesis of each other, are *yogis*, and each gets the ([Page 314](#)) result of the law he has followed. One attains the *kaivalyam* - realisation of oneness, complete isolation - of Avichi, the other the *kaivalyam* of Nirvana.

For the Arhat, while still in the physical body, the consciousness of the buddhic plane is his, this being its normal home.

In fact, to stand at the level of the Arhat involves the power fully to use the buddhic vehicle.

When the Arhat draws himself up into the buddhic plane, it must not be supposed that manas is in any way lost. For he draws up manas with him into that expression of manas which has all the time existed on the buddhic plane but has not been fully vivified until now. He still remains triple, but instead of being on the three planes, he is now on two, with atma developed on its own plane , buddhi on its own plane, and manas level with buddhi, drawn up into the intuition. Then he discards the causal body, because he has no further need of it. When he wishes to come down again, and manifest on the mental plane, he has to make a new causal body, but otherwise he does not need one.

Much in the same way, at a later stage, the buddhi and the glorified intellect will be drawn up into the atmic plane, and the triple spirit will be fully vivified. Then the three manifestations will converge into one. That is a power within the reach of the Adept, because, as we shall see in due course, He unifies the Monad and the ego, just as the disciple is trying to unite the ego with the personality.

This drawing up of the higher manas from the causal body, so that it is on the buddhic plane side by side with the buddhi, is the aspect or condition of the ego which H.P.Blavatsky called the spiritual ego, which is buddhi plus the manasic aspect of the One, which was drawn up into buddhi when the causal vehicle was cast aside. That state - that of the Arhat—is called by Christian mystics that of spiritual illumination, of the Christ in man.

H. P. Blavatsky has also a classification in which she speaks of four divisions of the mind : ([Page 315](#))

[1] Manas –taijasi, the resplendent or illuminated manas, which is really buddhi, or at least that state of man when his manas has become merged in buddhi, having no separate will of its own.

[2] Manas proper, the higher manas, the abstract thinking mind.

[3] Antahkarana, the link of channel or bridge between the higher manas and kama manas during incarnation.

[4] Kama-manas which, on this theory, is the personality.

When the Arhat leaves the physical body in sleep or trance, he passes at once into the unutterable glory of the nirvanic plane. His daily effort is now to reach further and further up into the nirvanic plane, up the five lower sub-planes on which the human ego has being. He has a number of planes open to him, and can focus his consciousness at any particular level he chooses, although there will always be a background of the buddhic and nirvanic consciousness.

Even at the atmic level, there is a sheath of some sort for the Spirit, for in one sense it seems as though it were an atom, and yet in another it seems to be the whole plane. The man feels as if he were everywhere, but could focus anywhere within himself, and wherever for a moment the outpouring of force diminishes, that is for him a body.

The Arhat has to work at the casting off of the remaining five of the ten great fetters, which are:--

[6] Ruparaga—desire for beauty of form, or for physical existence in a form, even including that in the heaven world.

[7] Aruparaga - desire for formless life.

[8] Mano—pride.

[9] Uddhachcha - agitation or irritability, the possibility of being disturbed by anything.

[10] Avijja - ignorance .

The Arhat Initiation may be thought of as a halfway between the First and the Fifth Initiations.

On the first half of the Path - from the First to the ([Page 316](#)) Fourth Initiation—the man is busy shaking himself free from those personal limitations, from the illusion of "it". On the second half, he is engaged in releasing himself from the illusion of "you". It is usually said that seven lives are occupied, in the average case, at normal times, between the First and Fourth Initiations, and seven lives also between the Fourth and Fifth. But these figures are capable of very great reduction or increase. In most cases the actual period is not very great, since usually the lives are taken in immediate succession, without interludes in the heaven world.

The Arhat, whose ego is working perfectly in the causal body, need not incarnate again in a physical body, and go through the wearisome round of birth and death,

which is so unpleasant—at any rate, from the point of view of the ego himself. He must, however, descend as far as the astral plane. While in the astral body, he may at any moment that he chooses enjoy the nirvanic consciousness. If he is in the physical body, he can reach that nirvanic consciousness only when he leaves the body in sleep or trance, as already explained above.

Nirvanic consciousness means consciousness anywhere in the solar system.

