

The Evolution of Consciousness

As Revealed Through Initiation Knowledge



THIRTEEN LECTURES BY
Rudolf Steiner
RUDOLF STEINER

RUDOLF STEINER (1861–1925) called his spiritual philosophy ‘anthroposophy’, meaning ‘wisdom of the human being’. As a highly developed seer, he based his work on direct knowledge and perception of spiritual dimensions. He initiated a modern and universal ‘science of spirit’, accessible to anyone willing to exercise clear and unprejudiced thinking.

From his spiritual investigations Steiner provided suggestions for the renewal of many activities, including education (both general and special), agriculture, medicine, economics, architecture, science, philosophy, religion and the arts. Today there are thousands of schools, clinics, farms and other organizations involved in practical work based on his principles. His many published works feature his research into the spiritual nature of the human being, the evolution of the world and humanity, and methods of personal development. Steiner wrote some 30 books and delivered over 6000 lectures across Europe. In 1924 he founded the General Anthroposophical Society, which today has branches throughout the world.

THE EVOLUTION OF CONSCIOUSNESS

*The spiritual and physical evolution of the world
and of humankind in the past, the present and the
future, from the point of view of anthroposophy*

INTERNATIONAL SUMMER SCHOOL, 1923.

Promoted by the Anthroposophical Society.

Pennanenmawr, North Wales.

August 18th to September 1st.

PRELIMINARY SYLLABUS.

On Saturday, August 18th, in the Town Hall, at 6.30 p.m. an Address of Welcome will be given to Dr. & Frau Steiner and party, to which Dr. Steiner will respond.

On Sunday, August 19th, at 10.30 a.m., Dr. Steiner will commence a course of Lectures which will be given every morning at the same hour. The subject of the Lectures will be

Spiritual and physical evolution of the world and
humanity, past, present, and future, from the point
of view of Anthroposophy.

They will be delivered in German, and a synopsis in English will be given by Mr. George Kaufmann, M.A.

CLASSES for the discussion of the Lectures, and other Classes for the assistance of those who are commencing the study of Anthroposophy, will be conducted every day by members of the Anthroposophical Society: It is hoped that

Mr. Collison, Mr. Dunlop, Miss Groves, Mr. Kaufmann, Mrs. Merry, Mr. Metaxa, Mr. Purchas, and others will assist in conducting some of these classes.

Baron Rosenkrantz will give two Lectures on "Anthroposophy and the Artist of To-day."

There will be four ^{or} five Demonstrations of EURHYTHMY, under the direction of Frau Marie Steiner, by students trained at Dornach. These will take place in the evenings.

Instruction in Eurhythm will be given, if desired, by qualified teachers on terms to be arranged.

NOTICES will be posted giving the detailed programme for each day.

All Lectures and Eurhythm Demonstrations will be held at the Town Hall; and Classes and Discussions either at the Town Hall or in the Common Room at Plas Mariandir.

E. C. MERRY, Hon. Sec.

Dr. Steiner will give a special lecture on Eurhythm and will also attend some of the students' discussions.

**THE EVOLUTION OF
CONSCIOUSNESS**

As Revealed Through
Initiation Knowledge

RUDOLF STEINER

*Thirteen lectures, two addresses,
two sessions of answering questions,
held in Penmaenmawr, North Wales,
from 18 to 31 August 1923,
supplemented by drawings*

RUDOLF STEINER PRESS

Translated by V. E. Watkin, C. Davy and P. Wehrle

Rudolf Steiner Press

Hillside House, The Square

Forest Row, RH18 5ES

www.rudolfsteinerpress.com

Published by Rudolf Steiner Press 2012

Originally published in German under the title *Initiations-Erkenntnis* (volume 227 in the *Rudolf Steiner Gesamtausgabe* or *Collected Works*) by Rudolf Steiner Verlag, Dornach. This authorized translation is based on the 4th edition. Published by permission of the Rudolf Steiner Nachlassverwaltung, Dornach

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A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN: 978 1 85584 315 8

Cover by Andrew Morgan Design

Typeset by DP Photosetting, Neath, West Glamorgan

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Publisher's Note

The fourth English edition of this volume was published in 1991. Besides checking and revising the translation used in that publication, we have added to this new edition fresh translations by Pauline Wehrle of Rudolf Steiner's Welcoming and Farewell Addresses, as well as two fascinating question-and-answer sessions. In addition, we have included the notes from the latest German edition (2000), some facsimiles and Marie Steiner's introduction written in 1927. Although the latter is clearly dated in some respects, we decided to include it as it adds a charming and poetic eyewitness account of Britain at the time of Rudolf Steiner's visits and some pertinent observations of the British character. More significantly, perhaps, it is written by Steiner's close colleague, travelling companion and wife.

SG, October 2006

Rudolf Steiner's Lectures in Britain

Marie Steiner's Preface to the first edition of this book (1927)

Rudolf Steiner liked speaking about spiritual science in Britain and did so on many occasions.

In Britain there is a certain openness in people's willingness to accept spiritual-scientific truths; they have a more liberal attitude to the unbounded possibilities. They are less afraid of the defeat of their hardly-won head knowledge; an inclination obstinately to resist anything new and unknown is less deeply ingrained; they are not so strongly entrenched in their scholarly vanity. They have a greater daring to go ahead and conquer unknown worlds.

