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THE PLAY OF CONSCIOUSNESS  
WITHIN THE WEB



# THE PLAY OF CONSCIOUSNESS

WITHIN THE WEB

By

EDWARD L. GARDNER



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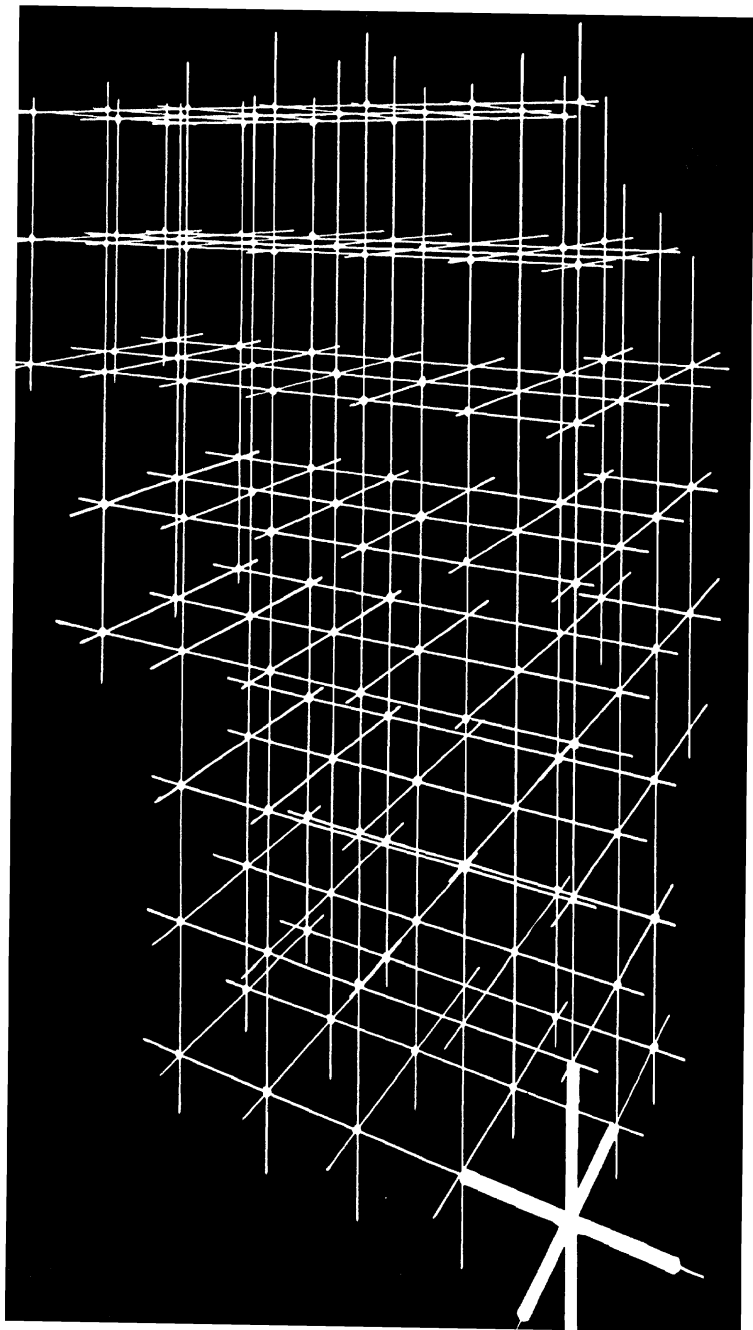
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The illustration on the opposite page is a perspective impression of a fragment of the Web, drawn by Mr. Ian Hammond, to whom I was indebted for the diagrams given in *The Web of the Universe*.

The following extracts from pages 30-36 of that book are brief descriptions of the characteristics of the Web :

The basic pattern is a six-armed cross, infinitely repeated, and appears as a maze of exceedingly fine lines, interlaced in an infinitesimal rectangular texture, ablaze with tiny points of brilliance where the lines cross, filling, enveloping all space and serving as the foundational structure for all material.

The Web is sub-stance; it is not itself that which we know as material but *stands under* material. The Web is the necessary background . . . it corresponds to the canvas of the painter, language for the poet, the orchestra for the musician, etc.

The lines . . . are seemingly rigid, taut-strung, yet exquisitely delicate and fragile. The fragility is an illusion due to the superlative sensitiveness of the glowing lines. . . . The lines are spaced regularly apart though the spacing must be far smaller than even the atomic order of measurement.

The enlarged cross in the illustration symbolises the first re-action within the Web to the impact of a focussed point of life.





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## I

### INTRODUCTION

*The Secret Doctrine*, by H. P. Blavatsky, was published in 1889, just fifty years ago. The work consists mostly of commentaries on an archaic manuscript, described as containing certain glyphs and figures, and an ancient text called *The Stanzas of Dzyan*. Mme Blavatsky, as translator of the Stanzas, states that these are rendered "for the first time into a European language".

The Proem introducing the book concludes with the following:

"The reader . . . is once more invited to regard all that follows as a fairy tale, if he likes; at best as one of the yet unproven speculations of dreamers; and, at the worst, as an additional hypothesis to the many scientific hypotheses past, present and future, some exploded, others still lingering. It is not in any sense less scientific than are many of the so-called scientific theories; and it is in every case more philosophical and probable."

The archaic manuscript has indeed proved to be far more philosophical and probable than many of the religious and scientific theories widely extant in the last part of the nineteenth century. Two volumes of *The Secret Doctrine* entitled *Cosmogogenesis* and *Anthropogenesis* tell the story of the creation of stellar universes with their attendant chains of planets, of the origins of life on our earth, of the beginnings of the kingdoms of nature and their development, and also of the great and important contribution

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humanity has to make to the vast creative effort now in process of manifestation.

The book is still much more than up-to-date, for though scientific research of the last fifty years has been amazingly fruitful it has by no means overtaken the survey given in *The Secret Doctrine*. In certain directions, particularly in the sciences of biology, physics, and astronomy, recent investigation has produced many corroborations of arresting significance. Reprints of the book have been periodically called for and a new, well-documented edition has recently appeared.\*

. . . . .

The essays that follow owe much of their content to *The Secret Doctrine*, though neither authority nor responsibility, other than the writer's, can be claimed for the presentation. One of the Stanzas of Dzyan has the phrase "Father-Mother spin a Web . . . this Web is the Universe"; and the manner of the spinning of this web and the flow of life thus enabled to function in forms are the themes of the archaic poem. In a world of upheaval and readjustment such as we are now witnessing, the play of the potent life-forces which are now in action is in real need of understanding. The larger issues of life and of life's purpose are apt to recede from view at such times. Hence to invite attention to the occult teaching concerning the existence of an Inner Government and the majestic plans of its mighty Hierarchy would seem to be timely and appropriate. Moreover the mechanism of consciousness at this stage of human evolution is such that much of this teaching may be examined and verified by the student who is willing to qualify for the task.

\* *The Secret Doctrine*, H. P. Blavatsky, 6 vols., Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras, India.

## II

### GOD AND MAN

THE relationship of God to man, of the Creator to humanity, has been the theme of philosophic and religious speculation and assertion for centuries. Ranging from the theory of an aloof, omnipotent deity to that of a pure pantheism, from extreme transcendence to extreme immanence, every note seems to have been struck. A very wide choice is offered to the student and aspirant, and, if authority be esteemed, many a claim will be found well weighted with a "Thus saith the Lord."

One wonders sometimes, when reading, for example, the fine literature collected in the biblical Old Testament, whether many ever stop to inquire what such words as these mean :

"This is what the Lord hath said . . ." *Exod. xvi. 23.*

"Thus saith the Lord of hosts . . ." *2 Samuel vii. 8.*

"Behold, I am against thee, said the Lord . . ." *Nahum ii. 13.*

Similarly also in other scriptures, as in the profound discourses of the Bhagavad Gītā, which begin: "The Blessed Lord said . . ." None of these, of course, mean more than that the speaker or writer used an expression which carried weight, possibly quite reasonably and in good faith, to emphasise the instruction. "Thus saith the Lord" was, and is still, the colloquial idiom of the prophet. This is not a denial of the fact of inspiration or of what may be called true spiritual guidance; it is merely the recognition that all experiences of that order are necessarily translated and published by a fallible human mind and voice. Time and religious associations have unfortunately given to many of these scriptural phrases a certain spurious sanctity. These and all similar utterances

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of " authority " must be accorded their limited and transitory worth if we are to be free and balanced in our judgment of them.

We are quite accustomed to recast our ordinary ideas radically as knowledge increases and understanding is widened, and a more liberal interpretation of the relation between deity and humanity has supplanted the servile abjection of earlier times. Indeed a view advanced by a well-known philosopher in the last century that " the universe is as necessary to God as God is to the universe " sums up fairly well the philosophic thought of to-day.

It is part of the teaching given in *The Secret Doctrine* that those characteristics which are usually attributed to deity alone, which we call omnipresence, omniscience, and omnipotence, can be realised and exercised in their fullness within the limits of our planetary scheme only as man achieves them by releasing them within himself. At present they are only half true; for not until human consciousness responds easily to the creative archetypes in the Great Architect's office—an " office " which comprises the whole of the inner plane of causation—can His consciousness be extended to embrace the whole of Man's personal field. God and man achieve the fullness of the divine experience together.

The archetypal (causal) plane of the Universe has a close correspondence in ordinary professional architectural work of to-day. The architect's mentally-conceived design, plotted out and drawn by him on paper, must be lifted, worked over and materialised in a physical structure in order to complete the building. For all the later practical work a host of craftsmen under skilled superintendence is indispensable. The architect supplies the transcendent picture, creates it on the mental plane, and symbolises it in the drawing of plans and elevation, the result of mental plane activity projected on to paper; it is the builders and craftsmen who must then provide the immanent labour involved in manifesting the design. All the workers are needed, from the

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highest to the lowest, from architect to labourer all are necessary, they are an interdependent group though some, for the time being, are working outside the office.

That man is a necessary agent in assisting the teeming life of nature to develop the forms of the younger kingdoms is obvious from experience in agriculture and horticulture and in the breeding of animals. However commercial and personal the incentive may be at present, the facts are evident. Man, indeed, seems to be in charge of all future developments in nature's form-world and responsible for the consequent further release and advance of life throughout her kingdoms. Man has now entered upon the evolutionary arc of manifestation, and is engaged upon the return journey to the heights whence all life emerged, and upon that return journey the conscious co-operation of mankind with the evolutionary purpose is imperative, for it is part of his own evolutionary lesson as well as essential to the scheme as a whole. On this path, which is one of release from the ties of form, the creative hierarchies\* who have directed successfully the earlier involutionary arc need and demand the conscious assistance of man. In other words, God and Man need to work side by side throughout the upward arc to achieve the consummation of our vast scheme.

Occult teaching may very well be cited here for it stresses this intimate relationship between God and Man, and the teaching is far more reasonable and satisfying than the common theory of a vast hiatus between man and an omnipotent deity. The view it presents is that the field of our solar system is the scene of a creative effort deliberately organised by a central consciousness within a still vaster hierarchical system of a particular constellation. Within the solar field are groups of planets, physical-astral-mental, each with a function and a purpose as a specialised part of the creative whole.

\* A brief description of these and their work was given as an appendix in *The Web of the Universe*, Theosophical Publishing House, London.

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A member of one of these groups is our earth. It is concerned with a singular and very important task, for it constitutes the densest planet of its group and appears to be consequently the most difficult and resistant of all to handle and control.

The trinary group of constellation, solar system, and planets is described as being under the creative direction of members of a mighty hierarchy. Each ruling Lord is responsible for the special work attending his position and each has the assistance of a minor hierarchy of officials. Thus our earth is governed by an inner directive hierarchy of Beings and yet remains a unit within a group, or chain, of planets, this chain of planets itself being a larger unit within the governing system of our Sun. For this system in which our earth is involved, the One Life that manifests through all, and is shared by all, is solar in origin.

Within and of that life are the kingdoms of nature on our earth as we know them to-day, from elemental to human, each and all in the immediate care and responsible charge of the Lord of our World and his Ministers. An Artist's creation is in process, not a mechanical unfoldment following a commanding fiat, but a superb work of cosmic art involving profound and continuing research, ceaseless experiment, aeons of time.

In the light of so comprehensive a vision the solution of many philosophic riddles is more readily found, such as those pertaining to good and evil, happiness and suffering, charity and sin, riches and poverty, goodwill and brutal warfare—all existing side by side in our clouded world and desperately hard to reconcile with a belief in the omnipotence *and* the beneficence of God.

The occult teaching is that the Lord of the World and his Ministers, though powerful and wise far beyond an understanding based on our present knowledge, are not literally omnipotent. The creation and successful manifestation of this world and its consciousness, to fill a rôle in the cast of

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the Solar drama, is the work of a Creative Artist on the planetary scale; and whether the work of art undertaken proves to be a rich and glowing triumph or otherwise, and when this consummation shall be reached, are not entirely dependent upon the will or effort of the Planetary Artist. He can direct the automatic out-thrust of the awakening life on the involutory half of the cycle, but for the conscious return of its ripened experience to the central store, man is the essential agent. Man on the return journey is adult and must accept the task of co-creator during the rest of the cycle.

Our humanity is now of age, and the life of the younger kingdoms on our planet—mineral, plant, and animal—is now man's responsibility, and is, comprehensively, under his direction and control. This is not quite to say that in his own consciousness the Lord of the World stands, so to speak, aloof and beyond the consciousness of the mineral, plant, and animal, but that he knows them as widely flowing streams of life, knows them on an inner, higher scale as gradually becoming particularised into group-soul units, all on the outward journey towards individualisation. In the separate and particular bodies of form adopted in the physical world, the younger kingdoms can be seen and examined by him through the "microscope" of a human mind, a technique easy to employ and probably often used. Similarly, at the human level, if man wishes to see and examine that which is beyond his sense-range, as, for instance, an object too small for physical vision, he has to enlist the services of the fourth kingdom from his level, the mineral, and feel his way down to the minute through a magnifying glass.

Omnipresence, omniscience, and omnipotence are relative terms to whatever level of consciousness they be applied and in any case are applicable only within the limits of a scheme of manifestation. Even within those limits they are but gradually attained by consciousness as man, the bridge-maker, advances to his goal.

The terms transcendence and immanence apply to levels

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of consciousness within the One Life of a scheme, and, though opposites, they are mutually dependent. The task of the human bridge-makers is successfully to unite them.

It will be clear at once that if these occult relationships are accepted, then the vast problems, so often contemplated and evaded, which associate a beneficent and omnipotent deity with the pain and distress, the strife and conflicts, in our world of to-day, disappear. The Originator of our scheme of developing life never has chosen to be an omnipotent overlord, nor, almost obviously, could he so choose, if it be admitted, with all its implications, that life is one.

Much of this becomes clearer on studying man's corresponding efforts at creation. We are surrounded by thought that has been laboriously materialised in much the same manner and pattern as that attributed above to God. Everything about us, from our clothes to our houses, from cities to arterial roads, from the humblest furnishings to the loftiest works of art, all inventions, implements, machines, vehicles of transport by land, sea, and air, everything thought out and constructed by man on earth—all are humanly-created projections of human thinking. In his field of the mental, emotional, and physical planes, with himself as lord, man is practically supreme, though certainly not omnipotent. Yet to-day, it is the personal half only of man's nature that would seem to have been adequately awakened and developed. If that is to be complemented and perfected by the arousal of still latent powers it is imperative that attention be now directed to the development of the higher, spiritual principles.

In the past the great racial leaders sent out from time to time by the Inner Government of our world have assisted by example and precept in the awakening and nourishing of the spiritual nature of man, as may be inferred from the traditional teaching and mystery lore attending such names as Vyasa, Orpheus, Thoth, Zoroaster, Jesus. The religions of the world, warped and distorted now though they be, are testimony to the high status of their founders, but they have



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only kept the flame alight in a darkened house. The time has come for the occupants of the house to throw open the windows to the sun itself.

The significant feature in all this, and that which is of enthralling interest to ourselves, is the emerging vision of the true relationship of man to the mighty Lord of the World and his Government. There are powers latent within human consciousness which, when unfolded, will enable each one of us to respond directly to his consciousness and to appreciate the full measure of what is meant by the terms God and Man.

### III

#### FLOW AND EBB

THE nature of the human constitution has been the subject of keen research by many during the last few decades. Although the psychological schools of the western world do not by any means agree on the inferences and conclusions arising from their research it is accepted by all that man's nature is composite.