The Fifth Initiation makes a man a Master, an Adept, a Superman. The Buddhists call Him the Asekha—literally, the not-disciple—because He has no more to learn, and has exhausted the possibilities of the human kingdoms of nature. The Hindus speak of Him as the Jivanmukhta, a liberated life, a free being, because His will is one with the Universal Will, that of the One without a second. He stands ever in the light of Nirvana, even in His waking consciousness, should He choose to remain on earth in a physical body. When out of that, He rises still higher into the Monadic plane, beyond not merely our words but our thought.

As the *Secret Doctrine* expresses it: the Adept "begins his Samadhi on the Atmic plane," all planes below the atmic being one to Him.

([Page 317](#)) A man attains Adeptship when he raises His ordinary consciousness to the nirvanic level: the fact that differentiates Him, and makes Him an Adept, is that He has unified the Monad with the ego. And, since He has become one with the Monad, He has already reached the level of the third or lowest manifestation of the Deity or Logos.

In Christian symbolism, the Ascension and the Descent of the Holy Spirit stand for the attainment of Adeptship, for the Adept does ascend above humanity, beyond this earth, although, if He chooses, as did the Christ, He may return to teach and help. As He ascends, he becomes one with the Holy Spirit, and invariably the first thing He does, with His new power, is to pour it down upon His disciples, even as the Christ poured down tongues of fire upon the heads of His followers at the Feast of Pentecost.

At the Asekha Initiation, the atma is seen as a clear light, a star, and, when it spreads out, at the last breaking down of the wall, it becomes the infinite light.

Before that, the Arhat can feel the underlying peace of atma when in meditative mood, but constantly he returns to the sorrow. But when a man rises to the atmic plane in full consciousness, and the buddhic consciousness merges into that, there is but one light seen. This is expressed in The Voice of The Silence: "The Three that dwell in glory and in bliss ineffable, now in the world of Maya have lost their names. They have become one star, the fire that burns but scorches not, that fire which is the Upadhi of the flame."

While the man was in the causal body, he saw the Sacred Three separate, but now he sees them as the three aspects of the triple atma. Buddhi and manas, which were "twins upon a line" in the buddhic consciousness of the previous stage, are now one with atma, the fire which is the vehicle of the Monadic flame.

Then says the Teacher : "Where is thy individuality, Lanoo, where the Lanoo himself? It is the spark lost in the fire, the drop within the ocean, the ever present ray become the All and the eternal Radiance". ([Page 318](#)) He who was a disciple is now a Master. He stands in the centre, and the triple Atma radiates from Him.

The Adept has the power to get at any knowledge that He wants, almost in a moment. He can make Himself one with it, and get at the core of it instantly, and then observe the surrounding details as He may require them. Somewhere on the buddhic or nirvanic plane, He would grasp the idea that lies at the back for example, of any particular science or department of knowledge and make Himself one with that. Then, from that point of view, He would reach down into any details He might require.

A Master does not appear to need all the knowledge stored within His brain as we do, but is able to turn a certain faculty on to anything that is wanted, and, by the use of that faculty, then and there, to know all about it. He would not need to read up a subject, but He would turn His all-seeing eye on the subject , and thereby somehow absorb the knowledge.

This may be the explanation of getting rid of avidya - ignorance. With the buddhic faculty, as we have seen, it is no longer necessary to collect facts from outside, but one plunges into the consciousness of anything, whether it be mineral or plant or Deva, etc., and understands it from inside.

H. P . Blavatsky has pointed out that a Master's physical body is a mere vehicle. It hands nothing on, but is simply a point of contact with the physical plane, a body kept as an instrument, needed for the work He does, and dropped when done with. The same consideration applies to the astral and mental bodies.

The Masters aid, in countless ways, the progress of humanity. From the highest sphere, They shed down on all the world light and life, that may be taken up and assimilated, as freely as the sunshine, by all who are receptive enough to take it in. As the physical world lives by the life of God, focussed by the sun, so does the spiritual world live by that same Life, focussed by the Occult Hierarchy. ([Page 319](#))

Certain Masters are specially connected with religions, and use these religions as reservoirs, into which They pour spiritual energy, to be distributed to the faithful in each religion through the duly appointed "means of grace".