What made present Britain into one people were the warlike tribes of various nationalities. After the Roman invasion came the conquering Germanic Anglo-Saxons who pushed back the native population of Britons and Gaels and drove them as far as the north-west coast of France; invading Frisians and Danes; the conquering Frankish Normans. Britain was conquered in this way several times and its people welded together after many a hard struggle. What arose out of this, however, was a strong, self-confident unity, a proud all-embracing self-reliance, a capacity to put their own mark on the character of other nationalities. The soul make-up comprising the characteristics of the various individual nations kept itself in balance, and this was maintained by an individual awareness that was raised to the point of feeling an integral part of their whole nation. Thus this many-faceted national unity was able to defy all outer attacks on its island fortress, surrounded as it was on all sides by seas turbulent yet protective, and developed energetically both its own self-confident independence as well as setting out to conquer the world.

Noblesse oblige. Both in respect of the mind as well as in respect of those things that concerned the State and humanity in general, it would have been unworthy of a nation as self-assured as this to curb its freedom of thought, stifle its

freedom of conscience, and restrict its freedom of action. Therefore Britain became the land where there was least hindrance when it came to looking for the spirit. Neither the power of the State nor Church coercion could ever extinguish it, not even secret organizations with Vehmic courts could do that.

If Rudolf Steiner had been able to work in English-speaking countries in the way he did in Middle Europe his name would even now be on every tongue. He would have been neither hushed up nor stigmatized; people would not have been after his honour and his life in order to make him harmless. Yet he had to speak there in a language foreign to his audience, at the time when hatred of things German was at its height, and however correct the translation might be it could never do justice to the vital artistry of his eloquence.

And yet his message got through. A faithful circle of pupils attached themselves to him and drew the attention of outsiders to this outstanding spiritual teacher. Then, although the war threatened, as it did everywhere, to stifle the seeds that had already begun to take root, they slowly broke through into new life.

No more than three years after the end of the First World War Rudolf Steiner was able to speak to a British audience on educational matters, and to begin with he did so in the Goetheanum in Dornach, Switzerland. Mrs Millicent Mackenzie, the well-known British educationalist, headed the circle of interested people who travelled from England to Switzerland to receive from new spiritual sources enlightenment on educational problems. The stimulus received on that occasion had its effects. First came an invitation to Rudolf Steiner to speak on the subject of art and education at celebrations held at Stratford-on-Avon in April 1922 in honour of Shakespeare's birthday. One lecture bore the title 'Drama in its Relation to Education' and the other one was 'Shakespeare and the new ideals'. It was a happy omen—one that carried them over the problem of national hatred—to meet in the common endeavour of celebrating Shakespeare's genius. It was Goethe who rediscovered Shakespeare for the world, and Rudolf Steiner—the one who had built the Goetheanum—had the spiritual knowledge to throw the kind of glaring light on Shakespeare that linked him to events of cosmic proportion, which served to turn him into a problem for our intellectual age which gropes around helplessly with its ineffectual hypotheses. The festivities that took place in Stratford in connection with the memorial celebrations, in which the representatives of the different countries joined in processions, were worthy of the joyful pride felt for the greatest of England's sons. Germany was not yet officially represented, but on the other hand it was represented by Rudolf

Steiner on a spiritual level and therefore in an all the more real sense. The bond was re-established, and as early as August 1922 Rudolf Steiner was able to speak about educational matters to a considerable circle of interested parties in Oxford, the charmingly beautiful university town in which, however, the Middle Ages still lingered.

The eight lectures on education and the subsequent debates led to the founding of the 'Educational Association' under the chairmanship of Mrs Millicent Mackenzie. The aim of this union was to make Rudolf Steiner's thoughts on education accessible to the widest circles and especially to British and American educational associations.

Such events were always coupled with lectures on spiritual science in London and in the place itself. As part of these visits there were also performances of the art of eurythmy given by artistes from the Goetheanum. Eurythmy is an art of movement that works with the oscillations of either music or the spoken word that can be spiritually perceived vibrating in the ether and sounding in the air. And as such it is a source of re-enlivenment for all the arts, and an educational factor which has not yet been adequately recognized as an answer to the needs of the spirit-starved coming generation. A gift of the living spirit, Rudolf Steiner presented it at a moment when requests for enlightenment in such matters were being pressed upon him. Thus what had begun originally as theoretical indications were speedily put into practice by responsive pupils, and from these beginnings there arose the new art which has effectually made its way into the cultural life of the present.

The enthusiasm which the young art kindled among Rudolf Steiner's friends in London led to a splendid result. By June 1926 a lecture hall and theatre was able to be opened in one of the most accessible parts of London (35 Park Road, NW1) which is called 'Rudolf Steiner Hall'.* The architect, Mr Wheeler, made a very pleasing combination of the building conditions necessitated by the London streets and inspiration coming from Rudolf Steiner's ideas on architecture. The chief function of the hall is to spread Rudolf Steiner's message and his conception of art.

His enlivening ideas for education also led to practical results. It began with the headmistress of an already existing country boarding school expressing her willingness gradually to change her system of education over to Rudolf Steiner's educational principles. The school was housed in a charming building, formerly

a Dominican abbey near London, by the name of Kings Langley Priory, and its head, Miss Cross, although she realized that it would take some time to alter existing arrangements into new teaching methods set about this with courage and loyalty, shunning no effort or disappointment. Straight after the Christmas course on education¹ in Dornach she began to put her resolve into action. Those who were in greater haste, and wanted to set up a school on the outskirts of London itself based on the educational principles of Rudolf Steiner, managed to realize their ideas in a relatively short time. By the year 1923, after a two-week cycle of educational lectures by Rudolf Steiner in Ilkley,² their resolve matured. And by June 1926 we were able to visit 'The New School', an excellently functioning school with a boarding establishment attached, in Streatham,* a pleasant suburb of London; it proceeds with joy and energy, and has already held an educational conference which has provoked interest.