The eastern student makes a broad but definite division of man's consciousness into three aspects, two of which, a higher and a lower, correspond respectively to the human and animal characteristics in the human race. Beyond these, the third, the subtlest, is an out-thrust of the conscious, creative aspect of the One Life, the SELF, the Eternal Spark, in Christian terminology the spirit, which uses human experience as a means of Self-expression. The three-fold nature of man is not only asserted, it is widely accepted in the East as in Christianity, and certainly the distinction between the inner nature, the higher self, and the personality, or mask, the lower self, is one that tends to grow in strength during a sincere self-analysis, the distinction, indeed, becoming convincing.

The western student of psychology is more familiar with a theory of man's emergence from primitive conditions and the gradual development of his capacities. But too much attention has been paid to the existence of atavistic tendencies and too little to the still earlier descent from the heights of that larger consciousness from which man's higher self is never wholly separated. Consequently there is a need for emphasising the fact that the highest possibilities of human development, never having been lost, are inherent in every

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human being, though in most these higher powers are latent, incipient, still asleep.

Eastern philosophy sees man as the link between the One Self, God, and the lesser self, represented by the kingdoms known as the animal, plant, and mineral. In so far as man shares the animal body with these less conscious forms he is of their nature; and his lesser self, the lower man, partakes of their limitations. But because he has also within himself a virile spark of the Divine Fire—indeed it is that which makes him human—he partakes also of the nature of the high consciousness whence he came, and will in time learn to exercise the great powers of insight, understanding, and creative skill that are always inherent, though at present latent, in his human constitution.

A familiar tenet of occult science is that every cycle of manifestation exhibits a flow-and-ebb movement. Whether the cycle relates to a solar scheme, a chain of planets, a world period, or, on the life-side, to the awakening and development of consciousness, the first half of the cycle is a movement outwards, a descent, and the second half is a return, an ascent. Like the circling movement of a clock-hand, the course taken is at first steadily away from the starting mark till half-way through the hour, and then comes the return. In other words, life travels an involutory and an evolutionary course, a descent into the limitations of forms and an ascent from them by eventual mastery.

Outbreathing and inbreathing, descent and ascent, forth-going and homecoming, downward arc and upward arc—these are all metaphorical synonyms denoting first the involution of life in form and then life's evolution as forms are mastered. On the latter, the ascending course, humanity has now entered.

There are two features in this flow-and-ebb sequence which are especially significant in relation to the development of human consciousness. They are that whereas during the outward course humanity is assisted, guided and taught, by

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sister streams of evolution and by elders,\* during the return journey the same humanity has to learn to stand on its own feet, must fend for itself, claim and seize every opportunity for the expansion of consciousness, “take heaven by storm”, and achieve the consummation of the vast flow-and-ebb cycle by virtue of its own released creative skill.

During the flow outwards of the tide of life—that is, during the descent into form—privation and inhibitions are imposed on life, by the ever increasing complexity of the enshrouding forms. They are the order of the day. If the undifferentiated One Life is ever to become self-conscious, that is aware of Itself, then much of its omnipotence must be curtailed, most of its omniscience must be inhibited. The limitations imposed by forms ensure this: hence privation appears to be a first necessity.

To the value of privation as a means of self-knowledge we can probably all testify. For example, health is little appreciated until we suffer its loss; friends are never so valued as when we are isolated; to lose possessions is more truly to assess their worth; the realisation of one's ignorance is the surest incentive to the pursuit of knowledge. Under the subjection of form life becomes conscious; within the privations they impose lies the secret of self-discovery. All this is of the involutory arc, the outward journey, misinterpreted frequently in religious dogma as “the fall of man”. On the return journey there is a reversal of the method, and as mastery is attained in the use of forms human consciousness is liberated by withdrawal from them. First a descent of life into forms, then the ascent of life from forms' limitation.

Familiar examples of such flow-and-ebb movements are on every hand, from the sweeping tides of the sea to the inhalation and exhalation of the breath. Trace this principle of manifestation to its origin, pursue it, in experience, in oneself,

\* The Angelic hosts and Hierarchies.

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and one meets with a startling phenomenon. This is nothing less than that one's consciousness, as also the very existence of material things—literally their existence, their forth-standing—is due to an alternating current of motion in the basic three-dimensional Web through which life plays.

As a ready illustration of this alternation consider the projection of a cinema film-reel. During one brief second of time about twenty-five photographs are shown on the screen; so rapidly indeed do they follow each other that an excellent illusion of movement is imposed on the eye. Yet the pictures are separate and clearly distinct on the reel, and each stands quite stationary in the light of the projector for about a fiftieth of a second. In between every two pictures is a short break of completely shuttered darkness, for no light must pass during the time one picture is moving over to give place to the next. The lag of vision in the eye is amply sufficient to bridge the gaps of darkness, and hence there is an appearance of unbroken movement on the screen. Although the light and dark periods follow successively it is impossible to detect the temporary absence of light, because the mechanism of the eye itself assists and condones the illusion. The picture is apparently of real and continuous action.

Similarly, the throbbing pulse of the One Life on the screen of the Web excites reactions which seem to be due to the existence and reality of permanent forms. But all formal structures, objective and substantial though they seem, are built in truth of a succession of impacts on the Web; and our minds, the screen-mirrors in which we see all objects, bridge the gaps intermittent between the impacts, so that each object seems to be a stable continuum. This flow-and-ebb movement, this impact and withdrawal, this presence and absence, is so rapid and intense, and so minute, that its frequency of alternation normally escapes us. Like the cinema picture, the objective world around us seems to be continuous and unbroken, though many times in a second every objective thing ceases to be and is again reborn! "The

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Vibration sweeps along, touching with its swift wing the whole Universe." (*Stanzas of Dzyan, III.*)\*

Consciousness itself is built on this vibratory foundation—a sweeping flow-and-ebb of incredible speed—and, as contact is made with the objective worlds around and about us, all similarly sustained, personal sense-impacts are experienced. At a deeper, or higher, level, in moments of withdrawal and profound silence, the throbbing beat of that “swift wing” may be distantly heard. In this way the student may experience in himself, not only the existence of the two parts of his nature—the higher and lower self—but the alternating throb of consciousness that is the play of that light which *is himself*.

\* *The Secret Doctrine*, 3rd Edition, Vol. I, page 57 ; Adyar Edition, Vol. I, page 93.

## IV

### LIFE AND LIGHT

IN *The Web of the Universe*, published in 1936, a description was given of that deeply occult, web-like fabric which carries within itself all the material forms of our world, bears and supports them within itself as unaffectedly as light is borne by a mirror.

Light!—all would appear to be light, for life and light are almost synonymous, indeed they appear to be identical from every angle of approach we can assume. If we trace and measure the motive force through a nerve, whether of an animal body or the corresponding structure of a plant, an electric current reveals itself—light. Pursue some element of the mineral kingdom through its material stages to a discovery of its nature, and the final evidence of its very existence in the physical world is of a force registering itself as akin to light. Look further, to the world wherein function the emotions, to the interwoven plane called the astral, and we find that all feeling is expressed consistently in colour differences—light.

The essence of fire is said to be “the Life and Light of the Universe”,\* and St. John has it similarly: “In him was life; and the life was the light of men.”† We may indeed say that life *is* light concentrated, focussed. In the Commentary on the IVth. Stanza of Dzyan, Mme Blavatsky quotes the following: “Thus the Sons of Light clothed themselves in the fabric of Darkness.”‡ The fabric of darkness is the Web of the Universe, which, itself not seen, in darkness, nevertheless provides a home for our worlds of

\* *The Secret Doctrine*, 3rd Edition, I. 35 ; Adyar Edition, I. 73.

† *St. John* i. 4.

‡ *The Secret Doctrine*, 3rd Edition, I. 129 ; Adyar Edition, I. 164.

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material—worlds that reflect “the Self-Existent like a Mirror” (*Stanza* iv. 12). The play of life thus reflected in material form, when viewed from this higher angle, presents an aspect that is a fascinating study. And man, by virtue of that spiritual principle the higher mind, which makes him man, can adopt that higher angle, that bird’s-eye view, and see the worlds of form objectively in which his bodies so freely live and move.

Although accepted by many as philosophically sound, the conception of the One Life as functioning through many forms and different kingdoms is difficult to visualise. Modern engineering, however, provides many examples of a single, consistent force exhibiting very different properties, the difference depending on the mechanism through which the force plays. Electricity, for instance, is generated at a power station and conveyed under control to various machines. In the trolley-bus and train the current moves heavy vehicles at speed; in the cooking-stove it functions as heat; through the telephone it affects the ears as sound; on the television screen it produces moving pictures; in our homes and streets it becomes light at will. In every instance the electrical force is the same in essence; its expression, its manifestation, depends on the mechanism through which it passes. Similarly it may be taken that there is but one life playing through every living form, from the noblest among humanity to the humblest plant or mineral. Though the life is the same in essence, the mechanism of form may impose such heavy limitations on the free expression of the life and imprison it so closely that a minute trace only is released, as in a stone. On the other hand, the form may have been so mastered that the life can express itself without impediment, in its divine amplitude, as in the saint.

Forms supply the necessary resistance, the limitations, the impediments, and are invaluable as such for the achievement of conscious life and of self-consciousness: As a simple illustration and analogy of the value of limitation consider the



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projection of a lantern-slide on to a screen. The beam of light from the lantern throws a clear white disc, which is unimpeded before the slide is inserted. The slide carries, say, the photograph of a landscape and when placed in the lantern, it obstructs, and consequently much reduces, the light. But, in clear definition, a picture appears upon the screen. A moment's analysis proves that the formal picture projected is there simply because part of the light has been shut off, has been resisted successfully. That which has absorbed the light is material, and has been well called the shadow of spirit. The light represents the One Life; the slide represents the forms of the kingdoms of nature, each in a greater or lesser measure obstructing the play of the life.

The value of the involutory arc, during which life suffers a gradual submergence in material forms, consists in the fact that in the process the hitherto diffused life is enabled slowly to become vividly aware of living and hence at length achieves self-consciousness. The principle involved in this process is concisely defined in Patanjali's *Aphorisms*: "The self-identification of seer and phenomena inheres in the nature of things. Although it is the cause of obstacles yet it is necessary in order to kindle the spark of self-consciousness into full activity." The forms restrict life so efficiently that the intensity of conscious experience rises gradually through sensation to perception and memory, and, as the forms become more responsive, through intellect to knowledge and understanding. Then as veils of form are pierced in the school of later incarnations human consciousness may aspire to the high standard of true wisdom, even to a Master's degree.

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IN the human kingdom the upward evolutionary arc has now begun and a wealth of speculative philosophy and scientific research is being expended in seeking the origin and meaning of life. The most promising field is that provided by man himself, especially as it appears that science is nearing the limits of external physical nature in its explorations. Indeed human consciousness is becoming increasingly aware of an inner source of knowledge, of the possibility of touching and arousing a faculty of understanding at apparently the opposite pole from that of the ordinary objective world. This experience of a source of inner teaching has now a familiar name and place in language and thought—the intuition—and it will be appropriate at this point to submit an explanation of its function, for at present it is to many the evidence of the spiritual source of life. Its manifestation depends entirely on the quality of the form through which it functions.

Since the inner teaching, or intuition, is frequently referred to in speech and literature to-day an understanding of what is really meant or implied by the term is worth pursuing but first we need to distinguish it clearly from instinct, a much humbler quality, although in many respects similar in character. The word instinct is applied, in general, to the animal kingdom and really means an in-born, quite unconscious, subjective prompting to physical action; the word intuition, on the other hand, should be reserved for mankind, intuition being of a mental or emotional order and working at a conscious level. Instinct prompts to an immediate and correct action in a physical need, the intuition to a correct understanding of a mental

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problem or to a new conception with or without a physical consequence.

A definition of instinct runs—a natural impulse in animals to do what is necessary for existence independently of instruction and experience; an unreasoned prompting.

The definition might go further, for the organism of every living physical body, in its marvellous internal economy, covering such intricate details as the repair of tissue and the digestion of food, is directed by instinctive reactions. One may well ask—“Whence comes this natural impulse, this unreasoned prompting?”

The occult teaching is that the life of the body and its organs is independent of the life of the human being who is using the body as a whole, though obviously closely related. The animated craftsmanship ascribed to instinct is carried on by the life of the body itself. This active searching life is that of an elemental kingdom of nature which is itself only at the threshold of consciousness. In its work this elemental life is responding to an intelligence far loftier than its own, for the personal elemental life which floods a human body, guarding and tending it, is really acting under the direction of a superior nature spirit, whose function is to control groups of subordinate elementals. It is under the same type of invisible direction that an entirely untutored bird builds its nest. The whole subject of instinct and adaptation in plant and animal forms is interwoven with the play of unseen elemental forces in nature, a subject of fascinating interest. The bodily elemental of the human form in its capacity for automatic adaptation follows the same laws as underlie instinctive action in the younger kingdoms.

The subtle relationship between the directive intelligence and the elemental agents working in a human body may well be illustrated by the relationship between the brain and hand, say the brain of a pianist and his fingers. The fingers respond to an interior stimulus and they in themselves can be very little conscious of what they are doing and, certainly, if the

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pianist's fingers only were seen and nothing else, the music would seem to be instinctively produced. In the automatic workings of the body similarly we see the "fingers" and nothing else. The etheric connection between the higher intelligence and the elemental life is of a very subtle quality and as invisible as the connecting links between a radio station and a receiver. But it is there and in abounding efficiency and the secret behind the efficiency is that within the bodily elemental, as in the bird, there is no *mind*, no discriminating and selective mind, to come between the intelligent controller and the elemental life of the body—just as there is no mind between the pianist's brain and his hand. The mind is above the brain.

When the mind begins to become an active principle, as it does in the domestic animal and throughout the human kingdom, then hesitation, indecision, mistake, fear, memory and expectation are born, all of which and many more accompany the birth of active mentality. The mind sifts and selects and very quickly tends to claim a large part of its owner's attention. The promptings of instinct, hitherto the infallible guiding hand, become blurred, and obscured and veiled as the mind becomes the dominant principle in man's service. The elemental of the body continues to do its work but its activities have dropped below the level of conscious perception. Nearly all that is left at the conscious level is the voice that is termed conscience. This conscience is an interesting phenomenon. The sum total of the elemental life's experience on its own, its mass-memory, is represented in this so-called interior voice. It can however intimate only what not to do; conscience in this sense of the word can never advise positively on a course of action. In a negative way, as a check and a warning, the elemental can press its attention usefully on its personal lord, the human being, within whose orbit it lives. This conscience serves mankind well, if it be listened to, till the intuition is awakened and becomes the positive influence in life; then conscience is thrown very

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much into the background and its conventional advice may often be challenged.

In considering the awakening in man of the faculty called intuition, it is evident that knowledge or insight of a high order occasionally has an avenue of approach from some inner realm to the field of human consciousness, and this avenue evidently connects with the mind, such information reaching the mind from the inner source instead of from the familiar field of outer stimulation.

The relation of sense organs to the principles of man is given in the ancient philosophy of the East and, together with the law of correspondences enunciated in that teaching, will help us here. In these correspondences the sense of touch is said to be related to the wisdom, the intuitional principle, and sight is said to correspond to mentality. Taste and smell are also given as connected with the emotional and physical natures respectively. The implication is that in an intimate and vital way, and in the precise and concrete form possible only in our clean-cut physical material, the senses and sense-organs represent in the physical body certain of the less-defined and subtler properties of our human constitution.

To understand further the implications of these correspondences the division of the mind into its higher and lower functions must be considered. The customary division of the mind into higher and lower activity is appropriately and very strikingly reproduced in the anatomy of the eye, the leading features in man's organ of vision being the lens and the retina. The terms higher and lower in this connection, too, are apt, for the lens fulfils the first, the higher, function of collecting and focussing rays of light, and the retina, as the secondary feature, provides the screen on which the focussed light may fall and be registered.

The light thus temporarily focussed on the retina is conveyed by the optic nerve to the brain and thence to the receptive mind, there to be instantaneously extended into the three-dimensional view with which all are familiar. (A

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long process lies behind this instantaneous mental picture, for it is built up of myriads of contacts in the lower kingdoms and in earlier lives. Its present amazing speed and accuracy are good testimony to the skill of the body-building craftsmen.)

By the help of a study of the eye as a concrete example of the workings of the mental principle an illuminating view of the function and mechanism of the divisions of the human mind can be secured. As the lens of the eye collects and concentrates rays of light, so does the higher mind collect and concentrate rays of that still subtler plane of light called the buddhic, the plane of wisdom. The wisdom light thus focussed by the higher mind is registered on the retinal screen of the lower mind and may then be perceived by human consciousness: for it is the lower mental fabric alone, of all material structures, that can actually arrest that inner light and hold it clearly and long enough to be read.

From the outer physical world the lower mind has been trained to and does receive and register impressions conveyed to it by the sense-organs. Yet it can also receive and register impressions from this inner and higher source.