Then there is the great intellectual work, wherein the Masters send out thoughts of a high intellectual power, to be caught up by men of genius, assimilated by them and given out to the world. On this level, also, They send out their wishes to Their disciples, notifying them of the tasks to which they should set their hands.

In the lower mental world, the Masters generate the thought-forms which influence the concrete mind, and guide it along useful lines of activity in this world, and teach those who are living in the heavenly world.

In the intermediate world, They undertake the work of the helping of the so-called dead, generally direct and supervise the teaching of the younger pupils, and send out aid in numberless cases of need.

In the physical world, They watch the tendencies of events, correct and neutralise, so far as law permits, evil currents, constantly balance forces that work for and against evolution, strengthening the good and weakening the evil. They work also in conjunction with the Angels and Devas of the Nations, guiding the spiritual forces as the others guide the material.

The whole earth is divided into special areas, each in the charge of a Master. These areas, consisting of huge countries or even continents, correspond somewhat to "parishes" in the Church organisation. Thus one Adept may be said to be in charge of Europe: another looks after India : and so on.

The Adept has all the different grades and forms of evolution to regard—not only humanity, but also the great kingdom of the Angels and Devas, the various classes of nature-spirits, the animals, vegetables and minerals, the elemental kingdoms, and many others of which so far nothing has been heard by mankind.

A large part of the work of the Adepts lies at levels far beyond the physical as They are engaged ([Page 320](#)) in pouring out their own power, and also the force from the great store filled by the Nirankayas. It is the karma of the world that it shall have a certain amount of this uplifting force at its service; on account of this, humanity is evolving as a unit, the fact of brotherhood enabling every one to make much more progress, than would be even remotely possible were he standing entirely by himself.

The Great White Brotherhood rays out the supply of force from the great reservoir upon all egos, without exception, on the higher mental plane, thus giving the greatest possible assistance to the unfolding of the indwelling life.

Whilst an Adept may ray out His force upon enormous numbers of people, running often into many millions simultaneously, yet such is the wonderful quality of this power, which He pours forth, that it adapts itself to each one of these millions, as though he were the only object of its influence, and it appears as though what, for us, would be full attention, were being given to that one.

This arises from the fact that the Master's nirvanic or atmic consciousness is a kind of point, which yet includes the entire plane. He can bring that point down through several planes, and spread it out like a kind of bubble. On the outside, of that huge sphere are all the causal bodies, which He is trying to affect, and He , filling the sphere, appears all in all to each individual.

In this way, He fills with His life the ideals of millions of people, and is for them respectively the ideal Christ, the ideal Rama, the ideal Krishna, an Angel, or perhaps a spirit guide.

In this department of Their work, the Masters frequently take advantage of special occasions, and of places where there is some strong magnetic centre. Where some holy man has lived and died, or where some relic of such a person creates a suitable atmosphere, They take advantage of such conditions , and cause Their own force to radiate along the channels already ( [Page 321](#) )prepared. When some vast assemblage of pilgrims comes together in a receptive attitude, again They take advantage of the occasion , by pouring Their forces out upon the people, through the channels by means of which they have been taught to expect help and blessing.

Another example of the methods of work of the Masters at the causal level is afforded in the case of talismans, which a Master may link with His own causal body, so that its influence will last through the ages. This was done with certain physical objects, buried at various points of future importance, by Apollonius of Tyana.

The Adept having become one with the Third Aspect of the Logos, manifesting on the plane of atma, His next step is to become one with that Aspect which is represented by the Christ in the bosom of the Father. Later on, it maybe presumed that He will draw ever nearer and nearer to the Deity of the Solar system.

When human life is completed, the Perfected Man usually drops his various material bodies, but He retains the power to take up any of them, if ever He should need them in the course of His work. In the majority of cases, one who gains that level no longer needs a physical body. He no longer retains an astral, a mental, or even a causal body, but lives permanently at His highest level.

Of those who attain Adeptship, comparatively few remain on our earth as members of the Occult Hierarchy, as will be explained more fully presently.