The attractive practice of holding English summer schools brought it about that Rudolf Steiner visited not only places with well-known names such as London, Oxford and Stratford, but also remote areas which offer an interesting insight into the many-sidedness of British life. A foreigner is particularly struck by the clearly noticeable contrast between the most modern commercial/industrial enterprises and an atmosphere deeply cut off from the world. The world of cars, machinery, recorded music, speeding traffic and the superficiality of our modern cultural life borders directly on deep seclusion, cultural memories lying well before the Middle Ages, and geological formations which almost take us back to those times when continents arose out of the water. One can have impressions like these in Devonshire when travelling through the wilds of Dartmoor, and again on the coast of Cornwall on experiencing the onslaught of the ocean waves pounding round the rocky ruins of King Arthur's Castle in Tintagel. The Middle Ages, which are so wonderfully preserved in the British buildings, creates a splendid transition, making it possible to receive a strong impression of such contrasts. You can well understand that the British people must feel an inborn need to preserve the Middle Ages right into some of the national costumes and customs and into the system of guilds. It strengthens their self-awareness and also their national consciousness, and arms them against the socializing flood which is making its first attack against the mighty bulwark of their system of Empire. It also builds a bridge for their aesthetic consciousness to reach back to the hoary past, which is uncannily alive in the way it comes to meet them in moor and mountain top, in the movements and whisperings of the ether stirrings felt in the very earth formations themselves.

The first impression we had of such contrasts came to us in August 1923 on our visit to Ilkley. The journey takes you through the blackest industrial area: Leeds, Bradford, dreadful black buildings, monsters worthy of a Strindberg hell. Ilkley is a pleasant place at the foot of the Yorkshire moors. But here the ancient past speaks to you where, upon the moors, you find those hills of Druid stones, dolmens with engraved symbols which speak with the inner voice that bound the culture of those times to the existence of the spirit.

But this kind of experience is had even more forcibly in Wales in the legendary land of Merlin, whose much loved magic cloak was the rustling of the forest and the ocean spray. The train takes you from Ilkley through the overpopulated industrial area of the 'Black Country', with its carpet of railway lines, past the conglomeration of factories in Manchester to a bright and pleasant terrain. The medieval walls and battlements of Chester gleam and the blue bays of the approaching Irish Sea beckon to you. Gulls and other sea-birds in large colonies proclaim that their undisputed kingdom is about to begin. Mighty strongholds mount on high in magnificent proportions, subduing the wide valleys and binding themselves to the rocks. The realm of the nobility, that could be subdued neither by kings nor Church, make a powerful impression. All has now become poetry, poetry in the mysterious guise of stone and ivy. Up among the crags the heroic epic, below, among the gentle flocks of sheep on the green pastures, the idylls, where, in the trembling of the crowded backs of the sheep, reminiscent of the gentle movement of the seas, there quivers the pulse of the rhythm of worlds.

The pulse beat of time, which has been arrested in this part of the country, leads us by way of the Middle Ages to a northern antiquity which has come to a standstill. It existed once upon a time, and still does. It is there so strongly in the wild beauty of nature, in the strength of its elements, in the way the sun laughs through semi-cloudbursts, that the modern age can have little effect on it. It disappears in this environment.

Even if down on the road round the bay the cars whiz by in close formation almost like Piccadilly Circus, they are insignificant in this framework. Our gaze is drawn upwards, for it is here that most certainly the strongest claims are made on our attention. Huge gashes have been cut out of the mountain ridges; these are the quarries, and the villages which serve them lie there, black and gloomy, without any sign of an organic connection with surrounding nature. Railway lines, steam locomotives, blasting devices have bored their way into the primeval rock, tearing its veins. Nevertheless it is stronger than they are, and

defies them or laughs at them, according to whether the atmosphere dissolves or hardens the mountain. What dominates here is the sphere of the air and the light: the driving clouds, the rushing wind, the rain beating down time and again, or the playful showers, the sparkling sun that merrily subdues the commotion of the elements, then just as quickly hides away again. Teasingly and playfully a gloriously youthful element romps and threatens, now down below, now up above racing along, tearing along, right in the midst of all the evidence of venerable antiquity. Nevertheless up there behind those mountains there lives the past, standing there in mighty, lasting images; and still today people seek them out, their pilgrimage taking them up steep, steep slopes, not at all afraid to battle with the sharp winds whistling at them out of the ravines. A splendid reward is soon theirs. The bay disappears from sight, and they are surrounded by slope upon slope of radiant yellow, darkly glowing violet, gorse and heather. It flashes and hushes, beckons and glows with overpowering colour. Yet for staying and enjoying oneself nature is too raw. Struggling with the wind becomes more and more difficult, and you have to fight for every forward step. We are soon surrounded solely by rock, parched grass and moss. You have to brace yourself and protect yourself from being pulled to the ground; then you make headway and breathe in new strength from drinking in the lines and the colours of the horizon.

The Druids did not make it easy for their pilgrims. What a noble festival that must have been, how boldly conceived in its festive processions, as from all sides the people of the valleys and the slopes set out to climb to the summit. What solitude surrounded and filled them, with the whisperings of the desolate wastes, the depths, the vast expanses. Up there they were far away from the everyday world and close to the gods. Here, spirit beings spoke to them through the elements, here the sun left its signature in the lingering shadows; stones were the guarantee of these written characters, placed in a circle corresponding with the signs of the zodiac. Whatever sign of the zodiac the sun was passing through, this sign was stamped into the shadow of the stone, and the initiated Druid read the mystery it told him.

Facing towards the east stood a stone which, as the sun rose, received the direct impact of the heaven-sent shafts of light. By means of the horizontal placing of stones upon vertically standing ones, shadowy chambers were formed in which the sun again and again inscribed its message. In this way the priests, who were knowledgeable in the language of light and shadow, communed with the spiritual world, interpreting the commands which determined the ordering of their year,

their work, their festivals, their laws and their customs. Thus was wisdom received from the gods and transformed into human wisdom.