Again, the study of the mechanism of the eye illustrates how this higher or inner vision may be acquired. Just as the eye is built and developed as a physical organ to focus the light of the sun, so may the mental mechanism of man be further developed in order consciously to focus a still higher octave of the solar light. This octave of light, higher than that used by the eye, is indeed a further solar emanation and is related to an inner level of man's being—a level which, however, may be touched in consciousness only through a clarified mind, symbolised by the transparent lens of the human organ of vision.

In illustration of the relation between this subtler light and the mental lens, our familiar sunlight provides us with a close correspondence. When a convex lens, such as an ordinary burning-glass, is held horizontally in sunlight, the light pass-

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ing through the glass is all brought to a common centre a short distance beyond. The rays thus focussed, if made to fall on to a sheet of paper, appear as a brilliant point of light, intensely hot, surrounded by a dark shadow. This circular shadow is, of course, the area from which the light and heat rays have been deflected, those rays which are now gathered in the centre. Without the lens, the rays are scattered and diffused, comparatively weak; passing through the lens they are brought to a point of fiery brilliance.

The higher mind of man functions similarly as a focussing lens for the higher light. The brilliant centre of light which is man's true centre of consciousness, his individual life, his true self, is none other than the concentration of a few rays of the One Life. This focussed concentration has acquired consciousness, or awareness of living, because of its close association with bodies of form, themselves minor, or lesser, concentrations of the same life. Just as the brightest sunlight is utter darkness until it strikes a reflecting surface, so is the human life-centre unaware, unconscious, innocent, until its light strikes a responsive medium. Such a medium is provided by the material bodies of the lower mind, the emotional nature, and the physical nervous system, a group of inter-related forms which constitute the three-fold abode of a human being.

These, the bodies of man, appropriate and step-down so expertly the brilliant, living light of human consciousness that plays upon and through them that they reduce its intensely concentrated power to the tempo of their own capacity, and for long succeed in deluding the light into identification with themselves. Although seemingly obstructive, by their very limitations they bestow upon this vivid centre of human life the gift of awareness, receiving in their turn an intense stimulation by contact. The friction caused between the life and its form by reason of the limitations imposed, and life's consequent discontent, are the means whereby a measure of self-consciousness is at last

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achieved, and man, as a self-directed being, comes into his own.

This process, the triumph of the downward arc, called by the occultist involution, has taken many cycles and incarnations. On the upward arc of evolution the forms complete their task of compelling concentration and at length the focus of the higher light, the very fountain-head of human consciousness, that has been so long clouded, is to some degree cleared of its veils. When this is done, even though it is in part and temporarily only, the higher light can begin to illumine the mental screen directly and functions as intuition.

Wisdom, the higher octave of the solar Life, however, remains unknown to man until skill in the use of the true eye of the mind is acquired. The physical eye is a gift of the gods, the elemental builders of the body; the mental eye develops and becomes serviceable to human consciousness only when the emotions and the mind are controlled and clear. These latter conditions seem to be a necessary precedent to the direct functioning of the higher mind. They are themselves only ensured by deliberate effort. To secure the right conditions, consciously-directed effort is not aimed at acquiring something new but at deleting from the emotional nature and the mind the effects of any and every source of personal agitation. To focus ordinary rays of light one does not have to make the light; all that is needed is a lens that has been prepared and cleared. Similarly with the mental lens: the effort demanded is the clearing away of obstructions clouding its focussing power.

Success in achieving this clarity may at first be only occasional and temporary but, given the conditions and some skill in clearing the way and in using the inner light, then an illuminating intuition may be received bearing on any subject of interest to the individual concerned. Such is the speed and content of the buddhic light that an intuition may be received as a flash and in a second of time, and yet, as many an artist and student has testified, take long hours to



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unravel, clarify and secure in the limited but precise language of physical brain symbols. When this happens, that which is called the higher mind is performing its true function as a lens, with the lower mind acting as an undistorted screen which arrests the inner light and registers it accurately in memory.

The sun's familiar light and fire are about us and around us and flood our world to the full. They are given freely. The higher octaves of light and fire, of wisdom and illumined thought, are also about us and around us, but their entry into human consciousness is through a door that must be opened by man within himself.

## VI

### FOCUSSING LIFE

THE higher mind has been described as a lens that receives and focusses the diffused light of buddhi, the aspect of the One Life which reveals wisdom. The material bodies of man—the lower mind, the emotional, and the physical—compose the screen on which plays the brilliant ray of life concentrated by this higher mental lens. The action of the higher mind is such that this focussed ray plays through the structure of the bodies with the speed of light itself, the swiftest known speed in the universe, and wherever it touches *there* is the possibility of awareness.

The play of this light-ray of human consciousness is, indeed, so incredibly swift that its very existence remains entirely unknown, unsuspected, undreamed of, for many cycles of incarnations, though it is in itself the very root of being, and its nature the consummation of all instruction in mystery schools.

As concentration of effort was the first step in manifestation within the One Life, so, for the human being, concentration must be the first step to a realisation in experience of this centre, this spark of divine fire, within himself. As the higher mind provides the means for its creation we must endeavour to visualise, if only intellectually, the mental vehicle of consciousness, in order to understand the problem involved concerning its structure and use.

The relationship of a pencil-point to a sheet of paper closely resembles that between the higher and lower minds—but in a sunshine recorder we have a better illustration of the actual mechanism involved. In this device, a roll of sensitised paper is made to move slowly under an exposed glass ball. Sunlight, falling on this ball, is focussed, and the point of light

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imprints a line on the moving paper and thus clearly records the duration of sunshine. The line drawn on the prepared paper, it should be noted, is created by the focussed light, the glass sphere being the immediate creative agent in concentrating to a point the diffused sunlight.

Similarly the higher mind acts as the creative agent or principle in focussing universal spirit (buddhi), and the imprint then made on the prepared lower mind produces the friction that gives birth to human consciousness.

For some understanding of the shape and composition of the higher mental lens there is fortunately at hand an analogy, probably also a correspondence, on any road-side hedge on a cool autumn morning. Spiders old and young have woven innumerable webs on the bushes and every web glistens with myriads of beads of vapour. Moisture in the air has condensed, and every junction point of the threads holds a minute droplet. The slightest agitation of the web causes many of these tiny points of vapour to run together, forming drops, very small spherical drops, of water. Each is a potential lens, small or large, capable of focussing the sunlight; indeed, when the sun shines upon the web a vision of scintillating beauty enchants the eye.

These minute crystal lenses are born of water-vapour condensed on the delicate filaments of the spider's web and are held, comparatively stable, at the junction points; and the extreme simplicity of the assemblage is characteristic also of the simplicity attending all early stages of manifestation, however vast the scale. Without, of course, pressing the illustration too far, the student may conceive from it something of the process whereby, given the basic threads of the Web of the Universe, a "condensation" of the Life of the Creator, the Third Aspect of the Logos, on the junction points of the Web provides the means for concentrating the Light of the Second Aspect and enabling it to function as life-consciousness in forms.

Just as the lens of the eye adjusts itself to the angle of the

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light-rays to be focussed on the retina by a change in its relative position and shape, so does the higher mental lens, *by a change in itself*, direct the focussed light to any part of its personal bodily organism. External stimuli reaching the mental, emotional, or physical bodies from the environment through the avenues of the five senses are amply sufficient to claim the attention of this focussed light, the human consciousness, for many of mankind's earlier lives. Indeed throughout the involutory arc it would probably be correct to say that the stimuli from the environment determine the reaction of consciousness, so closely has the ray been identified with the bodies. The momentum carries on still; and a wide school of thought continues to hold the view that environment determines conduct exclusively.

On the evolutionary arc, at the beginnings of which humanity stands to-day, the possibility exists of dominating the environment; of "ruling one's stars"; of becoming free. So long as the habitual identification of the life-centre with the personal bodies continues, environment wins. Directly the egoic human life, the divine spark, affirms itself as independent—a momentous and vitally important step forward—it can become the dominating partner and begin to carve its own destiny. The process is gradual, and many a lapse may follow the first glimpse of the vision splendid, although, once seen, it can never be forgotten.

The technique of focussing the higher mental light and directing it at will, revolves around the practice of concentration, contemplation, and meditation, all preceded by a willingness to withdraw from the external world and, in silence, to turn the attention *within*.

A puzzling word, this within, yet there is a process of withdrawal to a within that every student can attempt and the following may serve as a useful example. Imagine that one is writing a letter to a friend. Stop the movement of the hand and look at the pen. The pen is an external tool under the control of the hand and is conveying

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by written symbols one's thinking. Now regard the hand objectively: it is obviously external to the source of thought. It is an agent under the control of the brain, so attention can now be withdrawn to the brain. Is the brain external to the thinker? Linked intimately with the physical brain, but apart from it, are the mind and emotions, in a body of material of a subtler texture than the physical. This auric body surrounds, encloses, and interpenetrates the physical. It is within this subtler body that the light of consciousness is playing, for it is in the astro-mental auric body that there is stored the memory of remote and recent events, each with its indelible imprint. From these a selection is being sought and made by the flashing point of light which *is* human awareness. The selected memories are pondered and synthesised and then reduced to language by the mind. They are then passed to the brain to be precipitated by hand and pen into words and sentences on paper. These inner operations are so rapidly carried out that usually the effort is not in the least realised. Yet it is the independent and inner "I" who is engaged running through the memory store, selecting, choosing, adopting, and reducing to language, all that is wanted for the letter. "I" am the active, living point of concentrated light, within.

Can "I" withdraw from my teeming storehouse of memories in which I am so thoroughly at home and be myself at my own level? If so, then am I, indeed, within! This last step is the really difficult one; but if the whole route cannot be completed, it is a useful exercise to travel inwards occasionally as far as one is able. In such an exercise of withdrawal that which is necessary is a repeated assertion "This—and this—and this—is not myself, not my real self." In doing so, genuinely and with conviction, one of the early and important steps in raja yoga practice can be taken.

Once freed from the habitual memory associations of the lower mind, the higher mind can then determine just where attention should be directed, by a technique which, though

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simple, is usually extremely difficult to maintain. This technique consists in modifying the position and shape of the mental lens so that the focussed point of life shall play on and vivify only that area of the personal bodies which it is now the deliberate intention to use. The difficulty lies in overcoming the age-long usage of the mental lens to throw the light on, and hence give attention to, an external stimulus. And such stimuli come in as readily from the mental and emotional worlds as from the physical! Hence the effort of concentration is an endeavour to control and compel the lens to decelerate its movements and the consequent play of the light, and to remain constant for a while in a condition determined by the inner man. The light then falls on one spot, is one-pointed; and a successful experience will mean at least the gaining of a sense of conviction as to the possibility of mental control.

## VII

### THE HUMAN CENTRE OF CONSCIOUSNESS

**A**MONG the occult aphorisms quoted in *The Secret Doctrine* are several relative to the sun's composition.\* The sun we see pouring life and light through our world is there said to be but a reflection of an invisible "Primary". Various terms, all of significance, are used with reference to this concealed sun, or Primary: heart, nucleus, focus, kernel, are some of these. From this Primary, it is stated, proceed all the powers which are to be manifested. Another occult tradition declares that at the centre of the sun is a single atom, that this atom is the original, permanent, and real body of the sun and is itself the portal through which all powers enter the solar system; and that the mighty globe of light, nearly a million miles in diameter, which we call our sun, is merely the fiery aura around this single atom.

Glance now at the other end of the scale of manifested forms, and examine with the help of a microscope a single-celled animalcule, say an amoeba. Streaming out from the nucleus within this tiny plasmic body are waves of vitality which flow freely through the whole cell; and within the nucleus is the minute nucleolus, itself apparently the source of the life-stream. Turn the amoeba over and view it from the other or any side and the appearance is the same: the vital waves well outwards from the centre, like a fountain playing in all directions at once. The animalcule and the sun appear to have this similar characteristic.

In both sun and animalcule the life-forces flow outwards to their limits, and circulate freely, open-heartedly, generously; no special direction is apparent, no particular concentration. These two, the sun and the animalcule, are examples of

\* *The Secret Doctrine*, 3rd Edition, I. 309, 310; Adyar Edition, I. 331.

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extremes, termini, so to speak, in a vast cycle of manifested forms. The one, the solar macrocosm, exhibits a perfect consummation; the other, the unit-cell, a perfection of simplicity, of innocence; neither has any apparent specialisation in form. Exhibiting these characteristics, the extremes meet full circle.

Now consider a human being. Man, being somewhere about midway on the journey through involution and evolution, is consequently at the farthest remove from either extreme and at the very apex of compulsory concentration. The personal bodies he is using, the physical, emotional, and mental, have a very limited outlook; for the windows of the physical sense-organs permit only fragmentary views of the external world, and these are at first only slightly enlarged by the activities of the emotional and mental bodies. Compared with the freedom of the Archetypal Consciousness in which life has its rise, the limitations imposed by the normal physical body make it a veritable prison-house, with just five slits of windows, five senses, through which fragments of the whole can be glimpsed when conditions are favourable. Couple with this the urgency of the prisoner's desire for larger experience, expressed in the insistent clamour of the desire-nature for attention and satisfaction, and we see something of the skill employed to induce, through the restraints of form, some degree of concentration. A narrow outlook and intense desire have proved to be the adequate incentives to the development of one-pointed self-centredness. This is the triumph of the involutory arc, at the end of which humanity achieved self-awareness, self-consciousness.

Now comes the turn of the cycle, and with the dawning of the upward evolutionary arc the flow of life begins to overcome the limitations of form. With the first release from compulsory limitation the oneness of the life-force begins to be realised. It needs only the lifting of the latch, the slightest opening of the prison-door, for the prisoner to sense the clean, pervasive power of the free surrounding air. Thus to-day



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the feeling of brotherliness for others begins to displace the single-pointed self-interestedness of the past. With the recognition of its common life mankind begins to work from its true centre and so to win independence of environment.

For a child the first step is that it shall know, and learn how to use, its body; for humanity the task is to distinguish clearly between the real man and the forms, or bodies, through which he expresses himself. ✓ During waking consciousness one's ordinary experience is that the mental, emotional, and physical bodies are intimately related, are indeed woven together so closely as to make a fairly good workable unity. As a matter of fact in the past man has thoroughly identified himself with each in turn—and very many of our present humanity are still so identified even to-day. Although an analysis readily discloses their three-fold nature, it is very much as an established unity that the three bodies function. Yet the very act of asserting this tacitly postulates an independent knower who, from a conscious centre, can stand apart and examine objectively its agents, the bodies, and learn from them of the worlds in which *they* live. It is they and they alone which enable man to know these worlds, for each acts as a mirror reflecting its own plane of action; they are also the instruments whereby the man can act on their respective planes. The three bodies are his means, indeed his only means, of communication, back and forth, between himself and their planes of existence. But, although his bodies live in three worlds, man is himself not necessarily of nor belonging to those worlds. In this connection, the occult teachings submit the view that man, the microcosm, corresponds, in the basic factors of his composition, to the macrocosmic sun, for within himself is ever found the true source of his life. The truly human centre resembles the nucleolus of the animalcule and the central atom of the sun, and is rightly regarded as a focus of life rather than as identifiable with anything in the nature of form.

In what follows, nothing is claimed beyond the submission

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of a reasonable theory as to what constitutes human consciousness. Proof lies only in experience and is more elusive of demonstration at present than is even the existence of mind apart from brain. Let us for a moment recapitulate the process leading up to what is experienced as human consciousness. The universal life is creative in essence, its nature being a driving urge that seeks and compels an ever-widening field of contacts to minister to its exploring sense of touch. Entering the worlds of form in the Web, its searching drive is such that it pursues and uses every form obtainable in its cyclic, outward journey to the physical world, being gradually slowed-up in the process by reason of the increasing inertia of material. Its progress is pulsing, vibrating, because this light of life is not a continuing stream like a flow of water but is a succession, a very swift succession, of flashing impacts of light, of inestimable speed. In the human kingdom, the higher mind is of the nature of a lens, a pulsing, superbly resilient lens of a pure lucidity, and the light of life streams through it and is focussed to a brilliant centre of intense, creative activity.

Through this higher mental centre in each human being the light plays freely into his triple aura. Just as the lens of the eye adjusts itself automatically to the angle of the light-rays to be focussed on the retina in order that a clear image may be projected, so does the spherical lens of the higher mind focus the buddhic light to a consciousness centre, and the lens adjusts its relative position or its shape to direct the light to meet any part of the bodily mechanism that makes a call. This focussed point of light, Life concentrated to a Centre, is what is known as the Ego, the "interior organ", the individual and indivisible human consciousness itself.