Beyond the Fifth or Asekha Initiation, the higher Path opens up in seven great ways, among which the Adept must take His choice. These seven are as follows:--

[1] He may enter into the blissful omniscience and omnipotence of Nirvana with activities far beyond our knowing, to become, perhaps, in some future world, an Avatar, or Divine Incarnation. This is sometimes called "taking the Dharmakaya vesture" . The Dharmakaya keeps nothing below the Monad, though what the vesture of the Monad may be on its own plane we do not know. ([Page 322](#) )

[II ] He may enter on "the Spiritual Period"-a phrase covering unknown meanings, among them probably that of "taking the Sambhogakaya vesture". He retains His manifestation as a triple spirit, and probably can reach down and show Himself in a temporary Augoeides.

[ III ] He may become part of that treasure-house of spiritual forces, on which the Agents of the Logos draw for their Work, "taking the Nirmanakaya vesture". The Nirmanakaya appears to preserve His Augoeides, that is, His causal Body, and

keeps all His permanent atoms, and therefore has the power to show Himself at whichever level He chooses. The Nirmanakayas are Spoken of in The Voice of The Silence as forming a Guardian Wall, which preserves the world from further and far greater misery and sorrow.

[IV] He may remain a member of the Occult Hierarchy, which rules and guards the world in which He has reached perfection.

[V ] He may pass on to the next Chain, to aid in building up its forms.

[VI ] He may enter the splendid Angel or Deva Evolution.

[ VII ] He may give Himself to the immediate service of the Logos, to be used by Him in any part of the Solar System: His Servant and Messenger, who lives but to carry out His will, and do His work over the whole of the System which He rules. This is called joining the "Staff". It seems to be considered a very hard path, perhaps the greatest sacrifice open to the Adept, and is therefore as carrying with it great distinction.

A member of the General Staff has no physical body, but makes one for Himself by Kriyashakti - the "power to make"—of the matter of the globe to which He is sent. The Staff contains Beings at very different levels, from that of Arhatship upwards.

Above the Initiation of the Adept lies the Sixth Initiation, that of Chohan, word which means ([Page 323](#)) "Lord". The same word is used also for the Heads of Rays Three to Seven.

The Ray to which an Adept belongs affects not only His appearance, but also that work that He has to do.

The following table sets out briefly certain facts regarding the Rays:-

Ray	Head of Ray	Characteristics of Ray	Remarks
1	<b>Chohan Morya</b>	Strength	The Master Jupiter is also on this Ray, and is the Guardian of India. He is a great student of the abstruser sciences, of which chemistry and astronomy are the outer shells.
2	<b>Chohan Kuthumi: formerly He was Pythagoras ( 6th Century, B.C.</b>	Wisdom	This Ray gives great Teachers to the world
3	<b>The Venetian Chohan</b>	Adaptability: Tact	Astrology is concerned with this Ray
4	<b>Chohan Serapis</b>	Beauty and Harmony	Many artists are on this Ray

5	<b>Chohan Hilarion:</b> formerly Iamblichus (4th century).	Science: detailed knowledge.	
6	<b>Chohan Jesus:</b> formerly Apollonius of Tyana (1st century), and also Ramanujacharya (11th century).	Bhakti or Devotion	<b>The Ray of Mystics</b>
7	<b>Chohan Rakoczi:</b> formerly the Comte de St.Germain (18th century); Francis Bacon (17th century); Robertus the monk ( 16th century); Hunyadi Janos(15th century); Christian Rosencreuz (14th century); Roger Bacon (13th century); Proclus the Neo-Platonist (5th century); St. Alban (3rd century).	Ordered Service: Ceremonial	<b>Works through ceremonial magic, and employs the services of great Angels</b>

( Page 324 ) The following are examples of the methods likely to be employed by representatives of the different Rays:----

The First Ray man would attain his object by sheer force of resistless will, without condescending to employ anything in the nature of means at all.

The Second Ray man would also work by force of will, but with the full comprehension of the various possible methods, and the conscious direction of his will into the channel of the most suitable one.

The Third Ray Man would use the forces of the mental plane, noticing very carefully the exact time when the influences were most favourable to success.

The Fourth Ray Man would employ the finer physical forces of the ether.

The Fifth Ray man would set in motion the currents of what used to be called the astral light.

The Sixth Ray man would achieve his result by the strength of his earnest faith in his particular Deity, and in the efficacy of prayer to Him.