How alive this whole atmosphere still was in this country when the opportunity arose once more for the old wisdom to be taught, but this time in a quite new form, suited now to the demands of the present stage of historical development. It could be presented differently here than in Germany, where a scientific theory of cognition would have been an essential foundation. The British public could take a more direct spiritual approach. Both the mood and the courage for this was able to come from such a setting as Penmaenmawr with its retained imaginations.

This lecture cycle comprises the fruits of Rudolf Steiner's lecturing activity in Britain. It gave the opportunity to grasp the history of the spiritual evolution of the universe and of humankind from another aspect.

Penmaenmawr meant the unfamiliar intonation and breath of things exotic, yet which is permeated by the eternal spirit; not retentive or blocked as has happened in the mixing together of Celtic and Anglo-Saxon idiom, but which has a mysterious sparkle in the many breath sounds of its language.

Rudolf Steiner was moved to the heart to read this language which stirred with the atmosphere and etheric life of a past world, and he transformed the wisdom of those times into the wisdom of the present, pouring into it the ego force which will bring human beings back to God, and in going forwards and backwards, closing the circle, taking humanity with it. When past and future find their spiritual focus in the consciousness of a human being, thus embracing eternity, humankind will have arrived, once and for all, at the spiritual experience of the oneness of the development of cosmic and of human evolution.

Marie Steiner

Dornach, December 1926

* It is now called Rudolf Steiner House.

* It moved to Sussex during the War and is now called Michael Hall

• It moved to Sussex during the war, and is now called Michael Hall.

Knowledge should become the most heartfelt offering of soul

Rudolf Steiner

Welcoming Address

Penmaenmawr, 18 August 1923

Dear Friends,

The really warm and sincere welcome Mr Dunlop³ and Mr Collison⁴ have given Frau Dr Steiner and myself prompts me to say a few words today already, before the lectures start tomorrow. I find it extremely gratifying that Mr Dunlop together with his helpers wanted to organize this summer course on anthroposophy, and I hope that you, dear audience—whom I heartily welcome—will find some satisfaction, too, from its content.

I was especially happy about Mr Dunlop's choice of the theme, for it offers me the opportunity to link up what anthroposophy has to say regarding the present time, which also includes the near future, with humankind's oldest treasures of wisdom and the way human beings experienced the spirit in earliest times. In a certain respect, of course, it certainly is essential—and I admit I do thoroughly understand from the point of view of the spirit and purpose of the civilization of our present age what the committee that has invited us is saying—that through the very fact of laying on an anthroposophical course we are a little out of character with regard to anthroposophy as such. For in those earliest times—which we remember so fondly just because they revealed to us the oldest of our treasures of wisdom concerning our soul's spiritual home—when the people gathered together in places where this wisdom was cultivated, it was only with the greatest difficulty that they tore themselves away from the work which occupied them day by day throughout the course of the year. These were times which were so to say read from the cosmic order, and they would never have asked: Have we to neglect any of our secular affairs when we gather around the mysteries for these seasonal festivals which have been proscribed to us out of the cosmos, so that we can cultivate science, acquire knowledge of the spirit?

We cannot do it that way, for we have other things to do in the winter, and this is

why we come together in summer schools. For this reason we cannot carry on with the old customs. And as anthroposophy will enter mainstream civilization only in the future, we have to come together these days in our summer holidays, during the time when we, so to speak, have nothing else to do. This is the time for excursions and for going to festivals, and we have to use our holidays to pursue anthroposophical activities.

Now Mr Dunlop has already mentioned all the things that can happen to one; but even if it had happened to us that we had lost some of our luggage, anthroposophy would not have been in it, and we could all the same have brought it here intact. For anthroposophy is especially equipped to lift us above what can happen on a material level in space and time. And in discussing the very theme the committee have chosen, anthroposophy will transport us in the coming days into the most ancient times of humankind's evolution, a time when a living science formed the foundation for all that civilization and culture encompassed. What human beings were able to take hold of on their path to wisdom was not only in the form of dead concepts but was the living spirit itself, which could then flow into artistic creativity and religious experience, and raise human beings by way of art and religion into the regions where they could behold those beings which otherwise—dimly though unquestionably—spoke in the form of ethical, moral ideals.

During the course of the evolution of humanity, what had once been a compelling unity—science, art, religion and moral/social life—became separate. The great tree that represented the totality of human evolution put forth four branches: science, art, religion and morality. This was a necessary happening in the evolution of humankind—the only way each of these single branches of civilization could develop the strength it needed both for its own good and for the good of humanity.

But today we happen to be at an important moment in human evolution: the point of time when the compartmentalized nature of our relation to knowledge prevents us from connecting with the source of things required by our total being, which needs to engage all its inner forces, both subconscious and even unconscious, to draw from the realms of soul and of spirit what it needs for the attainment of its full humanity.

We are really and truly at an important moment in humankind's evolution. Those brothers, science, art, religion and moral/social life, who all have the same

mother, now need, after having gone their own way in the world for a while, to return once again to their native homeland, where they can see the mother they all share. We cannot take the same paths today that human generations of the past took in order to find humanity's spiritual light. Humankind is involved in a living evolution. The humanity of today is different from the humanity that sought in the ancient mysteries of India, of Egypt and Chaldea and of Greece for that which represented the mother of all human knowledge and skill, both in a spiritual and in a material direction. Today we must tread new paths, for we have become a new humanity.