In the simpler forms, where the early lessons of life were learned, sense-contacts were made and stations established for communication between the creative life and the physical plane of form. In the animal these sensory contacts become exceedingly acute. In the human kingdom life is aroused to

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a conscious awareness of being separately alive, experiences this separateness particularly when contacting bodily responses, and so is led to such identification with the responsive agent, the body, that it comes firmly to believe itself to be the body. The growth process may be summed up thus: first, unconscious identification of the life with physical forms; then, by virtue of the clean-cut separation of forms, the achievement of individualisation; then the release of the now established self-consciousness from identification with its familiar bodies.

For many the first step on the upward evolutionary path is the clear knowledge of a higher and a lower, an inner and an outer self, that is to say, a distinction between the divine spark and its abode, and an understanding of their relationship. Such belief, such knowledge, is not new; it has often been voiced. For example, St. Paul, in his letter to the Romans, declares himself well aware of these extremes, and affirms the difficulty of reconciling the "spiritual law" of his mind with the "sinful law" of his flesh.\* But the beginnings of this understanding have been sadly travestied. Such shallow teachings and dogmas as those of original sin and perdition, a personal devil, redemption by a blood-sacrifice, forgiveness of sinful man by an appeased God, the "miserable sinner" slogan and many another, all owe their invention to attempts by mankind to rationalise a growing awareness of the two extremes—God and nature, life and form, the real man and his bodies—extremes that are being slowly bridged to-day by human consciousness.

Only gradually can the focussed centre of truly human life take charge and the human spark of the divine flame become a conscious centre of illumination and the dominating partner of the soul-body mechanism. Under its direction can be begun the fascinating task of training the personal bodies to be living and responsive instruments through which the three worlds of mind, emotion, and physical action may be

\* *Romans*, vii.

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controlled and mastered by the light of the divine life functioning consciously through a human centre.

This theory of the concentration of the divine life, the One Life, at the higher mental level, and the realisation that the true human centre of consciousness is just this—a focus of the divine life, no less and no more—may become an experience in truth for those who will.

## VIII

### WILL AND MIND

THE distinction drawn between will and mind in modern psychology is still very obscure. It is usually held that the mind weighs merits and chooses between different courses of action, and that the will then acts; but there are almost as many classifications of the two terms as there are philosophers to make them. Some treat the two as practically synonymous; others, while assigning to will an independent empire, proceed to qualify it as being a member of the intellectual department! The definitions offered bewilder rather than clarify. "The whole code of Nature's laws may be written on a thumb-nail," wrote Emerson; so perhaps the problem is too simple to be readily solved.

To-day it is freely admitted that education is, as the word itself implies, a drawing out, and not a putting in; that the release in the child of a more or less inhibited natural capacity is truly, as it is literally, education. The assistance given by the trained elder to the younger is that of guidance and direction in the acquiring of skill in the control and discipline of the body and, later, of the emotions and the mind.

The consciousness of a newborn child is naturally clouded and obscured by the immaturity and unresponsiveness of the body in which it finds itself. For months adjustment to the new vehicle and the gaining of some familiarity with it are all that can be attempted; in fact, the first few years are wholly spent in relating consciousness to environment. In this task the Montessori technique, which is concerned first with evoking a clear perception of sensation, is unusually successful. Once an understanding of sensation has been built by this or some other method, there follows the need for establishing a measure of fearless self-confidence in regard to the possession

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of a personality; and, if this be won, with all that it implies of a certain degree of skill in the use of the mind and the emotional nature as well as the physical body, by about the fifteenth year, the normal degree of education for that age will have been reached. In the third period, ranging from adolescence to maturity, the centre of consciousness and its true relationship to its vehicles may be very helpfully enhanced and fostered by the practice of some creative art or craftsmanship, in fact by any activity which is creative rather than repetitive.

The first two periods of life are largely recapitulation of racial training and experience, and throughout almost the entire period from childhood to adolescence reaction to the environment, whether to events or to persons, is spontaneous and largely instinctive. Little in the way of judgment or considered choice is exercised; nor would it be wise to invite too much of this before entering the third period, for in this alone the distinction between the activities of the mind and the promptings of desire becomes possible. Until then the egoic centre of consciousness is engaged in descending into its vehicles and gripping them firmly. This descent of the consciousness into the personal bodies and its identification with them is recapitulated in every fresh incarnation and corresponds to the involutory arc in the larger scheme, wherein life becomes involved in form. Not until the third period is advanced can the true will be said even to be born. Earlier than this, both in racial humanity and in individuals, the will functions as desire in all its forms, and, itself at the root of all creative activity, gives evidence of its presence in personal self-interest, selfishness, acquisitiveness—all of first importance in the work of establishing an ability to respond to the self-conscious "I" in the new vehicles.

At the personal level, where consciousness is so active in early life, the will short-circuits through the emotions, and usefully prompts to self-centredness and self-importance. It is this fact, the failure to make a clear distinction between

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will and desire, which is responsible for the mistaken prominence given to the "power" theory in psycho-therapy, for it is in the desire-nature of the individual that the will cloaks itself. This disguise has led to great confusion. Desire is admittedly the life-force within all purely personal experience, and having been confused with power a theory of power psychology very naturally followed. So long as desire is held to be of the same nature as the will, the concept of a will-to-power as the driving urge of human life will appear to have a real basis. But this is as though someone, having tapped a live electric wire and found that in a resistance coil it produced heat, accepted heat as the one and only manifestation of electricity. Similarly, through the human body the power, or will, current of the One Life plays, but can at first only function through the desire-mechanism of the personality, because this is all that is available. Not until the third period, that of later adolescence to maturity, is the "filament" within a chamber of the brain developed sufficiently to use the human life-current consciously as self-directed light. This is the birth of will.

When will and desire are differentiated, will may then be known as one of the three fundamental human attributes, no less and no more important than the other two, intuitive wisdom and creative activity. It is on the path of return, the evolutionary arc, when self-consciousness has been attained, that the will, focussed in a well-established and active egoic centre, becomes directly initiative in character. Such control and conscious use of the power of the will should come normally at maturity. With self-control gained, the will can justly be exercised in releasing the personality from its too intimate ties with its environment. Many of these ties have served their purpose and may be discarded, others will need a more correct adjustment in the light of the added self-knowledge and understanding created by the adult use of the will. Thus, at this stage, the will must be used to free the mind, the true human and positive principle, from

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entanglements. In other words, the same power which at first was used to stimulate desire, has, now that it begins to function at a higher level, to be used to ensure the release of the wilfully isolated self by stripping it of the outgrown and the superfluous. The human will should act from its own level as a deleter, an inhibitor, a destroyer. This is its true task and function.

Inhibition and construction are the parents of every created thing, from picture frames and pins to chains of globes. Inhibition is the rejection of all and every particular save the one on which the mind is fastened. To the sculptor the statue is within the marble block, and it is his own inhibitive, destructive power which must release it; but this can be successfully accomplished only if the inhibitive power is balanced by the constructive ability of his mind and hands. Similarly, in every work of art and craft: rejection or inhibition must be coupled with acceptance and constructiveness. In such illustrations as this the functions of the will and the mind stand forth clearly. Though the poles apart, the two are complementary.

Man is a mirror of the universe, and expresses himself, of necessity, in accordance with universal laws. Before a child becomes aware or at all conscious of much of his environment, his surroundings and the circumstances of his outer life are already established and, from his limited point of view, are exceedingly complex. The physical body is the first to be organised, and its senses appear to afford the only contact the child has with the world about him, and its muscles the only means whereby he can modify his surroundings. Strictly speaking, that still is and always will be the case at the purely physical level, for all tools and machinery are in a true sense artificial extensions of man's muscular system.

The modifying process which, throughout life, his muscles enable man to accomplish, is one of continual rejection of the not-wanted. Metals are laboriously obtained from the



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earth by mining, sifting, cleaning, smelting, stripping them of the worthless; clays are dug, washed, moulded, and fired; timber is felled, sawn, planed, and shaped—all are rendered of value to man's purpose by the rejection of the unwanted. Never is the immediate product a creation, always and inevitably it is the result of the deletion of the undesired.

The muscular system is itself a physical correspondence of the power or will aspect, and its mode of expression, as explained by one school of anatomical research, is significant. This school holds that we secure the play of certain muscles not by positive direction of the muscles in question, but by negative or inhibitive efforts affecting the opposite muscles. If flexors are required to be exercised, then we inhibit the tension of extensors, or vice versa, and the body automatically acts as we wish. In short, a predetermined action may be described as being accomplished by preventing the body from doing anything else!

The will as inhibitor, deleter, or destroyer is indicated in the characteristics ascribed to Shiva, the first of the Hindu Trinity. One of the aspects of this deity is to act as the destroyer or dissolver of outgrown forms; and in the case of humanity this aspect of will works more particularly in relation to the form-world of the personality. The value of the inhibitive function in connection with the activity of the mind is obvious. The human mind is as responsive to stimuli transmitted through the senses as a harp-string to the finger, and some method by which the unwanted can be deleted and one-pointed attention be secured is imperative. Without such means consciousness would remain merely an idle spectator of a teeming, unceasing panorama. "Inhibit the modifications of the thinking principle," wrote Patanjali. And the rescue of the mind from its modifications is effected by the germination of will and its action as destroyer. Concentration then at once becomes possible, and the creative faculty of the human mind emerges as land from a falling tide.

In relation to the lower mind the will must be used to

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inhibit all responses and forms except the one selected for consideration, and to dispel all abstract ideas except the one it is desired to explore. Concentration can indeed be exercised only when the will thus fulfils its proper rôle. "The mind is the great slayer of the Real. Let the disciple slay the slayer."\* The uncontrolled mind is, of course, meant here, and the will is the principle invoked as dissolver and destroyer of the unrequired, outworn, and outgrown. It must be invoked not as executioner but to clear the field and give space to worthier thoughts as a lover of flowers will clear weeds from his garden that treasured plants may grow and thrive. In the instructions on Yoga by Patanjali is the following: "Detachment [freedom from identification with material things] is most rapidly attained by those who know how to use the will." (Book I, 21.)

If the will is employed positively instead of negatively on the personal nature the end desired is unlikely to be achieved, defeat being the general outcome of any such intent. This reversal effect has been fully discussed in literature on suggestion† and need not detain us here.

During early life every child recapitulates rapidly the earlier racial stages of involution. Until the end of the evolutionary cycle this meant for the human race as a whole a consistently progressive descent into the limitations of form and of subjection to the environment. The child of to-day copies for a time this ancestral route. But now that the first steps on the upward arc of evolution have been taken, man has begun to challenge the persuasiveness of the bonds of environment, and to assert his birthright to freedom, liberty, and choice. That a choice when exercised may often be taken in the wrong direction is likely enough, because of the momentum of self-interest carried by the personality. But the egoic centre of divine life is awakening, and just as recapitulation of the past was the order of the day during

\* *The Voice of the Silence*, H. P. Blavatsky, p. 14.

† *Suggestion and Autosuggestion*, Baudouin, Part II., Chap. I.

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involution, and still is to a certain extent, so is anticipation of the future the order of the day during evolution—and mankind is the pioneer in this.

The third period of education in the life of the individual mentioned above corresponds to this latter stage. Hence the challenge to a parentally-controlled world by many a youth in the later years of adolescence: perfectly appropriate and to be welcomed, in the light of occult teaching. If right independence and ability in creative art has been fostered by suitable educational methods, then the will steps easily into control and takes up a constructive task capable of leading to mature self-direction. If on the other hand creative experience has been frustrated, the will emerges late or not at all, and its repressed energy is apt to find an outlet in destructive criticism and rebellion.

Thus, through incarnations in race after race, with their characteristic and progressive emphasis upon many different aspects of personal experience, the ego gradually accustoms himself to a facile use of his bodies. In achieving this in relation to sensation, emotion, and clear-cut thinking, the ego, the human centre of consciousness, has laid sound foundations for its pioneer activity on the upward arc. This new pioneer work is nothing less than the conquest of the higher mental range of consciousness and the possibility of this opens out with the conscious use of the will. Until the upward path was entered—comparatively recently as evolution counts time—will was hardly known except in the desire nature, for desire has been for ages the human driving force, and only exceptional individuals evoked the selective and creative power of the inner man.

The higher and lower minds have already been spoken of as having the same relationship to each other as have pencil point and paper. If we add an eraser to the other end of the pencil this very simple illustration suffices to include the function of will also. Ancient and modern psychology may be cited abundantly in support of these relations. Hindu

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psychology teaches the law of contrary mental states, and the same idea is expressed in modern phraseology as the power of positive affirmations. Both these teachings may be summed up briefly as the power of the mind to alter the habits of the personality by dwelling upon, and hence building, virtues opposite to the faults it is intended to overcome. Two contrary vibrations cannot exist in the concrete mind at the same time, says the eastern psychologist. Consequently, if one desires to overcome fear, one must think courage. This statement has been challenged and the whole process discredited in the West because so often the will has not been used to delete the older condition before the new concept is built. The result is a false façade of purely mental construction built over the uneradicated past, and the last state of the person affirming the ideal becomes worse than the first, as conflict is increased. Yet, with the façade in view, the self-delusion may persist that a cure has been effected. The correct method when using affirmation or suggestion is to call on the will as inhibitor and erase from consciousness the lower mental picture of the opposite condition. Then, and then only, the higher mind can effectively draw, from within, its vision of the desired state. This is supported by such facts as that individuals with fixed types of mind have difficulty in using affirmations, and that unless the higher mind continues to build its picture of courage, calm, etc., as the case may be, the old picture reforms and reinstates itself. When the latter occurs, the negative, inhibitive action of the will has been improperly or unskilfully used, and so has not erased this particular vibratory habit of the lower mind. The mind must be trained afresh to new habits, with the old deleted.

When these relationships are appreciated and accepted a fundamental change takes place from the state in which life was focussed in the personal nature, with a positive emotional principle as its motive, to that in which the higher mind becomes the dominant force, with conscious choice, will, as its ally. In the former, desire is positive and the

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mind negative and receptive merely; in the latter, in real egoic life, the mind is positive, and will plays the part of inhibitor or deleter of the unwanted and unreal. Hence as a human principle it is in this sense negative, for it clears the way for the manifestation of truth.

Although an intellectual understanding of these two functions may be easy to grasp, there is difficulty in realising in experience the distinction between personal and egoic activity. Clear, scientific, concrete, are the adjectives of the day, and we tend to accentuate them to the exclusion of all else, and to strengthen them with a positive element of desire. There is danger of imprisonment within these personal forms. To take social examples, fortunately not so common now as formerly, there is the employer who sees destruction ahead of all business life if the workman shares in business management, and the workman who labours to establish brotherhood but cannot include the capitalist among such brothers. If either of these could cease thinking along his characteristic lines, could inhibit the habitual mental and emotional activities of his personality and realise the fact of the unity of all life, the lower mind, owing to its mirror-like capacities, could and would inevitably build an image of this interior fact of human unity. The personal nature could then seize the idea as a practical reality and work it out into everyday terms. Difficult? But it is the destiny of mankind now to sense the archetypal forms of the new age and bring them out into the field of personal understanding, into personal experience.

To-day, there is great need for an understanding of this relationship of mind and will, because many people are touching idealistic consciousness very clearly. For most, however, creative imagination, i.e., original thought, creative ideation, initiative, is still undeveloped; and for these the right way of attaining it is supposed to be by the positive play of the will, by "taking the kingdom of heaven by storm". But for these also the storming must be by the deletion of the veils that

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limit and warp the play of the divine creative principle in man, his higher mind.

It calls for patience and intrepidity to hold the vague bulk consciousness of a partially-visions interior fact, to cling to it gently, yet hold it positive and clear, while the inhibitive will wipes out all preconceived notions from the concrete mind. Slowly and painstakingly the material of the personal bodies adjusts itself to this new and enkindling force, becomes aware of spiritual capacities and is deleted of astral desire. Desire binds. The Will absolves. The Mind, liberated and illumined, seeing the highest, builds.

## IX

### MICROSCOPIC AND MACROSCOPIC

**T**O explore the fascinating field of the minute, an instrument of precision must be used in ordinary practice to assist the eye—the microscope. Although there are limits beyond which the finest instrument cannot penetrate, any good and well-made microscope opens the door to a vast new world of forms. A world, too, of which little could be known without some such assistance to extend the range of the human eye. By an increase in the power of the objective lens a greater and greater magnification is obtained till the eye is presented with an enlargement of an object so great that it is the equivalent to seeing a man's figure as more than a mile in height. By the help of such mechanical means a common-place technique exists to-day which extends the range of human vision so that it embraces a region very far beyond or, rather, beneath the capacity of the eye alone.