The Seventh Ray man would use elaborate ceremonial magic, and probably invoke the aid of non human spirits, if possible.

In attempting the cure of disease:--

The First Ray man would simply draw health and strength from the great fountain of Universal Life.

The Second Ray man would thoroughly comprehend the nature of the malady, and know precisely how to exercise his will-power upon it to the best advantage.

The Third Ray man would invoke the Great Planetary Spirits, and choose a

moment when astrological influences were beneficent for the application of his remedies.

The Fourth Ray man would trust chiefly to physical means, such as massage.

The Fifth Ray man would employ drugs.

The Sixth Ray man would employ faith-healing. ([Page 325](#))

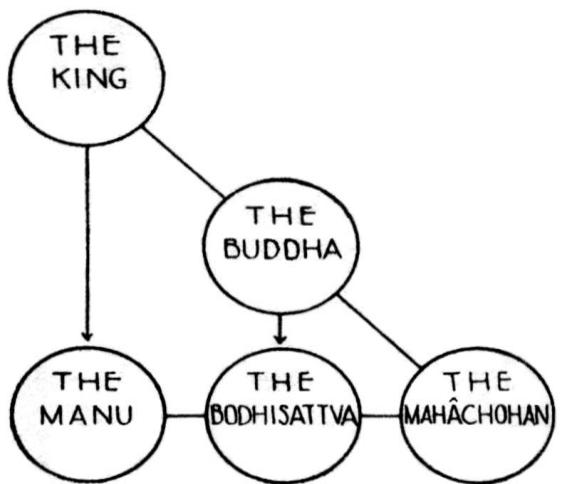
The Seventh Ray man would use mantras, or magical invocations.

Beyond the Chohan Initiation, on Rays Three to Seven, the highest Initiation that can be taken on our globe is that of the Mahachohan: it is possible, however, to go further on the First and Second Rays, as is indicated in the following table of Initiations, in which it will be seen that the Buddha initiation is possible on the Second and First Rays, and that the Adept may go still further on the First.

	SILENT WATCHER							
INITIATIONS	9	LORD OF THE WORLD						
	8	PRATYEKA BUDDHA	BUDDHA					
	7	MANU	BODHISATTVA					MAHACHOHAN
	6	CHOHAN	CHOHAN	CHOHAN	CHOHAN	CHOHAN	CHOHAN	CHOHAN
	5	ASEKHA	ASEKHA	ASEKHA	ASEKHA	ASEKHA	ASEKHA	ASEKHA
	4							
	3	FIRST RAY	SECOND RAY	THIRD RAY	FOURTH RAY	FIFTH RAY	SIXTH RAY	SEVENTH RAY
	2							
	1							

The Occult Government is in three departments, ruled by three officials, who are not merely reflections of the Three Aspects of the Logos, but are in a very real way actual manifestations of Them. These three are [1] Lord of the World , who is one with the First Aspect, on the Adi plane, and wields the divine will on earth; [2] the Lord Buddha, who is one with the Second Aspect, which dwells on the Anupadaka plane, and sends the divine Wisdom down to mankind; and [3] the Mahachohan, who is one with the Third Aspect, which resides on the nirvanic or atmic plane, and ([Page 326](#)) exercises the divine Activity - representing the Holy Ghost. The following table sets out these facts:----

Logos	Divine Powers	Planes of Nature	Triangles of Agents	Ray
First Aspect	Will	Adi or Originating	The Lord of the World	1
Second Aspect	Wisdom	Anupadaka or Monadic	The Lord Buddha	2
Third Aspect	Activity	Atmic or Spiritual	The Mahachochan	3-7



**DIAGRAM XLIV.—The Great Triangles of the Hierarchy**

representatives, the Manu and the Bodhisattva, respectively. ([Page 327](#))

The Manu and the Bodhisattva stand parallel with the Mahachohan, thus forming another Triangle, to administer the powers of the Logos down to the physical plane. These two triangles are expressed in **Diagram XLIV**.