It is these new ways to the spirit, ways that suit the present time and point us to the future, that anthroposophy wants to speak about. And the best way to do this may possibly be to attempt to do justice—even by only sketching it—to the theme our good committee has chosen for this summer course.

And we shall be especially pleased to be able to put on some performances of the new art which, although it is still in its beginnings, may just, by reason of its being still at the stage of struggling to find its identity, be best of all in a position to show us that today art too not only should but can be created out of the spirit.

We shall, of course, in the short time available to us only be able to present a small part of what we would like to bring. However, if our hearts are full of the feeling of the necessity to enable anthroposophy to come into the world today then our hearts will also be full of sincere gratitude to those who are providing the opportunity for the realization, in any area, of what anthroposophy is striving to bring into the further evolution of human civilization.

Speaking from out of all these feelings, you can believe me that my thanks to Mr Dunlop, Mrs Merry⁵ and all the members of the committee who have enabled this course to happen comes from the warmth of my heart, the depths of my soul. And this feeling of thankfulness really and truly springs from an understanding of all that such a committee has to do before such a course can take place.

To the same extent that we shall barely notice the hard work going on behind the scenes over the next few days that is an essential part of a eurythmy performance—and I am just mentioning this in passing—we shall also not give much thought to the extremely hard work such a committee does. And anyone who has admittedly worked on such a committee, not only many times, but many times squared, will realize in the pale faces of the committee members all that they

have already been through, and the worries just before the course starts and throughout the whole proceedings, and this will tell them just how much they deserve our respect. Anyone who is able to judge such things from their own experience, who is therefore a qualified authority on sizing up the degree of pallor of the committee members, can really express his thankfulness to an adequate extent. And I would like to do this, both in the name of Frau Dr Steiner, who has been so warmly welcomed, and on my own behalf.

I only hope that what we are going to bring to the events of the next few days will be as satisfying as we can make it, and that we can fulfil at least part of the expectations you brought with you. For we are also fully aware that people do not lose their expectations along with their luggage, but bring them along in full measure. And it is extremely difficult, on the other hand, to fulfil these expectations.

But anthroposophy as such happens to be something that actually speaks so deeply to the souls of present-day humankind, coming as it does from the very needs felt by everyone of our present civilization who are aware of what it means to be truly human, that even if with our weak forces we can only achieve relatively little our intentions can at least mean something. And we need to work with purpose. We see in every direction where humanity, over the past three to four centuries, having set things going on the basis of a glorious externalized material culture, cannot cope any more. It is like a material body which, having spread in all its external perfection over a large part of the earth, yet, like anything else that should be alive, requires soul and spirit. And anthroposophy is able, after all, to bring soul and spirit to this body that has arisen in so glorious a manner in the external material civilization of today. Just as anthroposophy is inspired by this spirit in everything it does, I sincerely hope that this spirit will pervade our work throughout the days of our summer school. And it is from out of this spirit that I would like to welcome you most heartily both in Frau Dr Steiner's name and in mine!

Lecture 1

First Steps in Imaginative Knowledge

19 August 1923

My dear friends, understanding the way the world evolves has, throughout the ages, been associated with understanding our own human nature. It is generally recognized that in the days when not only material existence but also spiritual life was taken into consideration a human being was looked upon as a microcosm, as a world in miniature. This means that human beings, in their being and doing, in the whole part they play in the world, were viewed as a concentration of all the laws and activities of the cosmos. In those days it was insisted that an understanding of the world could be founded only on an understanding of the human being.

But here, for those who are really unprejudiced, a difficulty arises at once. Directly people want to arrive at so-called self-knowledge—the only truly human knowledge—they find themselves confronted by an overwhelming riddle; and after observing themselves for a while, they have to acknowledge that this being of theirs, as it appears in the world of the senses, is not completely manifest even to their own soul. They have to admit that for ordinary sense perception part of their being remains hidden and unknown. Thus before they can reach knowledge of the world they are faced with the task of first looking for their true being, stirring this into evolving in the process of knowing themselves.

A simple reflection will show that our true being, our inner activity as an individual, cannot be found in the world that we encounter with our senses. For directly we pass through the gate of death we are given over as a corpse to the

laws and conditions of this sense-perceptible world. The laws of nature—those laws which prevail out there in the visible world—seize upon our physically dead part. In fact the system of relationships which we call the human organism now comes to an end, and after a time, depending upon the manner of burial, our physical body disintegrates.

From this simple observation, therefore, we see that the sum of nature's laws in so far as we come to know them through sense observation, is adapted solely to breaking down the human organism, but not to building it up. So we have to look for the kind of laws, for that other activity which during earthly life, from birth or rather conception until death, battles against the forces, the laws of dissolution. At every moment of our life we are engaged, with our inner human being, in a battle with death.

And if we now look around at the only part of the sense world understood by people today, the mineral, lifeless world, this certainly is subject to the forces that signify death for the human being. It is sheer illusion for natural scientists to think they could ever succeed by relying on the laws of the external world to understand even the plants. That will never be so. They will go some little way towards this understanding, and may cherish it as an ideal, but it will never be possible really to fathom plants, let alone the animals or physical human beings themselves, with the aid of the laws that surround us in the world we perceive with our senses.

As citizens of the earth, all the time between our conception and our death our essential inner being is fighting against the laws of nature. And if we really want to rise to self-knowledge we have to investigate that activity in the human being which works to combat death. Indeed, if we are going to explore human nature thoroughly (which is our intention in these lectures) we shall have to show how it comes about in the course of our development on earth that our inner activities ultimately succumb to death—how death gains the victory over the hidden forces opposing it.

For the moment, this is intended just to show the direction our studies are going to take. For the truth of what I am now saying will only gradually come to light in the course of the various lectures. To begin with, therefore, we can merely indicate, by observing human nature impartially, where we have to look for our innermost human being, our personality, individuality. This is not to be found within the realm of natural forces but outside it.