From the point of view of ordinary human consciousness this microscopic field lies all in one direction, towards the minute. What of the other direction, that of the vast? A corresponding instrument for such an excursion is not of course the telescope, for that is an adaptation of the same principle as the microscope and merely brings a distant object apparently nearer to the eye. It makes no reduction of the large and widespread to a comprehensive size. The microscope and telescope are purely mechanical and formal: they are physical instruments and wholly objective in character. That which is needed for research in what we may call the macroscopic direction is some means of reducing, say, the scenic content of a county to an intimate landscape view with every detail clear and pronounced—an end unlikely to be achieved by means of merely mechanical devices.

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In an attempt to investigate the macroscopic field, to study the conditions of vast and extended relationships, any assistance obtainable is likely to be of a subjective nature, that is by some extension of sight gained through sharing for a while the more extended vision of another's consciousness and that other not necessarily of the human kingdom. Subjective experience of this character is probably not at all uncommon, though its technique might quite well be unappreciated. It can follow a careful pre-meditation and may be the origin of the suddenly clear understanding that often emerges from a previously obscure situation. If analysed at all, such experiences of enlightenment are usually accepted quite correctly as an intuition, a "hunch"—and no special inquiry is made as to their source. Yet the experience may very frequently be due to a contact established, quite unconsciously, with another and very different grade of consciousness from that enjoyed by the person receiving the intuitive impression.

As example furnishes the best illustration, the following description of a short macroscopic experience will perhaps serve best to define the technique. The experience was in connection with the Web, the web of the universe referred to so dramatically in the Stanzas of Dzyan. This recently was the subject of discussion and debate among a group of science students. The question was raised as to whether any *distortion* of the Web ever took place and I had stated that in the experience described in my book the three-dimensional network of finely spaced lines seemed to be equidistant, stable and rigid, except only for the tremor occasioned by the astral, or emotional, tattva. This question of distortion, raised at the meeting, recurred to me later and with it was a feeling of uncertainty as to whether the consistency of the Web's structure did really entirely rule out the possibility. The point was intriguing and curiously disturbing; it was indeed so insistent that I devoted some time to discover the truth of the matter, in the hope it might be possible to do so.



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A few simple conditions needed to be secured. There must be quiet and an assurance of freedom from any disturbance. The mind must then gradually come to rest on the subject needing consideration, the will being used to exclude all else. This attitude is best described as one of sustained and easy contemplation; "meditation with seed" an aphorism of Patanjali names it.

With these conditions established, in due course the Web entered the field of consciousness, but quite differently from the fragment seen in an earlier investigation. The view now embraced an amazingly large section stretching from the centre of the earth to beyond its periphery. Although aware that the whole enormous depth of it was under observation, I knew at the same time that this vast field of view was not directly mine. It was being relaid, so to speak, by another and altogether larger scaled consciousness. A consciousness, too, that was not necessarily superior to the human, but different, more widely-flung, to whom the units of the environment were on a much larger scale. Whether the relay received was intentionally being given I do not know. It may be that such extended views are as open and available as is the wider horizon from a tall tower, if one troubles to mount it. Anyway, there it was, a living and wonderful survey presented from an unfamiliar elevation.

Here was a vastly large area scaled down to a comprehensive size, with the clear knowledge during examination that the original was really in view. In this respect the scene was like that which one might conceive as being presented to vision by a powerful *inverted* microscope (a macroscope?). That which now stood out clearly was that the Web was more closely knit near the earth's centre than at the periphery. From surface to centre the regular diminution of the spacing of the lines of the Web was progressive. The variation from the parallel was so exceedingly slight that unless a very great length of the whole section could be seen at once the

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diminution would be imperceptible. This gradual reduction of the spacing gave the appearance, on foreshortening a view of the depth, of a slight curve inwards all the way, as if one were looking down an incline, from whatever position one assumed at the periphery.

It was at this point that the word gravitation leapt into my mind. Is gravity due to the tendency of material\* to flow along converging lines and hence become packed more closely towards the centre? It certainly looked as if anything carried by the lines would tend to slide, to fall, downhill. Apparently in compensation for the compression within, the lines of the Web outside and beyond the periphery seemed, on the contrary, to widen and expand—if these terms can be used for such an exceedingly minute divergence. May one infer, I thought, that the secret of gravitation is to be found in the Web itself?—and is the orbital motion of planets due to rocking wave-like pulsations through its vast network? . . . but these are suggestive suppositions only, I could follow no further.

The view faded as consciousness receded to normal again but the question of distortion in the Web was answered—though very differently from any anticipation. Distortion would seem perhaps to be hardly the word, but there does appear to be a departure from the uniform parallel arrangement which, in the smaller and earlier view, seemed consistent and invariable.

The technique and contacts of the experience are perhaps the most interesting features. It would seem that access is available to a far wider and more penetrating view of natural phenomena than an unaided human consciousness is able by itself to reach. On the purely form side of objective nature the microscope opens up a way to the survey of a field beneath the range of physical vision. In the opposite direction and by a different type of extraneous assistance, a survey appears to

\* Force currents, playing through the Web, to us appear as mental, emotional and physical material.

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be open to a field beyond the range of ordinary subjective investigation. Unlike the mechanical microscope, the assistance rendered in experiences of the latter order is, I believe, of a living quality of which we may know much more as we learn better how to co-operate. This macroscopic technique, as we may perhaps call it, introduces a very wide horizon to one's vision, an horizon which appears to be the normal extent of a consciousness very different from the human; different by way of being immensely wider, more diffused, and with a much less pronounced personality. In texture and feeling the difference between a spreading lake and a mountain torrent, between a cloud of vapour and a rain-drop.

Descriptions of a sister stream of evolving life, called the deva kingdom,\* are found in eastern literature and a contact with one of this order would most nearly explain the experience mentioned. Such orders of consciousness are closely associated with nature and seem to be concerned with units of territory ranging from mountain, plain and valley to nation-wide boundaries and continents. For example, it is said, the subtle embrace by the deva-consciousness of a country includes all its people, endowing them with patriotism and affecting them on occasion when away with nostalgia.

With the opening up of the higher-mental faculty, humanity is just becoming able, on equal terms, to commune with these forces, without the danger that used to attend contact with the grosser sensational levels, the latter sometimes being referred to as entering the kingdom of Pan.

The technique described, of stillness and defined contemplation, enables the human mind to share, in macroscopic fashion, the larger vision of a deva and, for a moment maybe, conveys to that deva-consciousness the clean-cut microscopic vision of the world as seen by man.

\* Deva : literally *shining one*. In western literature angel is the nearest corresponding term, though likely to be somewhat misleading.

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The whole technique as here described gives an understanding of that sharing of consciousness between different grades and degrees which was mentioned on page 13 in the essay on "God and Man".

## X

### PAST AND FUTURE NOW

IN the exposition which follows it is suggested that the recognition of the relation of man's higher consciousness to his lower, with its threefold nature, will enable him to arrive at some understanding of the problem of Time. It would seem that the past, the whole past of our world's existence, is discoverable by bringing the threefold lower nature skilfully into alignment with the higher. Further—and this is a matter of greater moment—the future may be discerned, in general terms, when consciousness at the truly human level of the higher self has been attained.

The qualification that the future is perceivable in general terms only, and not necessarily in every detail, is due to the fact that mankind is constantly making its own contribution to world-manifestation. Just as the design drawn by an architect demands the assistance of a builder and his craftsmen if the vision is to be realised in a building, so does the projection of the vision of a world's architect demand the co-operation at some time in the building of master-builders and craftsmen; and, for our world, these are drawn in major part from humanity. Hence, in regard to seeing the future, although the Architect's vision be consistent and static throughout, the time needed and the circumstances attending the final stages of a world's consummation are dependent on the number and skill of the Creator's co-workers, that is to say, on human craftsmen, whose efforts are fallible and the quality of whose work may vary.

Of recent years the study of the mysteries of time has been pursued with increasing interest. Current speculation is now associating the problem closely with that of consciousness, but consciousness being largely a subjective

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field of exploration its contents are elusive and hard to define in acceptable terms.

The objective field of spatial extension is explored with relative facility, for its threefold dimensions are now easy to observe and describe, and the average human being feels it to be common and familiar ground. Not so with time. If time be regarded as another, a fourth, dimension, one is led nowhere, since time, as we experience it, is a one-way continuity, irreversible, and hence it differs fundamentally from the spatial three. The present, even as we view it, becomes the past, apparently never to return; the future continually moves towards us into a fleet-footed present for it flows away behind us in the instant of contact. Time eludes the formal intellect, it refuses to stay and be handled at leisure; so let us approach the problem from another angle, noting that, although time moves only in one direction, it is, like its spatial complement, threefold to our ordinary consciousness: past, present, and future.

### THE PAST

The objective world into which we are born is known simply and solely because we have acquired and use a group of bodies which reflect, or rather reproduce, their environment as in a convex mirror. We know only that which is so reflected. We see, hear, and feel, we taste and smell, because the bodily sense-organs can reproduce in themselves certain wave-lengths which play through different media. Through solids we experience touch, through liquids taste, etc. These reproductions, taking place within our own personal and intimate vehicles, we interpret as resistance, as light and colour, flavour, scent, and so on. The point to be emphasised here is that every sense-experience aroused by contact with the objective world around is known only through our ability to respond to it, and solely because we can reproduce, indeed *become*, that bit of the world, at least in part, within ourselves. Inability to respond means that no reproduction is

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taking place, hence that no knowledge of that particular mode of experience can follow. Such, obviously, is the case of the blind and the deaf in relation to light and sound.

That which is known as a sense perception, for example, the seeing of a lovely landscape or the hearing of a bird's song, is due, of course, to something more than the mere reproduction of the wavelengths of light and sound in the eye and ear. To be conscious, to be aware, of the scene, or of the bird's song, the human centre of consciousness must reach out to the sense-organ from within, on being called, and look or listen. In other words, life, to be aware of living, must do its part. Light-impacts and sound-waves can do no more than arouse the sense-organ, knock at the door, so to speak. The door must be opened from within for the message to be delivered. An appeal for attention has been made, an invitation to meet the message at the door of the sense-organ and greet it—and greet it, moreover, at the same vibratory speed. Such a meeting and mutual "handshake" between the dweller within and the messenger without is necessary if the message is to be received at all.

A close analogy to this procedure is to be found in the response made by a radio-receiving-set to an incoming programme. The mechanism is idle, irresponsive, till an electric current flows through its interior and a selective adjustment is made that tunes in to a particular wavelength. For successful reception the workings must be two-fold, an outer, the radio programme, to knock at the door, and an inner, the electric current plus the selective mechanism, to open it. This is a vivid and close illustration of the relation between sense-messages and consciousness.

This tuning-in on the part of human consciousness to the organs of sense is done so easily that it seems effortless and, indeed, inescapable; yet it has been, and still may be, a voluntary operation on our part. Normally, we see, hear, and feel so readily because the identification of consciousness with the bodily mechanism has been so thorough. It is important,

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however, to distinguish clearly between the purely physical consciousness, that of the physical elemental or independent life of the body, and the consciousness of the man; for the responsive automatism at the physical level is the work of the alert body-elemental, and not necessarily that of the human egoic self. For example, all of us on occasion have attended lectures or sermons that have failed to hold the interest, and then, though our ears have functioned perfectly, not a word has been heard for minutes on end! Why? The reason is simple: we have ignored the knocking at the door and have not come forward from within to meet the message. Probably the attention has been concentrated on some mental reminiscence or emotional record of recent interest, and, though wide awake, we have attended to that exclusively. Similarly, our eyes may be open and we may not see, or pain may be present, and even acute, and not felt, if the attention is diverted to another part of the mental field.

A careful self-analysis of such experiences will reveal a clear distinction between the receiving organ of the personal self, and the egoic listener, the higher self, and this dual partnership can become very evidential. Further, in a study of those states of consciousness called dream and trance, as also those hypnotically induced, it is common to find interior experiences that are as vivid as any arising from sense-contacts; occasionally they are even more so. Thus there is much reliable testimony, derived from introspection, that the mental receiving-centre can be reached by other means than through the physical body. Numerous telepathic experiments have proved this, quite apart from hypnosis, and this means that something of the nature of direct mental contact is possible at an inner level between mind and mind. The avenues of approach to the awareness of the self are, as a matter of fact, threefold, since every human being possesses three interwoven material bodies; and though for most people the physical body is far and away the best educated of the three, the emotional and mental bodies, too, have their doors, to which



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the attention of the self can be, on occasion, exclusively directed.

A special approach to the mind, quite other than through our familiar senses, is made when a psychometrist succeeds in registering a picture excited by a charged object. The term psychometry relates to an extension of the sense of touch which enables the sensitive person possessing the faculty, with eyes bandaged and by handling only, to name the different colours of a number of fabrics, describe objects at some distance from the fingers, diagnose a lesion or other fault in the physical body, and, in rarer cases, describe in detail incidents of the past connected with some object held in the hand. All objects seem to be more or less "charged", something after the nature of a battery. To arouse a response in the sensitive person, the objects are usually held in the hand or in contact with the head, and the psychometrist then reads off the impressions which occur to his mind. Such an experience proves that just as the eye and ear, responding to light and sound, induce pictures and music in one's consciousness, so can the imprinted records of the past arouse similar responses in a specially sensitive mento-emotional receiving-instrument. Reflected in the mind of a specially sensitive person trained in psychometry, these radiations can be read so that they depict events which have occurred in the vicinity of the object. It is as if past happenings had been impressed, photographed, on material surroundings. These impressions may be of a physical, emotional, or mental order, for the three modes of material vibration are all present, although one of them is normally dominant. Such a re-collection of past events may well cause surprise and wonder until the faculty becomes more common, but its explanation is relatively simple if the underlying facts of the structure and behaviour of the human mechanism are studied and full use made of analogy and correspondence.

The personal record of events termed memory, which all possess, is of the same character, the difference being merely

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that the mental material appropriated by each person, and which composes his mental body, has been deeply engraved by his personal experiences and is consequently intimately related to his personal consciousness. Having identified himself with his mental body and used it for a lifetime, the individual is thoroughly at home in it and its records are comparatively vivid and very accessible. These records, which constitute memory, are graphs of the personal past imprinted on the material of the lower mental body, originally received and transmitted mostly through the sense-organs. The egoic human centre of consciousness, the point of focussed light, fortunately forgets most of these because, for various reasons, some of which are known to the modern psychologist, it is unable readily to find the place of reference in the mento-emotional bodies, and so fails to revitalise the engraved picture. It is not the absence of the record but an inability to find it that constitutes forgetfulness. It is a common experience, for example, for an individual who wishes keenly to remember something he knows, such as a name, a quotation, or a tune, to be completely unable to recollect it. Yet he knows he knows it! This is very significant, for every sense-record received has really been imprinted indelibly on the mind, even though comparatively but a few records are held within easy reference. Self-conscious memory really consists not in the registration of the event—that is automatic—but in finding the record at will and seeing it again.

To remember an experience, say of yesterday or yester-year, the mental record must be looked up; and this record is as materially "written" as an entry in a notebook. If the ego is successful, the minute photograph, the record within the concrete mind, small as a pin-point, is found and awakened by the focussed light of attention. This, literally, is a ray of ultra-spectrum light focussed by the higher mind, which latter in practice functions, as already described, as a crystal-clear lens. The light of attention, the focussed ray, falls on the minute record in the mental screen, and this responds in-

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stantly by enlarging spatially. Indeed, if concentrated attention is sustained upon any one record, the mental image of it may spread and fill the whole personal mind, enlarging in appearance very much as a disc of light does when the iris shutter opens behind the lens of a lantern. When attention is withdrawn, the reverse occurs, and the memory-record fades again to the minute. This experience of remembering, sometimes with vividness, sometimes with elusive difficulty, is familiar to all.

Man, a microcosmic copy of the macrocosmic whole, bears within his mental body in registered memories the complete record of his own individual past. Similarly is it with the whole world of forms manifest in what is called material, for they also carry the complete record of all events in which they have shared since their beginning as forms, each with its own indelible memory. This memory-imprint on material may be re-collected by a human consciousness if the mind can successfully tune in and thus reproduce in itself the record required. The past, in this sense, obviously still exists, stands forth, in the present.

The door between the physical sense-organ and human consciousness is thus not the only means of access from the exterior world. For the vast majority of us the sense-organs are the familiar and well-worn entrance, but there are many minor experiences which show that other doors exist. For instance, the influence of a particular and other than physical atmosphere, as it is sometimes called, is often remarked. Lacking the precision and definition of sense-impressions, the human response to such an atmosphere is usually vague and scattered, but as an occasional extra-sensory experience such perceptions are indubitable. They indicate the faint beginnings of an interior sixth sense which, in one of its functions, will enable man to re-collect the memory of nature. Further evidence of this inner access as an addition to the sense-doorway, is the moving influence a good orator can impart to his audience: his emotional exaltation is, literally, contagious.