In this great Triangle, the Lord of the World and the Lord Buddha are different from the Mahachohan, being engaged in work that does not descend to the physical plane, but only to the level of the buddhic body, in the case of the Lord Buddha, and the atmic plane, in that of the Lord of the World. Yet, without Their work, none of that at lower levels would be possible, so They provide for the transmission of Their influence, even to the lowest plane, through Their

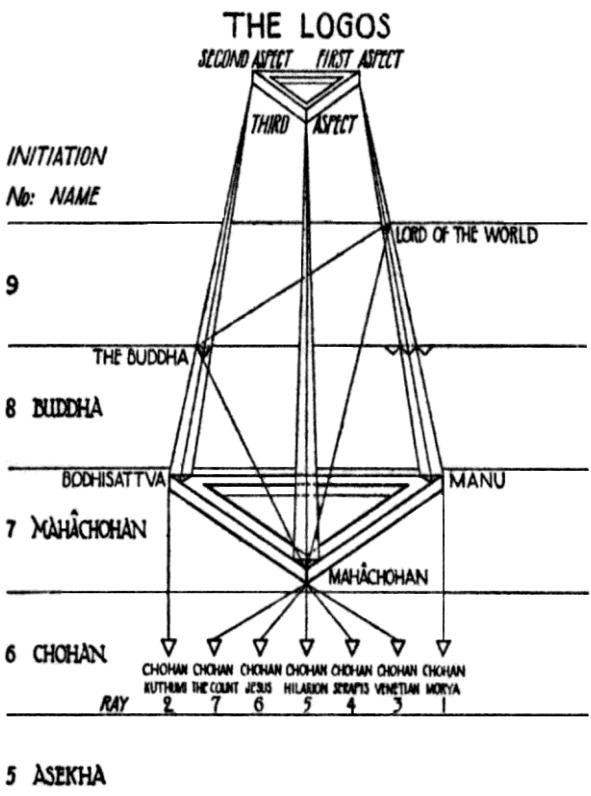


DIAGRAM XLV.—The Occult Hierarchy.

### The Occult Hierarchy

The various relationships described above are summarised in Diagram XLV, which is reproduced, with very slight modifications, from *The Masters and the Path*.

## CHAPTER -XXXV-

### CONCLUSION

(*Page 328*) In bringing to a close this series of four books, dealing with man's *etheric, astral, mental* and causal bodies, together with a considerable mass of phenomena, of the various planes to which these bodies belong, it may be useful, to glance over the whole ground we have covered, and draw a few general, conclusions.

Turning to the important matter of clairvoyant research, it seems to be a fact just at present, that what we may term *objective clairvoyance* is comparatively, rare. By objective clairvoyance, we mean that definite and definitive type of higher sight, or apprehension, which objectivises the things which are perceived; which in fact, makes things of them, as objective, in their own degree, as are the ordinary phenomena of the physical plane.

There is, however, another type of clear-seeing, which we may term *subjective* clairvoyance. In this type, there is a form of perception, perhaps more accurately termed *apprehension*, which does not objectify that which is being observed, but which rather feels or cognises it in a more subtle, and a more interior manner. Let a simple illustration suffice.

Whilst relatively few people are able to see auras, so that they can become perfectly objective, far more seem to be able to "sense" auras, and to *know* without actually *seeing*, what are their general characteristics, such as size, quality, colour, and so forth. They appear to see, quite literally, with the "mind's eye".

In both cases of clear-seeing, the wise and experienced student will be extremely, cautious and prudent, and will always take a strictly conservative view, either of what he sees—or *thinks he sees*—or of ([Page 329](#)) what he feels—or *thinks he feels*. Whilst it would be highly foolish, and contrary to all the canons of scientific method, to ignore, or discount too severely, that which is seen or apprehended, it is equally as foolish, and certainly more dangerous, to accept rashly, and without careful corroboration, everything that is seen or apprehended. The student must, in entering the unknown, strive to maintain that careful balance, between caution and rashness, which alone leads to true knowledge and keeps him on that "middle path" which has so often been described as narrow as the edge of a razor.

As mentioned in a previous volume, to have attempted to give proofs of the statements made in these books would have been, for many reasons, quite impossible, or at least impracticable. For a very large proportion of the contents of these volumes, rigid, intellectual proof could most certainly *not* be given, because it is not at present available. Comparatively few things - some would say no things—can be proved absolutely: facts, phenomena, observations, statements, are one thing; proof of those facts, etc., and, still more, *ability to appreciate such proof*, are a totally different thing. Men do not as yet seem to have been able to devise a system of proving whether certain things are true or are not true, a system as reliable, shall we say, as is a pair of scales for ascertaining weights of objects.