There is, however, another intimation—and such intimations are all I want to give today—that as earthly creatures we live in the present moment. Here, too, we need only be sufficiently unbiased to grasp all that this statement implies. When we see, hear or otherwise perceive with our senses it is the actual moment that is all-important to us. Whatever has to do with the past or the future can make no impression on our ears, our eyes or on any other sense. We are given up to the moment, and thereby to space.

But what would happen to people if they were entirely given up to the present moment and to space? By observing ordinary life around us we have ample proof that if people are thus completely engrossed they do not remain human in the full sense. Records of illness give evidence of this. Well-authenticated cases can be quoted of persons who at a certain moment in time became unable to remember any of their former experiences, and were conscious only of the immediate present. Then they do the craziest things. Contrary to their ordinary habits they buy a railway ticket and travel to some place or other, doing everything necessary at the time quite sensibly, in fact even more cleverly than usual. They have meals and do all the day-to-day things at the normal time. On arrival at the station to which they booked they take another ticket, possibly going in an opposite direction. They wander about in this way, maybe for years, until they find themselves somewhere and realize they do not know where they are. Then everything they have done from the moment they took the first ticket or left their home is blotted out from their consciousness, and they remember only what took place before that. Their mind, in fact their life altogether, becomes chaotic. They no longer feel themselves to be an integrated person in the way they were before. They had always lived in the present moment, and had always been able to relate properly to space, but they have lost their inner feeling for time; they have lost their memory.

The moment people lose an inner feeling for time—an actual inner connection with their past—their lives are thrown into chaos. Experience of space alone can do nothing for the health of their whole being.

In other words, where people's senses are concerned they are always given up to the moment, and in cases of some illnesses they can detach their immediate existence in space from their existence as a whole—but they then no longer have their full human capacities.

Here we have an indication of something in ourselves that belongs not to space

but only to time. So we must say that our experiences of space and time are different things, and our experience of time must always be present in us for our memory has to bring the past to life in us if our whole being is to be intact. Being present in time is something indispensable to us. Past time, however, is never there in the present moment; to experience it we must always carry it over into the present. So there must be forces within us for preserving the past, forces that do not arise out of space and are therefore not to be taken for laws of nature working spatially, for they are outside space.

These intimations point to the fact that if human beings are to be the central point of knowledge of the world and therefore have to begin by knowing themselves they must, above all, seek within themselves for that which can raise them above spatial existence—which is the sole existence of which the senses tell—and can make us not only beings in space but also beings in time. Therefore if we are to perceive our own being we must summon up in ourselves forces of knowledge that are not bound to our senses or our perception of space. It is just at this particular stage of human evolution, when natural science is making so momentous an effort in focusing attention on the laws of space that, for reasons to be shown in these lectures, the real being of man has in general been largely lost to view. Therefore it is particularly necessary just now to point out the inner experiences that, as you have seen, bring us out of space into time and its experiences. And we shall see how, proceeding from there, human beings actually enter the spiritual world.

The knowledge leading over from the world of the senses to the supersensible has been called throughout the ages initiation knowledge—knowledge, that is, of what constitutes the actual impulse, the active element of human personality. It is of this initiation knowledge that I am going to speak in these lectures, as far as is possible for people of today. For what we shall be studying is the evolution of the world and of man, in the past, present and future, in the light of initiation knowledge.

I shall therefore have to begin by speaking of how such an initiation knowledge can be acquired. The very way in which these matters are spoken of today significantly distinguishes present initiation knowledge from that of the past. In the past, individual teachers wrestled their way through to a perception of the supersensible content in the world and in man. On the feelings of the students who came to them they made a strong impression by virtue of their strong human qualities, and the students accepted the knowledge they offered, not

under compulsion but in response to the teacher's personal authority.

That is why, for the whole of the evolution of humankind up to the present time, you will always find described how there were groups of pupils under the guidance of a teacher, a 'guru',⁶ to whose authority they had to submit. Even on this point—as on many others we shall come across in these lectures—initiation science today cannot follow the old path. The 'guru' never spoke of the path by which he had achieved his own knowledge, and in those bygone times public reporting about the road to higher knowledge was never even considered. Such studies were pursued solely in the mystery centres, which in those days served as universities for those following a supersensible path.

With regard to the general level of human consciousness that has been reached at this moment in history, such a path would no longer be possible. Anyone speaking of supersensible knowledge today is therefore expected as a matter of course to say at the outset how this knowledge is acquired. At the same time everyone must be left free to decide, in accordance with their own way of life, what their attitude is to those exercises for body, soul and spirit through which certain forces can be developed in the human being. These forces can see beyond the laws of nature, beyond the present moment, into the true being of the world, and consequently into the true nature of the human being. Therefore the obvious course for our studies is to begin with at least a few preliminary remarks about the way by which a person of today can acquire knowledge of the supersensible.

So we must take our start from human beings exactly as they are in earthly existence in relation to space and the present moment. As earthly creatures human beings comprise in their soul and bodily nature—I say deliberately soul and bodily nature—a triad: a thinking being, a feeling being and a being of will. And when we look at everything that lies in the realm of thinking, in the realm of feeling and in the realm of the will, we have seen all of the human being that takes part in earthly existence.

Let us look first at the most important factor of our human nature through which we take our place in earth existence. This is certainly our thinking. To our capacity to think we owe the clear-headedness we need as earthly beings for surveying the world. In comparison with this lucid thinking our feeling is obscure, and as for our willing—those depths of our being from which the will surges up—all this for ordinary observation is to begin with entirely out of range.