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A mental picture, too, held clearly by a speaker, will for others temporarily illumine an abstruse subject beyond the effect of the spoken word. The difference, indeed, is often noticed acutely when, later, the speech is remembered or the description read in cold print in the absence of the direct mental contact. Something then seems profoundly lacking. Each of these experiences is common; and they reveal beyond a doubt the existence of both an emotional and a mental entrance to consciousness from the exterior worlds, apart from the avenues of physical sense.

Consider the reaction of a man in possession of a trained and sensitive body first to present-day happenings and then to the records of the past. Through the sense-organs current events and happenings are reproduced in him in pictures and sound, etc., in the way usual and familiar to all of us. By accurately reproducing them the man becomes them for a time, in the same way that a cinema screen becomes for a time a moving picture. Similarly, to explore the history of the past, he must reproduce in himself a re-presentation of those past events. The external stimulation necessary for this can be obtained from those imprints already universally "photographed" on material which has been near by when those past events occurred, and which retains as vibratory modifications within itself a faithful record of such past happenings. These modifications in material can arouse the necessary response in the sensitive, and the events may then be registered as if happening *now*—as indeed they are. ♪

In such readings of past events through contact with external objects the will-directed attention of the psychometrist selects and amplifies the record required. Incredible? As incredible, perhaps, as would have been the assertion a hundred years ago that a musical programme in New York could be heard in one's house in England at the moment of performance, or that the voice of a speaker could be engraved on a disc and be reproduced at any time, and any number of times, afterwards. The needle of the modern gramophone

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corresponds to the focussed ray of human consciousness when tracing and finding an image registered in the retentive mirror of the mind. Radio and gramophone, together with many inventions of a like order, are, indeed, mechanical projections of inborn human capacities, and hence are forecasts of powers at present latent in man. One of these powers is the reproduction at will of the universally imprinted records of past events. Hence there exists the possibility of a review of the whole vast history of our world's life.

The memory of nature, perfect and infallible, is at man's service if he can develop the faculty to read it; that is to say, if he can receive into and reproduce in himself in pictorial and auditory terms the engraved records of the world's life-story. Such records are exceedingly minute, for the atomic is the order of their size; yet they are capable of enlargement and of accurate expansion on the retinal screen of the mind with a degree of living reality that easily rivals the sense-pictures of current happenings. Given the suitable human instrument of response, the re-production of all past events in time becomes, obviously, merely a question of the skill with which consciousness can use its mental, emotional, and physical vehicles. In other words the success of the psychometrist turns on his ability to tune his mind to the wave-length of the particular series of imprints held by the object he wishes to examine.

The whole of the past is here to-day—now—awaiting the development of this further and very subtle faculty for its discovery. Given this, plus the attention of a trained consciousness, and for man the past becomes the present at will. Not till a much later stage in evolution will this faculty be a normal possession of mankind, but even to-day there exists evidence, fragmentary but convincing, of the existence of this ordinarily latent power.

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Any attempt to understand future time at once arouses

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questions about freewill and determinism; and at first sight it certainly seems impossible to reconcile a knowledge of the future with human freedom, especially if one is not prepared to abandon the irresistible logic of cause and effect. The impossibility of complete reconciliation, in the absence of occult premises, may be granted at once for, when causal relationships are considered, the fundamental cause of our world's existence is seldom traced back to its very rational beginning. Much has been said and written about evolution, but little about involution. Yet it is in this earlier cycle of involution that the secret of the future will be found. The process of involution means nothing other than the clothing in material form of a vast creative Idea. Such an idea, in the all-inclusive mind of an adequate Power, carries its own goal in its creative intention. This does not necessarily mean that every detail of effort that may be needed to attain that goal is envisaged, but the vision of its final consummation—yes. And that vision must be sustained throughout, if successful creation is to be achieved.

The first necessity is the clothing of the Idea in spatial, that is to say, in material, forms. In a world-manifestation this process involves denser and denser coverings, to attain clear-cut precision and ensure well defined separateness. The outward sweep into many forms—terminating for us in the “coats of skin” of physical bodies—is all part of the involutory arc, and throughout its course the archetypal model, or pattern, is held undimmed, all forms, despite their immense profusion, being merely detailed extensions of it. This archetypal pattern is the determining factor all through, and covers not only the process of involution but also the mental conception of the Idea's final consummation.

Consider some familiar analogies. An artist is inspired, seldom knowing whence, to paint a picture, write a poem, compose music, or design a building. The inspiration is his, he holds it and expands it in his mind to the exclusion of all else. Radiant in its germination though it be, it is at first

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somewhat tenuous, somewhat elusive, and yet instinct with promise. The artist, fired by his vision, seeks to express it in form with the help of his own familiar technique. He attempts to clothe it in language or colour, to reduce it to notation, or to the lines of a plan. On the way to the security of this immediate goal there is much pruning and selection. In the struggle to reach an adequate form-interpretation there may be many experiments, much deletion and addition, until at last a more or less satisfactory concrete form is achieved. This is involution. Even with the best results, however, much has been lost. The vision suffers privation in becoming involved in a form; it probably needs very many forms adequately to express it.

As compensation, on the other hand, the beautiful product of the artist, being externalised, may be shared by others; for though the single form produced by the artist of necessity reduces the brilliance of the inspiration, some measure of it can be caught by others, even reproduced by them, such reproduction approaching, in a few, to the splendour of the artist's original vision. The objectivised painting, poem, or music, may for the sensitive observer open a door to direct contact with the causal archetype the artist contacted in the heights and held captive for a moment.

Raise all this to the *n*th degree within the limits of our world-system and what is implied? Surely this, that a world manifestation, with all its forms, is due to the successful involution of an archetypal vision. Thus, in the process of reduction from mental to physical terms, a vast creative theme became at length involved in concrete forms, themselves the limited symbols of sub- and sub-sub-archetypes, each and all being extensions from the original Master-Archetype, which ever exists in the mind of the Supreme Architect. That He has also to prepare materials with which to clothe the Vision complicates the analogy but by no means destroys it.

There is so much corresponding experience, so many informative parallels, that this would seem to be an eminently

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reasonable theory of origins, though it has generally been left to the religious devotee to affirm the One God as Creator of heaven and earth. It is unfortunate that exponents of theological teachings, particularly the Christian and the Mohammedan, should have carried their loyal devotion to the Highest so far as to claim for Him attributes or an absence of attributes which, by their inconsistencies, repel the intelligent and critical mind. Admit the creation of the World-Archetype to be the work of a mighty, but not almighty, Artist, and hosts of difficulties vanish. With their disappearance, too, there may dawn a true understanding of man's rôle as co-worker with him.

Although the Supreme Creative Artificer of our world and its fellow-planets—call him Artist, Architect, God, Most High, what we will—must be of a nature far greater than human consciousness can at present grasp, yet he must also be, relatively, limited. Solar Systems incomparably greater than our own exist, and it is with no lack of reverence that one may picture creative hierarchies rising rank on rank to the vastness of a consciousness embracing the whole galaxy—and beyond. For if limitations, no matter how wide they may be, are the rule, then the word omnipotent must be accepted as a very relative term.

During the involution of life in form, from archetype to sub-type and on to genus and species, an abundance of experiments must of course be made, and all such carry the possibility, indeed the certainty, of many a misfit, many a mishap. The joy of creative manifestation, however, does not lie in the unfolding of a mechanically perfect device, but rather in the carrying through to objectivity of an artistic conception, a creative intention, with a possibility at every turn of success or failure. Every artist and craftsman knows and appreciates this in his own small measure, and, though the scale we are viewing is immensely greater, the same principle surely applies. The parallel, or rather the correspondence, is indeed compelling, once the mind is freed from the stout



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prejudices of materialism and the trammels of theological dogma.

Thus the goal set for this planet "in the beginning" is to be found, still existent, in the mental archetype created for this world by the Solar Artist. That goal, well-nigh certain of accomplishment in the fullness of time, radiates continually its living, driving intention at its own high causal level. Held steadily in being and active for the span of the world's existence, it is a dynamic plan of enormous inspirational power. The clothing, the involution of its content into concrete forms, the paradoxical reduction of the One to the Many, means, for the life within the forms, severe privations and hosts of inhibitions. Vast periods involving what are known as sequences, changes, time, are needed. At length the nadir is arrived at, and the Archetype is then half-way through towards its destined purpose. Life becomes largely latent because of the domination of form, but the half-way house of its journey has been reached, and the evolutionary part of the vast experiment of a world-manifestation follows. This latter half will be worked through in terms of release and the consequent expansion of the life, with the gradual re-emergence at a different level of many previously latent functions and the breaking up of the inhibitions imposed by rigidly organised material.

In the lower kingdoms of nature, forms have been evoked from materials which permit life on the evolutionary arc to enjoy sustained experience, movement, conscious response to outside stimuli. In man many previously latent powers of the life have already been released under the stimulation of the image-building faculty of the mind. For example, the innumerable mechanistic inventions and appliances in use today by mankind are witness to the externalisation of powers once entirely latent. Every tool and machine, every handicraft product and manufactured article from a needle to a cathedral, and every work of art, is an objectivised extension, or projection, of human thought. Yet the whole volume of

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this production—artificial as we call it to distinguish it from the work of nature—vast as it is, is but a part of the archetypal content waiting to be unfolded by the help of man. The worthier powers, those of the order of spirituality, have to be self-released by the individual, and in their fullest measure are beyond those as yet generally associated with mankind. For in their final amplitude these are the powers usually attributed to deity alone: omnipresence, omniscience, omnipotence.

Of the seven great racial cycles of our world, man is said to have arrived at the fifth, and has therefore entered the final and completing three: the 5th, 6th and 7th. It is significant that the last decade or so of this, the fifth phase, has seen the dawn of omnipresence in terms of machinery. Radio-mechanics are the externalised evidence of powers in man which, when they come to be fully externalised, will endow him with that faculty, quite independent of mechanical assistance.

Omnipresence, it must always be remembered, is a relative, not an absolute, term, and does not in any connection mean a conscious presence in the world everywhere-at-once. The fullest meaning of it is the ability consciously to reproduce, accurately and at will, every impact coming in from any part of the world, and to function similarly at any distance. Successive steps, involving time, are needed for the development of this order of perception and activity, though it is not difficult to conceive that an adept consciousness could be so alert that it would record a thousand impressions and project as many in a moment's span of our time. To enable one to envisage such a possibility one needs only to picture the acceleration of a gramophone disc recording a musical symphony. Imagine such a record speeded up so that the needle runs through a normal twenty-minute performance in five seconds: every note and chord sounded, every pause relatively observed, yet only five seconds of time occupied. No ordinary human ear would have heard anything understandable, but

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that failure would be due to human limitations. It will be noticed that in such an experiment time is not annihilated, it is merely intensely condensed.

Such an illustration conveys a little, perhaps, of the mysterious relation between consciousness and the perception of sequential experience in terms of "time". The estimate of time on the part of any individual is necessarily related to the quality and responsive capacity of his vehicle of consciousness. The psalmist may not have been far wrong in apostrophising the consciousness of the Most High as that of One in whose sight a thousand years are as a day.

Let us return to the consideration of archetypal patterns. One definition of the word archetype is: "An original or fundamental type of structure"; another: "The original pattern or model, a prototype." According to these, an archetype contains within itself the potentialities of multitudes of forms, all of which may, possibly, be projected. In their totality, were it ever reached, the externalised forms would demonstrate adequately the content of the archetype. Just as the complete permutations of a group of numbers may be forecast by a mathematician, so, given the archetype, it is conceivable that the multitude of its latent forms might be visualised; or, given the forms, the archetypal content may be visualised, if all the forms are manifested and known.

The visualisation of the content of a World-Archetype by the Supreme Artist may be assumed as the motive force behind manifestation. To visualise clearly enables one to convert a vision into concrete terms, as an inventor does when he makes a physical copy of a mentally conceived article. In the case of a World-Archetype, the projection of the mentally conceived vision is similarly achieved by its becoming involved in form—that is, by the involution of life in the kingdoms of nature.

Upon the mirror of space, within its three-dimensional web-like screen, light is arrested and modified by the archetypal shadow or pattern thrown down. The living light playing through and focussed by this limiting medium sees itself

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reflected within the mirror of the Web, gradually visualises its own content in terms of the involved forms, and functions through them. Just as the retina of the eye can arrest light and build a picture of colour and movement which, by remaining in memory, attains a certain continuity as a form, so does the archetypal life arrested on the retinal screen of space achieve at length incarnation and continuity in physical substance. Modifications and amendments in abundance may be made in the forms as the sequences attending involution and evolution follow, but all have the driving urge of the Archetype behind them, striving to achieve the goal, the vision and the intention of which remain steadily radiant at the high level of the causal plane.

That which is pictured on the retina of the human eye and seen attains only a comparative permanence in form. On the eye alone there is but a very short lag of persistence, less than a second of time, though this is enough to ensure the suggestion of a moving picture if still photographs are seen in succession quickly enough, as in the cinema. The corresponding lag in memory, in the record of the mind, is much longer, and may continue for a lifetime and more. The lag of the visualised archetype on the screen of Space-Time, reinforced by its Creator as may be needed, carries on through involution and evolution for the span of a world-period.

Imagination always precedes creative construction; and it is safe to assume that the creative vision of the Supreme Artist of our world contained and contains the goal of the world's destiny, just as, on a smaller scale, the total theme of a poem or a symphony is contained in the inspired vision of a human artist. Although a future poem may be known interiorly in creative perfection by a poet, its expression demands the fitting of appropriate language to thought and hence appears in sequential form in what is known as time; many changes and experiments will also probably have to be made by the poet during the endeavour faithfully to interpret his vision. Dynamic life and static form have to be justly related, fitted

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together with such technical skill as the artist possesses; and though discarded attempts may be many, they in no way affect the original vision. This vision exists in the artist's mind as a present and continuing record of a "future", whatever be the result of his immediate attempts to give it body and shape. The analogy need not be laboured; if we grant that the power in the hands of the Supreme Artist is relative and not absolute, then the difficulties of manifestation, and particularly those attending evolution with its successes and faults, are at least understandable.

Thus the future of our world of manifestation is written in terms of living potency in that portion of the life of the archetype which still awaits expression. That which has already been expressed and assimilated, though it is the past in our time, is present with us now. That which has still to be objectivised successfully, that is to say, clearly externalised, seen and accepted, represents the future—our future. Though radiant here and now in the Supreme Artist's vision it has still to be projected, and projected by and through mankind.

Thus, for the birth of consciousness in forms, and for its development to the fulness of the archetypal life, a vast succession of abodes and numerous incarnations in them has been needed. In the physical world the numbers and variety of forms in the plant and animal kingdoms serve as a school of experience for life's youth, for it is in those kingdoms that the sharpest and most acute sense-contacts are made. Human consciousness in this earlier period of history did not and still does not need such detailed or elaborated extensions, and hence retains the use of a comparatively simple type of physical form. This simpler body, in many respects much less developed physically than some of the forms of plant and animal, serves for mankind because of human skill in tool-making, and also because mankind is concerned primarily with mental and emotional mastery.

Beginning with the minute, life, in general, builds forms of adequate size but limited in scope and in responsiveness.

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Continuing, it builds forms of increasing adaptability and sensitiveness, much as the physical body of the child is built from the foundation of a single cell. A return to the size of the minute nucleus follows every excursion into incarnation, consciousness flowing and ebbing from and to the atomic starting-point of forms in the course of its continuing journey through the gateways of birth and death. On the cyclic return to the atomic, in the case of a human being, and just before descending again to incarnation in another physical body, a flash of illumined consciousness in the causal centre is said to be experienced. A momentary union with the brilliant life of the archetype is then made which conveys awareness of a further fragment of the future. Hence the references in occult literature to the fact that each soul before returning to earth is gifted with a brief vision in general terms of its next life.

For any individual the future is contained in that part of the collective human archetype allotted to him for expression and assimilation. The future consists of all the latent remainder of hidden potencies still waiting to be released. This release, this projection into objectivity, and the acceptance of that which is projected, depends on the immediate, moment-by-moment, human choice and action. Mankind's future is thus continuously brought into the present. Final achievement, although practically assured, may be much delayed and thwarted by the individualised consciousness of man, as such. "None else compels." Hence in the living archetypal content lies the promise of successful consummation, and in the necessity for human self-adjustment to circumstances the possibility exists of distortion and delay. Each human being may, if he chooses, glimpse the vision of his future, for a ray of the light of the Archetype dwells within him and is his lifeline to attainment.