And yet, amongst all the phenomena of life are many things, of supreme importance, upon which man *must* form an opinion, if he is to live as a rational being, and direct his life truly. He cannot afford to wait until clear, unequivocal, proof is forthcoming. To do so is to incur the risk of rejecting, merely on account of insufficient proof, information which, if true, may be of immeasurable importance and value to him.

Only one attitude seems reasonable and just. We must, as just said, make up our minds one way or the other, even when proof is *not* forthcoming. When intellectual proof happens to be deficient, it is often as ([Page 3330](#)) stupid to disbelieve, as to believe. There is a superstition of disbelief, as there is a

superstition of belief : and it is doubtful from which form of superstition the human race at the present time suffers most.

Proof today, perhaps always, is an individual matter for each man. There is a theory, and it is a theory by no means unsupported by evidence and by experience, that it is possible for a man to so train himself that, when a true fact is presented to him for the first time, something within him leaps to greet it, and he knows it is true. We may call this intuition, or anything else we choose : it has many names : but it is a phenomenon open to any one to observe, and to test for himself as a true phenomenon.

As Annie Besant has said: "As the higher sense in you which knows truth at sight gradually unfolds, you will be able to take in more and more of the truth. Then there grow up in you a deep inner conviction, and when a truth is presented to you, you will know it is true. This sense corresponds to eyesight on the physical plane. It is the faculty of buddhi, pure reason". [*Talks on the Path of Occultism*, p.210].

So, the wise man observes instances of this phenomenon in himself, and in others, and, recognising its tremendous and far-reaching importance, deliberately sets to work to train and perfect the faculty in himself. Obviously it can become of incalculable value to him, more particularly in his psychological and spiritual life.

Strange and extraordinary, perhaps even impossible, as many of the statements made in these four books may seem, to some readers, it would surely be a wiser policy [seeing that they are all made by sincere and honest investigators,] *not to* reject them, merely because they cannot be proved, but if they do not awaken a responsive thrill that feels them to be true, to set them aside for the time being, to "file" them for "future reference". Whereas, if they do awaken that responsive thrill, which, in those who have developed the faculty referred to above, is often quite unmistakable, ([Page 331](#)) they may be accepted, tentatively at least for the time, as probably true.

More and more students of occultism are finding that, as time goes on and they develop their own inner powers, they are able to verify for themselves many statements which, years or months previously, they had accepted in this manner, on the authority of others.

So much for the abstruse and complicated question of proof of the teachings of the Ancient Wisdom, in its guise of modern Theosophy.

Turning to the ethical aspect of what has been said in these four books, the reader will no doubt have observed that moral and ethical considerations, arising from a study of the occult constitution of man, have been touched upon only occasionally, and quite secondarily. This has been done deliberately, the view having been taken that facts speak for themselves, and point out their own moral. If man is constituted as described, if he has etheric, astral, mental and causal bodies of the nature stated, surely there can be no two opinions as to the way in

which he ought, even in his own interest, to live and conduct his relations with other men, and with the world in general. Whether he does so or not is, of course, his own affair entirely.

And now a few words directed more specifically to occult students, and to the general method of approach to the subjects dealt with in these four volumes.

The Ancient Wisdom can no doubt be presented in many ways, ways utterly diverse from one another. A mechanic would present them in one fashion: an artist in quite another way : a scientist would describe them in a manner very different from that which a poet or a mystic would adopt. According to the types or temperaments of men, and their qualifications and knowledge, so will be their presentations of the eternal verities.

Hence, there may be danger for one in the method of presentation of another. To be quite specific, the presentation adopted in these books many would say is mechanical, even materialistic. So be it: but, in the nature of things, ([Page 332](#)) there must be a mechanical and a material aspect of every phenomenon, no matter how spiritual, for there can be no spirit without matter. But the true occult student will guard against shutting himself up in any rigid mechanical system. Whilst his "tidy" mind may delight in categories, and precise tabulations of facts, yet he must not let these become a prison-house, with barred windows, limiting and restricting his views to certain narrow directions only.