Just think how little aware you are of your will in the ordinary way. Say you decide to move a chair. You first have the thought of carrying it from one spot to another. You have a mental picture of this. Then the essence of this mental picture passes, in a way you know nothing of, right into your blood and muscles. And what goes on in your blood and muscles—and also in your nerves—whilst you are lifting the chair and carrying it elsewhere exists for you only as a mental picture. You picture it mentally. But the real inner activity that goes on within your skin—of that you are wholly unconscious. Only the result returns as a thought.

Thus of all your activities when awake, the will is the most unconscious. We will speak later of activity during sleep. During waking activity the will remains in absolute obscurity; people know as little about the passing of a thought into willing as in ordinary life we know of what happens between falling asleep and waking. Even when we are awake we are asleep where the inner nature of the will is concerned. It is only the faculty of thinking, of mental picturing, that brings clarity into our earthly life. Feeling lies midway between thinking and willing. And just as dreaming happens halfway between sleeping and waking, as an indefinite, chaotic kind of picturing, a half-sleeping, half-waking state, feeling, too, comes halfway between willing and thinking, and is actually a waking-dreaming. So to take as our starting point what is closest to us, it has to be our thinking. But how does thinking run its course in ordinary life?

Actually, in our human make-up thinking plays a quite passive role. Let us be perfectly honest about this when observing ourselves. From the moment of waking until going to sleep our attention is directed to the world around us. We let sense impressions flow into us, and mental images become linked to these. When we turn away from these sense impressions we are left with the mental images which gradually turn into memories. But as I have said, if we observe ourselves honestly, we must admit that in these concepts acquired from ordinary life there is nothing which has not entered our soul from the external world through the senses. If we look objectively at what our soul contains we shall always find it was occasioned by some outer impression.

This applies particularly to the illusions of those mystics who—I am saying this expressly—do not penetrate to any great depth. They believe that by means of some kind of obscure inner training they can come to an inner experience of a higher divinity underlying the world. And these mystics, these half or quarter mystics, are often heard to say that an inner light has dawned in their souls, that

they have had some kind of spiritual vision.

People who observe themselves closely and honestly will come to see that many mystical visions can be traced to merely external sense experiences that have been transformed in the course of time. Strange as it may seem, it is possible for a mystic, say at the age of 40, to think he has had a direct imaginative impression, a vision of—I will take something concrete—the Mystery of Golgotha, that he sees the Mystery of Golgotha inwardly, spiritually. This gives him a feeling of great exaltation. Now a good psychologist, who can go back through this mystic's early life, may find that as a boy often he was taken by his father on a short visit where he saw a certain little picture. It was a picture of the Mystery of Golgotha, and at the time it made hardly any impression on him. But the impression remained, and in a changed form sank deep down into his soul to rise up again in his fortieth year as a great mystical experience.

This is something to be stressed particularly when anyone ventures more or less publicly to say anything about the paths to supersensible knowledge. Those who do not take the matter very seriously generally talk in a superficial way. It is just those who wish to have the right to speak about mystical supersensible paths who ought to know about the errors in this sphere which can lead people astray. They ought fully to realize that ordinary self-knowledge is chiefly made up of transformed external impressions, and that genuine self-knowledge must be sought today through an inner development, by calling up forces in the soul not previously there. This requires us to realize the passive nature of our usual thinking. It deals with all impressions in the way natural to the senses. The earlier things come first, the later ones later; what is uppermost in thought remains above, what is below remains below. As a rule, therefore—not only in ordinary life but also in science—a person's mental images merely trail after processes in the external world. Our science has gone so far as to make an ideal of discovering how things run their course in the external world without letting thinking have the slightest influence on them. In their own sphere the scientists are quite right; by following this method they have made the most enormous advances. But they are more and more losing sight of the true being of man. For the first step in those methods for developing inner forces of the soul leading to supersensible cognition, called by us meditation and concentration, is to find the way over from purely passive thinking to thinking that is inwardly active.

I will begin by describing this first step in a quite elementary way. Instead of a thought aroused by something external we can take one drawn entirely from

within and give it the central place in our consciousness. What is important is not that you can say that this thought is true, but that it should be drawn out of the depths of the soul in an active way. So it is not good to take anything we can remember, for in memory all manner of vague impressions cling to all our mental images. Therefore if we draw upon our memory we shall neither be sure that we are not letting extraneous things creep in nor be sure that we have really set about meditating with proper inner activity. There are three possible ways of proceeding, and there need be no loss of independence with any of them. A simple, easily grasped thought is preferable, a creation of the moment, and one that does not have anything to do with what is remembered. For our purpose it can even be something quite paradoxical, deliberately removed from any passively received thought. We have only to make sure that the meditation has been brought about through our own inner activity.

The second way is to go to someone with experience in this field and ask him or her to suggest a subject for meditation. There may then be a fear of becoming dependent on them. If, however, from the moment the meditation is received one is conscious that every step has been taken independently through an inner activity of one's own, and that the only thing not determined by oneself is the subject which, since it comes from someone else, has to be actively laid hold of — when one is conscious of all this, there is no longer any question of dependence. It is then particularly necessary to act in accordance with this awareness.

And finally the third way. A teacher can be chosen who, one might say, is at that moment invisible. Take a book you have never opened before, take a random page and read a chance phrase. You are thus sure of coming on something entirely new to you, which you now work on with inner activity. A subject for meditation can be made of the sentence, or perhaps of some illustration or diagram in the book, so long as you are certain you have never previously come across it. This is the third method. And in this way a teacher can be created out of the blue. The fact of looking out the book and of finding and settling for something in it is what constitutes the teacher.