Just as the human incentive to create a work of art is part of the content of an original vision, and hence the artistic creation of the future is "create from the beginning", so is

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the future of this world and its living content assured from the beginning, however much the time of final triumph may depend on the willingness of mankind to find and to release that which still lies latent within itself. With these ultimate human faculties discovered, man, the extended hand of the Creator, promotes the consummation of the world-task.

Man's consciousness is born of the One Life, of the Supreme. Hence the life which is now man, itself shared in the creation of the archetypal design before the worlds were born. Man was then unaware of his part in the design, just as an artist's hand is, in itself, unaware, unconscious, of the picture the artist paints, though it shares the artist's life and is necessary for his work. Add to this last analogy the conception that, towards the end of the picture, the hand of the artist achieves an awakened consciousness and contributes to the deftly flowing life of the artist a skill of its own, derived from its many experiences as hand, and we may envisage the principle underlying man's share in the final stages of a world's evolution.

It is one of the great instructions of *The Secret Doctrine* that the human will and the Supreme Will are one: that man may realise that Will as his own when and as he realises his own true nature. But here we step out from the purely inhibitive use of the will described in the previous essay and touch the mystery of the creative use of the Divine Will, which is a self-acting capacity for interior modification, from within outwards. Modern psychologists\* have termed it "cold choice" and discern it as a human faculty only when all other forms of choice—such as choice from desire, choice from reason—have been analysed and discarded. In Hindu terms, the human âtmâ, or spark of conscious life, is part of the flame of the Universal Atman, pure Creative Spirit, and consequently must, of its true nature, share the creative powers of the One Will.

The will of the adept, of the superman, is a liberated will, free within the wide limits of the cycle in which he lives,

\* *Personality and the Will*, Aveling, Chapters V and IX.

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as is the Will of the Artist Creator. From the moment of his Self-realisation, the future of such an adept is determined by himself: his will and the One Will are unified.

To summarise: Human consciousness functions from a centre outwards, and at first and for long identifies itself with the personal mirror of its three bodies, in and through which the mental, emotional, and physical worlds are so intimately reproduced. For many a cycle of incarnation this useful illusion of identification with the bodies persists. "I-ness," individuality, being thereby achieved, the threefold bodily mirror comes gradually to be known as a separate and objective abode. By virtue of this objectivisation there gradually dawns a mastery, more or less complete, and the bodies may and can then be used to reflect on demand and at will not only the personal memories they themselves carry but also the registered events of the past that have happened anywhere in the three worlds. Such skilled use of the personal bodies could disclose and reproduce the whole of the past and prove it still to exist.

When the three bodies are by way of being mastered and used objectively, then that centre of consciousness which is the true self of a human being is re-recognised, found and known as a focussed ray of the One Self. When thus known, man, adept man, may share the consciousness of the Artist Creator as he works his will within his system. And as that System lies upon the screen of the Web, exposed to his consciousness, so does the content of that Web lie open also to the comprehension of the Self-realising human being, to the measure of his appreciation and acceptance of his unity with the One Life.

Being thus of the same nature as that Life in this, his highest, self, man may share at least in part the vision of that which was and is the creative intention for our world since its beginning in time. The intention, the archetype, contains in terms of life all that has manifested and all that remains to manifest. And the latter contains the future of humanity.



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Existing now is a recorded history of the world's past: discernible now by human consciousness is the archetypal intention of the world's future.

The following books will supply the reader with some of the evidence relating to dawning human faculties:

*The Story of Psychic Science*, H. Carrington. Riders.

*Psychometry: Its Theory and Practice*, H. Bland. Riders.

*Our Sixth Sense*, Richet.

*Extra Sensory Perception*, J. B. Rhine. Faber.

*New Frontiers of the Mind*, J. B. Rhine. Farrar & Rhinehart.

*Mental Radio*, Upton Sinclair. T. Werner Laurie.

## XI

### KARMA

**T**HE Sanskrit word *ḥarma* comes from a root meaning action. It has come by use to stand for the law of cause and effect in its operations in human life, which is sometimes regarded as a law of retribution. To an inquirer asking “What is karma?” Mme Blavatsky replied:

We consider it as the ultimate law of the universe, the source, origin and fount of all other laws which exist throughout Nature. Karma is the unerring law which adjusts effect to cause on the physical, mental and spiritual planes of being. As no cause remains without its due effects, from greatest to least, from a cosmic disturbance down to the movement of your hand, and as like produces like, Karma is that unseen and unknown law which adjusts wisely, intelligently and equitably each effect to its cause, tracing the latter back to its producer. Karma does not act in this or that particular way always, but it always does act so as to restore harmony and preserve the balance of equilibrium in virtue of which the universe exists.\*

Restoration of harmony means, obviously, the cessation of some disharmony that has been caused by action. As a force that restores harmony, and tends constantly to re-establish the *status quo ante*, to ensure a return to an equilibrium that has been disturbed, karma, being the inevitable reply to action, is well defined as the law of retribution† or re-action. Equilibrium, in this connection, refers to that state which preceded the manifestation of the universe, an equilibrium which has been described as a state of quiescence, harmony,

\* *The Key to Theosophy*, pp. 135-6.

† The word retribution is used here in its literal sense: the return of tribute, the discharge of a debt. The words *ḥarma* and *retribution* do not themselves connote either a good or a bad qualification.

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slumber, that is to say, with no action, and hence with no re-action, no karma.

The first Stanza of Dzyan says:

The Eternal Parent, wrapped in her ever-invisible robes, had slumbered once again for Seven Eternities. . . . The Universe was still concealed in the Divine Thought and the Divine Bosom.\*

The emergence of a universe means, of course, its creation, and it is during such a period of creative activity that karma operates—and does so by offering a sustained and continuous resistance to every activity, straining constantly to “restore harmony”, to return to pure equilibrium.

This descriptive definition of karma can be very simply illustrated. Suppose that a stringed instrument such as a harp or violin, tuned but idle, untouched, represents the quiescent state prior to the manifestation of a universe. When the instrument is used, the moment a string is plucked or bowed it oscillates and creates sound. In the same moment this oscillation meets with a resistance due to the tautness of the string, which tends, gently but continuously, to slow the movement down to stillness. This gentle and persistent counter-pressure corresponds to the re-action of karma. Simple as this example is it well illustrates the principle underlying this universal law.

In the physical world the resistances offered to activity are recognised, widely known, and comparatively easy to foresee and to estimate. The physicist and the chemist can relate effect to cause in physical terms by repeated experiment, and can formulate a host of unvarying results; and such karmic reactions to known causes can be entered confidently in students' textbooks. But in mental and emotional activity the reaction of karma is more obscure, the effects being by no means easy to foresee. Within certain limits of probability, yes: for example, an insult will be quite likely to

\* *The Secret Doctrine*, 3rd Edition, I. 55-7; Adyar Edition, I. 91-2.

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arouse an angry retort; a blow struck may well cause a hundred to follow; a kind answer may be sometimes able to turn away wrath; a thought-provoking theory will be fairly sure to stimulate the criticism of an opponent. All such reactions as these can be foreseen with some certainty, but on larger issues, especially those with delayed results, evidences of the workings of karma are often not at all apparent. Yet the occult teaching quoted above admits of no exception whatever throughout the three planes, that of physical action, that of emotional desire, and that of thought; indeed, so wide-flung and all-embracing is the law that the effects of causes set moving in this life may wait over till a later incarnation of their originator. However long delayed they will inevitably attend him.

This triple world, of thought, emotion, and physical action, is, in a very real sense, one world, a world, moreover, in which the human being always lives, whether he is using a physical body or not. The law of karma operates unerringly throughout this field, and the reason of its inexorable consistency is simple enough to understand in principle, however complex it may prove to be in the details of its out-working.

The fundamental basis on which the principle of karma rests is to be found in the structure of that "fabric of darkness", the Web,\* within which all action, whether in physical terms, or in terms of emotion or of thought, operates and manifests. Reverting to the illustration of the musical instrument, it is obvious that whenever the strings are touched they will continue to vibrate until the disturbance caused by finger or bow has been straightened out and all is at rest and silent again. On the vast scale of the Web this appears to be exactly what happens.

For life to become conscious, aware of living, it must meet with resistance, opposition, just as, in the process of walking,

\* The structure of this is described at length in *The Web of the Universe*, Chap. III.

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it is necessary to be opposed by gravity if any progress is to be made. The resistance life meets with in the Web at once occasions friction, and this friction, which is due to the strains set up in the Web, converts life into consciousness, pure life-force thus becoming acute awareness, and capable eventually of achieving self-knowledge and understanding.

To pursue our illustration a little further: the sound-waves from the violin have to be accepted and absorbed by the surrounding material, the atmosphere and the walls, before they can die away. If not accepted, the sound will for a long time continue to echo and re-echo back and forth, as happens in a rock-hewn cavern. On the same principle—the scale does not change this—all disturbances and distortions set up within the Web have to be accepted and absorbed before they can cease; and herein lies some explanation of the complexities of karma. For the disturbances aroused in the Web, valuable beyond price in their worth to consciousness, all have to be accepted and adjusted, transmuted and absorbed by their authors, before they can die away. The Web, having fulfilled its purpose, then recovers its pure and static condition, and becomes again a “fabric of darkness”, in equilibrium.

The complexity attending action and reaction, activity and recovery, during manifestation, is largely due to the primitive and partially conscious life with which the Web is flooded, and which in its totality constitutes the elemental kingdoms of nature\*—those which precede and lead on to the mineral kingdom. This elemental life also functions in and through the material forms of man, animal, plant, and mineral, and provides the independent and automatic life and consciousness of the organs, cells, molecules, and atoms, that compose physical, emotional, and mental bodies. This elemental life is on the involutory arc, on the descent, seeking eagerly the precision and clarity of experience that comes with ever more and more narrowly circumscribed forms. The instinctive, automatic skill engaged in such intricate processes as

\* *The Web of the Universe*, Chap. IV.

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digestion, gland secretion, blood circulation, disease resistance, etc., is all due to the activity of this elemental life-stream. Man uses bodies aflame with this thrusting, fiery urge of the divine life streaming through the Web on the way down into forms and searching for every opportunity to contact the denser material of the world. The friction aroused by the journey of mankind when it lies in the opposite direction, the upward path, is inevitably severe. But when the purpose of this elemental life is understood, and some skill in handling it acquired, its instinctual impulses can be dominated and its energy can be used by man in his own creative work. The relationship of a man to the elemental life of his bodies is very much like that of a sailor to the contrary and captious winds which buffet his boat. A beginner, faced with this opposition, would be threatened with disaster; the accomplished sailor trims his sails and skilfully steers his boat to harbour by using the very winds which seem so strongly to resist him. The elemental life resembles the opposing winds, and it has similarly to be understood and used to serve the human being's own need.

Every thought and every personal emotion generated by man is seized eagerly by this active elemental life, and held, as long as is possible, separately enveloped, clothed and nurtured—treated, indeed, as a gift from a god. Moreover, the elemental life continually seeks to have such gifts revitalised and strengthened by further thoughts and feelings of the same nature and from the same source. Hence the easy recollection, from memory, of any incident to which a man has vividly reacted, as, for instance, the very unwelcome insistence of some mental or emotional worry which the elemental treats as a thrilling toy. Some thoughts, separated in this way into thought-forms, if coloured and energised by strong feeling, may last for long periods of time.

When habit and intensity of feeling form a deep entanglement of elemental life within the Web it is called in the east by a Sanskrit term—a skandha. Such strongly built thought-

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forms, or skandhas, are naturally closely associated with the person who generated them, and if they are not dealt with and dissipated during physical life then their magnetic connection with him will tie them to him while he is in the subtler worlds after death, and they will attend him on his rebirth into a physical body. They may be good or bad, and in either case are likely powerfully to influence him as the new personal bodies develop, endowing him with augmented skill or sapping his energies by gross temptations, according to their character. All skandhas reach their author as subtle mental forms, and all have to be resolved before harmony can be restored.

Mme Blavatsky says in *The Key to Theosophy*, page 95 :

After allowing the soul, escaped from the pangs of personal life, a sufficient, aye, a hundredfold compensation, karma with its army of skandhas waits at the threshold whence the Ego emerges to assume a new incarnation. It is at this moment that the future destiny of the now-rested Ego trembles in the scale of just retribution, as it now falls once again under the sway of active karmic law.

These temporary distortions of emotional and mental creations, the skandhas, serve a useful purpose during many lives. They strengthen the personality by assisting in the fixing and colouring of personal opinions and prejudices, thus enhancing the sense of self-importance. Without such personal incentives the majority of people would be apt to be listless and insipid, "neither hot nor cold", and would meet with few experiences. Although some distress and pain attends the dissipation of these skandhas, all, in the long run, have to be faced and dispersed. Like the weighted boots a diver wears to help him while under water they become a heavy handicap when consciousness broadens out towards impersonality and attempts to function in the free air of a more spiritual atmosphere.

As each skandha is resolved and its "debt" paid, it yields

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its life, transmuted, as an added power to the ego, while the hitherto separated form is dissolved and ceases to exist. Thus, harmony is restored. It is through the release of the conscious self from such ties and debts that liberation is reached and the pearl of great price—SELF-consciousness, conscious unity with the divine life—is won.

It will be gathered from this brief exposition that the reaction called karma is, in its simplest definition, a persuasive restoration to a state of equilibrium or silence in the worlds of form. As rain-clouds yield to a thirsty land, forms serve their purpose and cease to be as man wins his freedom from their assistance and their claims. And not man as an individual alone; inevitably he shares the karma of those around him, of his race, and of the world. The resolution of the world's karma opens the highway for humanity to the unity of a creative hierarchy—the Creative-Artificer-to-be of a new Universe.



## XII

### GOVERNMENTS AND PEOPLES

A TRADITION found even to-day among several peoples is that their ancient dynasties were founded by the Sun-God, and that their present rulers can therefore trace their descent directly from the Sun. In the light of certain occult teachings relating to the divine kings of the earliest races of earth humanity, this claim of various fourth root-race peoples—such as the Chinese, the Japanese, and the earlier inhabitants of the Americas—does not appear so fantastic as it sounds. Indeed it becomes understandable as a tradition.

A very appropriate ruler for a young humanity, supposing that such were available, would be one skilled in the understanding of human needs and with experience based on that gathered in other and earlier worlds. If the solar system is viewed as an organised whole, with organic relations between its various planetary units, then such an idea becomes at least theoretically tenable. A staff of highly-developed Beings, of a nature inconceivably more expanded and potent than that of any human consciousness, as at present developed, would be responsible for adjustments between one planet and another, and could and would send or give assistance to humanity in its struggles to establish itself in any new field.

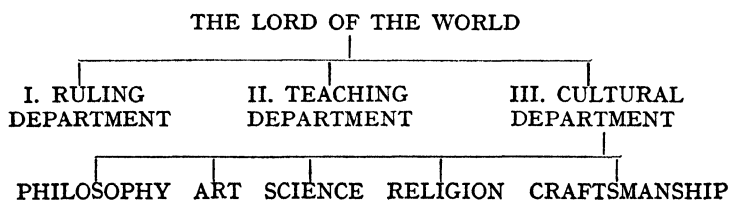
It is stated that an Inner Government has reigned over our world from the very beginnings of its existence as a planet, and that it still reigns, as a branch of the central Solar Government of our system. Such is the teaching—a theory it may be called—that presents us with material for a fascinating speculation as to the real principles of government. Details of this theory, to which we have access, are as follows :

For the current cycle of physical experience, our planet, the earth, would seem to be occupied actively for about forty

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million years.\* Throughout this period it is in charge of a viceroy of the Solar Logos, a viceroy appointed from another and older chain of worlds within the solar system, a mighty Being who has long ago passed through the human stage of growth and risen far beyond the capacities of even the most advanced of human beings. Known in occult science as The Lord of the World, he holds office as THE KING, and corresponds in every practical particular to the Deity of the world's present philosophic and religious cults. Using an hereditary body, of superlative quality, he is revered as being omnipresent throughout the earth, in the sense that he has the ability to respond at will to mankind's every thought, feeling, and action. He is omniscient within the limits of his world by virtue of knowing intimately the solar archetypes, the "architectural plans" related to our world, which are destined to become manifest on earth. He is omnipotent also, in a relative sense, within our world's orbit, because of his immediate access to the solar power-principle, although (we are told) this is used with the utmost reserve and calls for the highest possible degree of wisdom in its manipulation.

Directly under this mighty Being are the heads of the three great departments of government: the ruling, the educational, and the cultural. The last named is sub-divided into five branches: philosophy, art, science, religion (spiritual leadership in person), and skilled action or craftsmanship (which includes ceremonial). There are thus seven departments, or rays, in all. These relationships may be displayed as follows:



\* *The Earth and Its Cycles*, E. W. Preston, page 20. Theosophical Publishing House, London.