Dissection, analysis, categorisation are necessary for the intellect : but they are, after all, but scaffolding by means of which the structure, complete in all its parts is raised. Moreover, as H.G.Wells has admirably stated : "these thing—number, definition, class and abstract form—I hold, are merely unavoidable, conditions of mental activity; regrettable conditions rather than essential facts. The forceps of our minds are clumsy forceps, and crush the truth a little in taking hold of it".  
[First and Last Things, book I, "Metaphysics,-page 19].

The structure of knowledge is one whole, made up, it is true, of its manifold parts, yet greater than the arithmetical sum of all its parts, and, in its totality fulfilling a function which none of its parts, nor any group of its parts, can perform.

So with man: we may, for purposes of study and understanding, divide him into Monad, Ego and Personality, his bodies into physical, etheric, astral, mental, and causal: yet the man himself *is no one of these things , nor even all of them together*. These are all but means through which he expresses portions, aspects, or functions of himself : but he himself "remains", an entity, a mystery, if the truth be told, different from, and greater than, all of these categories into which we divide him.

C.W. Leadbeater [in *The Science of the Sacraments*, p. 547] gives an analogy which may be useful here. If an electric current be made to flow round a bar of soft iron, through a coil of German-silver wire, and within a tube filled with mercury vapour, it will give rise respectively ([Page 333](#)) to magnetism, heat and

light. The current is the same, but its manifestations vary according to the nature of the matter through which it is acting. So with man : the current of life flowing in him is split up into different varieties of manifestation, according to the bodies through which it expresses itself. We study the bodies in turn, and their methods of functioning : but the man himself, that which results in consciousness of various kinds in the various bodies is the noumenon behind all these external phenomena : and be it noted, just as the true nature of electricity still eludes our scientists, so does man himself, in his true nature, still elude us.

Hence, it is quite conceivable, nay probable, that it would be possible to give a fair and full presentation, shall we say solely from the point of view of consciousness, rather than of form, of the truths of the Ancient Wisdom, without any mention of atma, buddhi, manas, or the hosts of other technical terms with which these pages are so liberally sprinkled. The real student, the genuine lover of truth, will recognise truth, no matter in what guise, or in what "jargon," to use an unpleasant word—it may be expressed, or *veiled*. But let him above all things, be tolerant and kindly: all roads lead to one goal : let each pilgrim find and follow his own path, offering goodwill, friendship and kindness, without stint and without patronage, to pilgrims who prefer other paths.

In view of what was said above, regarding the inherent defects of intellectual processes and categorisation, the student must, *à fortiori*, guard himself against placing too much faith in diagrams, useful as these may be to the labouring mind. Let the student by all means employ them as scaffolding, as ladders up which he climbs, but let him be on his guard lest they become cages which imprison him. Here is a test : if his understanding be genuine, and full, the synthetic conception, which he has generated, will belong to a world far above the world of form or diagram: but the moment he casts his conception into the lower, ([Page 334](#)) categorising mind, it will project itself into countless forms and shapes, varying according to the materials he selects, from his store of knowledge, for the expression of that which is, in its own nature, incapable of being imprisoned in any graph, no matter how ingenious or appropriate. Diagrams, like all forms of categories, are admirable servants, but tyrannical masters.

It is the hope of the compiler that the years of work he has spent on these volumes will help to bring to many of his readers at least as much clarification of ideas, and, above all, enthusiasm and ever-deepening love for the Brahma-Vidya, the noble science, the knowledge of God and of man, as they have brought to the compiler himself. From knowledge comes understanding: from understanding comes that serenity and peace which are so immeasurably greater than all knowledge and all understanding.

"The value of knowledge," wrote Annie Besant, "is tested by its power to purify and ennable the life, and all earnest students desire to apply the theoretical, knowledge acquired in their study of Theosophy to the evolution of their own character and to the helping of their fellowmen. The emotion which impels to righteous living is half wasted if the clear light of the intellect does not illuminate

the path of conduct ; for as the blind man strays from the way unknowing till he falls into a ditch, so does the Ego, blinded by ignorance, turn aside from the road of right living till he falls into the pit of evil action. Truly is Avidya—the privation of knowledge—the first step out of unity into separateness, and only as it lessens does the separateness diminish, until its disappearance restores the Eternal Peace."