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Here we evidently have a model for all earthly government, a form of government, moreover, that was used for humanity throughout the first two root-race periods of our world-occupation, and part of the third. The tradition of divine kings and their descent from the Sun is explicable, for the rulers appointed in this early government of mankind were from among those who came over to our earth from other and older planetary worlds. Of a lofty nature, quite other than of the ordinary humanity of that period, they must indeed have appeared as radiant beings, Sons of Heaven, divine offsprings of a Solar God. Later these appointed Beings withdrew from active work on earth, and many have now passed on to other planetary tasks. Yet a few remain, and, as the heads of the departments or offices named above, and with a few of the most developed of our humanity they constitute, under THE KING, the Inner Government of our world, and are collectively known as The Hierarchy. Exceedingly rarely in these days are any of the higher ranks of these seen and known by men in personal or physical terms. Only through and by means of the spiritual principle in man can they be known, though, occasionally, when the need has been urgent, a messenger representing the teaching department has incarnated among men. We may recognise such messengers in Zoroaster, Gautama, Jesus. Says a Hindu scripture : "Whenever there is decay of righteousness, O Bhārata, and there is exaltation of unrighteousness, then I Myself come forth; for the protection of the good, for the destruction of evil-doers, for the sake of firmly establishing righteousness, I am born from age to age."\*

The heads, or rulers, of humanity during the early cycles on our earth were thus of the same nature as THE KING, and were his active representatives. Their outer governments were also a direct copy of the Inner Government, officers corresponding to those on the inner model being appointed by the ruler to administrative posts. The first system of

\* *Bhagavad-Gita*, IV. 7-8.

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ordinary earthly government was thus strictly hierarchical, for all appointments were made from above and the heads of departments and sub-departments were wholly responsible for good government, each one being directly accountable to his immediate superior. "The burden of wrongdoing or distress suffered by the subject lay on the shoulders of the Chief." Such is the principle of hierarchical government; indeed the term itself is significant in its implications: *hieros*, sacred, *archo*, to rule.

In the three early races—the Borean, the Hyperborean, and the Lemurian, as they are called—when mankind was passing through its infancy and childhood, in subtle and largely non-physical bodies, the guiding hand of competent representatives of the Inner Government was needed, just as the newborn infant and growing child of to-day needs the assistance of parents and teachers. The racial past is, indeed, recapitulated rapidly every time a child is born, as the still earlier stages of form-construction are repeated in the womb before birth.

Just as to-day, the young man and woman leave school and university when of age and go out to make their own independent way in the world, so during the third race period mankind emerged from its youthful state of dependency on others, began to stand on its own feet and to live its own life in the light of its own powers. During the third and fourth root-races the guiding hand was gradually and wisely withdrawn, and the skilled hierarchical direction of the earlier days remains in the race memory to-day merely as a legend of a Golden Age of happiness and plenty. To have continued all its days in the leading-strings of hierarchical government would have meant a humanity largely composed of childish nurslings and incompetents. It is in the bitter struggle for self-dependence, with its inevitable creeds of selfishness and competitive strife, that individualism becomes firmly established; and the stable worth and integrity characteristic of the best of humanity to-day was gleaned from and

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among the devastating frictions of the third and fourth root-race periods. The process continues in our own times, though the emphasis to-day is shifting somewhat.

Of the seven root-races of our world occupation the first two were born and nurtured under the benevolent overlordship of divine kings appointed by The Lord of the World. During the third, fourth, and fifth root-races humanity has had more or less to fend for itself, having been set the task of firmly establishing the individuality, and we are still in that position. In the sixth and seventh root-races, as yet almost wholly unborn, the hierarchical system of government, with its principle of the reign of the wise, is again to be installed. As the growth of humanity is outlined and foreshadowed in the ancient teachings, the fifth period will see the perfection of the intellectual faculty, and the emergence of the higher mind, illumined by wisdom, the intuition. In the sixth root-race the aspect of wisdom, with its direct perception of unity and its power of perceiving true values, will be dominant. Hence will arise the possibility of re-establishing the original hierarchical form of government, with the vast difference that the kingly heads and rulers will be of our own humanity and selected by their fellows because their worth is recognised and valued. This is the Utopia, the Golden Age, of the future, the theme of many an inspired forecast and the germ of truth within many a myth and prophecy.

Meanwhile there is a lengthy middle-period of adjustment and experiment during which three root-races of mankind overlap and are contemporary: the third (black, Lemurian), the fourth (yellow, Atlantean), and the fifth (white, Aryan). The peoples of these root-races, in order that initiative and a sense of responsibility be awakened, experiment with forms of government that are known as autocratic, oligarchic, and democratic, of different degrees of precision and often interwoven. The seven root-races and their methods of government may roughly be charted as follows:

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RACES I & II.

RACES III, IV & V.

RACES VI & VII.

Government - Hierarchical: offices filled by experienced rulers from other spheres.

Autocratic, oligarchic and democratic governmental systems; all experimental and educative.

Government - Hierarchical: offices filled by the wiser members of our humanity.

It will be found that no one of the experimental forms of government is ever quite true to its name, each having in it more or less of the elements of the others.

In terms of root-races and of world-age, humanity is now well-advanced being in the fifth root-race and at a stage where it may be said to be approaching a return to the hierarchical system of government and of society. Whether the time taken for this return be long or short is wholly, entirely, in human hands. Mankind is of age, and must decide for itself. The physical world has been adequately mastered: it is ours for the using; what is still needed is a recognition of the One Life and its corollary, a world-embracing spirit of brotherliness, which would, in their turn, ensure the practical policies of international federation and economic reform. To achieve this may take decades or millennia. It rests with us.

At the present time the so-called dictator states of Europe are affording some interesting experimental efforts towards one-man rulership. So long, however, as the hierarchical principles of *social responsibility of the leaders* and *freedom for the individual* are violated, the government is wide of the model and cannot last. The partial success of the dictators is nevertheless very significant; but it must not be forgotten that whenever experiments threaten seriously to handicap and retard the Inner Government's evolutionary plans for the world, certain forces of a destructive intent are automatically generated and may be released with tremendous and salutary effect for humanity. And because it is humanity that is being freed, it is humanity that must wield them.

The aspect of Deity as destroyer seems to be very much

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better understood in Hindu philosophy than in the philosophy of our western world. Indeed, in their very naming of the three aspects of Deity—Shiva the Destroyer, Vishnu the Preserver, and Brahmā the Creator—the clue is given. The function of Shiva, the First Person of the Trinity in Hinduism, is described as that of releasing the imprisoned life from outgrown and outworn forms—a most merciful act and a most welcome boon. Throughout the plant kingdom, and almost entirely throughout the animal kingdom, the death of the old and outworn body is accepted as a beneficent matter-of-course. In the human kingdom alone has life become so identified with form that any threatened dissolution of the body tends to arouse apprehension and dismay, as is seen in the ordinary human being's reaction to the incidence of death.

There are many other thought-entanglements of a hurtful character which, as well defined thought-forms active on their own plane, induce and foster modes of thinking and action that are racially outgrown. Desire-forces arising from selfish personal aggrandisement, crude thought-conceptions underlying much of the dogma of religions, exclusive political ideologies—these and similar impedimenta to progress find in certain levels of the elemental life of nature's kingdoms an eager welcome. Such humanly built mental forms—real and objective in their own world—provide the "transport" enabling certain grades of that life to hasten their outward sweep into denser material experience. Yet from the advancing human point of view such thought entities are deterrent and retrograde. The sword of Shiva, the human Will, is the potent weapon that should be used to dissolve them.

In earlier times similar mental growths of a very gross character were able to sustain a lengthy separate existence in the subtler world of thought and, when energised by the lowest type of elemental life, assumed often rather fearful shapes. These were the originals of the legendary stories of fire-breathing dragons infesting certain areas of country

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that trained knights of valour set forth to slay. Of a minor order there are many troubling the world to-day!

In the normal activity of plant and animal life about us nature makes no mistake when she quietly disperses forms that the imprisoned life may be released. Although we may warmly sympathise with an attitude of harmlessness to all living creatures, and even accept it as an ideal, common sense very quickly marks certain limitations to which we must conform at present. A reasonable compromise is indicated. Pure and undiluted harmlessness, for instance, is quite inconsistent with cleanliness. If whole-heartedly adopted, one would have to be content to live in dirt and cumulative dirt; disinfectants and anti-septics could never be used, for they involve the slaughter of countless millions of living creatures; vermin of all kinds would be respected and insecticides would be taboo; all weeding, of course, would have to be abandoned, and the garden incinerator abolished. In these and in a hundred other directions the destroying hand must be stayed, if pure harmlessness is to be the rule. The reply, of course, is that the line must be drawn somewhere. Exactly so: and it is man who has to decide the position of the line, has to say "Thus far, and no farther" to certain forms, for he is the agent and representative of the Inner Government here and now and for the whole future period of our world-occupation.

Faulty religious teaching has posited such a gulf between God and man that for many people it is probably a novel idea that man and God are as closely related as are one's hands to one's mind. In this triple world of thought, emotion, and action in which we all live, it is human consciousness that is now the outermost and advancing cutting-edge of God's consciousness; for all further development, all progressive evolution, now depend on man's ability in the exercise of his spiritual principles to reach and interpret and apply the archetypal plans. The task is actually well within man's power. Every true artist obtains his inspiration from



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that same source. And the rôle of Shiva may be a very necessary help to him in the troublous times of the third, fourth, and fifth root-race periods.

On the involutory arc, quite recently concluded as time counts in such a task, multitudes of experimental forms of every kind and permutation have been tried out. The plant and animal kingdoms swarm with the evidence of ways in which the driving, searching life explored every open path for expression. Although the involutory work of immersion in form has been triumphantly achieved, it has necessarily left hosts of experimental attempts near to the border line of failure, leading to the childish exclamation, "I wonder why God made that? What's its use?" Such comparative failures, such "mistakes", if persistently able to defy nature's methods of extinction, must be eliminated to avoid a weighty handicap on the more suitable and useful genera and species. Shiva's chief agent in this work is now mankind, but his destroying hand must be guided by pure illumination. His help too, in this direction, may be needed in other kingdoms than the plant and animal; and this view is not contrary to the underlying principles of harmlessness and brotherhood, but rather their fulfilment, by releasing life from the trammels of the outworn.

Under the burden of the primitive theory of an almighty and all-wise Deity, in the absolute sense, many problems presented, such as this need for a destroyer, are quite inexplicable; indeed, such problems, if coupled with the theory of the absolute nature of God, reduce the situation we see around us on all sides to absurdity. On the other hand, if the world is viewed as a creation, in the truest and highest artistic sense, as an effort that may either succeed *or* fail, a brilliant and illuminating light is thrown on the whole problem. For the Great Artificer, although exercising a skill superlatively greater than we can fully understand, nevertheless needs the assistance of tools, conscious tools, of his own fashioning. As success or failure may depend on the quality and temper

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of a craftsman's hands and tools, so it may be that the success or failure of our world-scheme now depends, to a very large extent, on the quality of humanity's co-operation, for we are the conscious tools in the hands of the Artificer. In such a view as this there is revealed a thrilling and glorious vision of man's lofty rôle as co-creator with God, and something of the imperative need for human understanding of the Great Plan.

Mankind is now of age. The work of its manhood lies before it.

## REVIEW

THE occult teaching known as *The Secret Doctrine* presents a philosophy and a science very different from those reached by ordinary deductive and inductive processes. But the occult doctrines are never imposed upon the student as authoritative and compulsive; always they are submitted as theories for consideration, as rational explanations of natural phenomena, as opening promising avenues for research, worthy of investigation by the sincere and uncompromising seeker after Truth. In summing up the salient features treated in these pages it is well to emphasise the spirit of intellectual freedom in which they are offered.

Life is One in essence. It develops differences in manifestation to meet the need of the many forms built and used. The kingdoms of nature, in all their multitudinous variety, are expressions throughout their whole range of this life, however much such expressions may differ in degree and apparently in kind.

In the densest material as in the subtlest, in the last analysis of substance as in the loftiest experience of consciousness, light appears to be the potent drive behind all creative activity. Life and light appear to be practically synonymous. The flow of life, or light, outward from its source, the Sun, is followed by its ebb or return. This flow-and-ebb movement is characteristic of life's every manifestation, from the highest to the lowest. In its swift outflowing expression the pulses of force act as the positive, creative aspect; the dark intervals, the "absences", are the ebb, for, in effect, they allow of reaction. Herein is the original of all contrasts and opposites, of light and darkness, day and night, presence and absence, life and death. Countless numbers of each of these flow-and-ebb periods occur during every second of our time. Flow and ebb are of the essence of creativeness, for creative activity

## THE PLAY OF CONSCIOUSNESS

demands an opposite able to re-act, to offer resistance, in order that the creation may stand forth, ex-ist, in time, and thus emerge from the slumber, the equilibrium, of the Eternal.

The One Life pervades our solar system. Coming forth from the Sun it is as an ocean of light, of energy. A vast network, a Web, is woven to entrap and condense it, so that its diffused powers may be concentrated and acutely differentiated. In microcosmic man the solar archetypal macrocosm is re-presented, and a high degree of concentration attained. Man is said in the Christian scriptures to be made in God's image, and the ancient wisdom expounded in *The Secret Doctrine* supports this statement with all its implications. To complete the creation conceived by the Divine Artist the self-conscious assistance of man as the tool or hand of the Supreme is essential for success. God, immanent, achieves his own goal in the perfection of humanity.

In the earlier rounds and races of mankind, the dense physical body was established as a fulcrum for the later expression of spiritual power. In the middle period of our world-occupation, through which mankind is now passing, the emphasis is swinging over to the subtler levels of man's being and to the problems of consciousness. Of these problems, feeling and thought are the most significant and important. After the trained development and discipline of the objective mind of man, which coincides with the earlier use of the physical, his densest, body, there follows the self-conscious development of the higher mental lens. Because of its power of focussing the divine light upon the screen of the lower mind, this lens endows man with the very highest creative potencies. Working from such a centre whence he "cannot err", man may share in the creative task of the spiritual Sun, the Logos, and thus take his place in the ranks of a new creative hierarchy.

The higher plane, or world, of archetypes, wherein the plans of our future world inhere, is open to man as he achieves self-conscious awareness of that focal point, that centre,

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through which he may contact the divine life which is himself. It was through the work of the skilled creative hierarchies who preceded our humanity that the plan of manifestation designed for our world and its inhabitants was scaled down and extended into the detailed material forms which comprise our present kingdoms of nature. Such is the marvellous quality of our world's material, all built of light, that it retains within itself, imprinted in terms of modified motion, the record of all incidences, all changes in which it has shared. The history of the past is engraved thereon for all time and may be read by those who can respond to and reproduce on their own mental screens the reels of these impressed "photographs". The past in its entirety is here with us now. And in the archetype the splendour of the future may also be read, although full success in its consummation waits intimately upon the work of human co-creators.

If our humanity is to take its part in the building of the future, using the higher mental principle to focus the light of the archetypal patterns and bring them through into physical existence, it will need to use all the resources of modern science and material organisation to achieve the desired result. To-day this is happening in part, with evident dangers, because the basic spiritual laws have not been perceived, or having been perceived have not been followed.

While the oneness of life implies, obviously, the brotherhood of man, this is far from being widely accepted, much less practised. Such ideals as brotherly internationalism based on the essential interdependence of mankind are repudiated and even ridiculed to-day by some Western nations, and sympathetic movements are being rigorously suppressed. Although the ideal be philosophically sound the press of national interests and the growth of special and separatist ideologies overlie deeply the spiritual principle of the unity of life. Hence the need and timeliness of citing the occult teaching concerning the Inner Government of the World and its official hierarchical method of rule. This

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latter was the model adopted for the earlier races of mankind on our earth, and later it will be again established. For the middle period through which we are passing, the experimental types of government now in vogue have a great value in social education, particularly the democratic form, with its responsibilities for individuals, its emphasis on freedom and on the innate integrity of the individual. The true expression of the mind of man demands this freedom, and to ensure it the creative use of the will is imperatively necessary. The mind in its highest development is the constructive, creative principle which, appropriately, comes into its own on the upward arc of evolution. With the protective power of the will exercised to remove the outworn and superfluous and to guard the field, the clarified and illumined mind may intuitively perceive Truth.

I go to gather this  
The sacred knowledge, here and there dispersed  
About the world, long lost or never found.  
Why ever make man's good distinct from God's?  
Or, finding they are one, why dare mistrust?  
Mine is no mad attempt to build a world  
Apart from His.

*Paracelsus*, ROBERT BROWNING.

