Therefore it is perfectly possible nowadays to take the path to higher knowledge in such a way that the active thinking required will not be unjustifiably encroached on by any other authority. This is essential for present-day people. And in the course of these lectures we are going to see how necessary it is for people today, especially when they wish to make progress on the path to higher

worlds, to respect and treasure their own free will. For how, otherwise, is any inner activity to be developed?! Directly anyone becomes dependent on someone else his own will is inhibited. It is particularly important that meditation today should be carried through with inner activity, out of the will in thinking, which is hardly at all valued today, with modern science putting all the emphasis on passive observation of the outer world.

This is the way to win through to an active thinking, the rate of progress depending wholly on the individual. Some people will get there in three weeks, especially if they persevere with the same exercises. Others will take five years, or seven or more. The essential point is that they should never relax their efforts. A moment will come when they recognize that their thinking has really changed. It no longer runs on in the old passive pictures but is inwardly full of energy, a force which, although they experience it quite clearly, they know to be just as much a force as the force required to raise an arm or point a finger. We become acquainted with a kind of thinking that seems to sustain our whole being, a kind of thinking that can knock against an obstacle. And this is no figure of speech but an actual truth that we can experience. We know that ordinary thinking does no such thing. If I run into a wall and get a swelling, my physical body has received a blow through force of contact. My sense of touch enables my body to come up against outer things. I knock against them. Ordinary passive thinking does not knock against anything. It simply imagines it. For ordinary thinking is not actually a reality but only an image. The thinking we arrive at in the way described, however, is a reality, something within which we live. It can knock against something just as a finger can tap on a wall. And in the same way as we know that our finger will not penetrate everything, we know that with our real thinking we cannot fathom everything. It is the first step. We have to take this first step of activating our thinking and turning it into a soul organ of touch, so that we can feel ourselves thinking in the same way that we walk, touch and take hold of something; so that we know we are living in something real, not just in ordinary thinking which creates images, but in a reality, in a soul organ of touch, and this is what we have become, in our whole being.

This is the first step, to change our thinking so that we feel: Now you yourself, the whole of you, has become the thinker. That rounds everything off. And it is not the same with this kind of thinking as it is with physical touch. An arm, for instance, being part of us, grows as we grow. But the thinking that has become active is like a snail—able to extend feelers or to draw them in again. In this thinking we are living in something which is certainly full of strength but is also

inwardly mobile, which can advance and retreat, and is inwardly active. When this organ of touch is stretched out we can, as we shall see, feel our way about in the spiritual world or, if this is spiritually painful, draw back.

All this must certainly be taken seriously by those with any desire to approach the true nature of the human being—this transformation of oneself into an entirely different being. For we do not discover what man actually is unless first of all we have the chance of seeing in human nature something totally different from what our earthly senses perceive. What active thinking develops is the first supersensible member of the human being—later I shall describe it more fully. First there is the human physical body that can be perceived by our ordinary sense organs, and which offers resistance when felt with the ordinary organs of touch. Then we have our first supersensible member—we can call it the etheric body or the body of formative forces. It must be called something, but the name is immaterial. This is our first supersensible member, and it is just as perceptible for a higher power of touching—the form of touching into which thinking has been changed—as physical things are perceptible to the physical sense of touch. Thinking becomes supersensible touching, and by means of this supersensible touching the etheric body can, in the higher sense, be both grasped and seen. This is the first real step, as it were, into the supersensible world.

From the very way in which I have tried to describe the passing over of thinking into the experience of an actual force within one, you will realize how little sense there is, where genuine spiritual development is concerned, in saying, for example, that anyone who wished to enter the spiritual world by this path is merely indulging in fantasy or yielding to autosuggestion. For it is the first reaction of many people to say: ‘Anyone who talks of the higher worlds in connection with a training of this kind is simply picturing what he has suggested to himself.’ Then others take up the refrain, perhaps saying: ‘It is even possible that someone who drinks a lot of lemonade has only to think of it and his mouth immediately begins to water, just as though he were drinking lemonade. Autosuggestion has such power!’

All this may certainly be so, and those who are taking the rightful path we have indicated into the spiritual world must be well up in the things that physiologists and psychologists can arrive at intellectually, and they should have a thoroughly practical acquaintance with the precautions that have to be observed. But to anyone who believes he can persuade himself by autosuggestion that he is drinking lemonade although he has none, I would reply: ‘Yes, that is possible—

but show me the man who has quenched a real thirst with imaginary, autosuggested lemonade!’ That is where the difference begins between what is merely imagined passively and what is actually experienced. By keeping in touch with the real world and making our thinking active we reach the stage of living spiritually in the world in such a way that thinking develops into a touching. We do not touch tables and chairs, of course, but we learn to touch in the spiritual world, to make contact with it, to enter into a living relationship with it. It is precisely by means of active thinking that we learn to distinguish between the mystical fancies of autosuggestion and the experiencing of spiritual reality.

All these objections arise only because people have not yet looked into the way modern initiation science describes the path for today. They merely pass judgment from outside on a matter of which they may have heard simply the name or of which they have acquired a little superficial knowledge. Those who enter the spiritual world in the way here described, which enables them to make contact with it and to touch it, know how to distinguish between merely thinking afterwards about what they have experienced through active thinking and the perceptive experience itself. In ordinary life we can quite well distinguish between the experience of inadvertently burning our finger or picturing the incident afterwards! There is a most convincing difference. In the one case the finger actually hurts, and in the other you imagine what the pain is like. This same difference is encountered on a higher level between ideas we have of the spiritual world and what we actually experience there.

Now the first thing a person experiences in this way is true self-knowledge. For just as in life we have for our immediate perception a table here, chairs over there, and this whole splendid hall—with the clock that isn’t going!—and so on, just as all this is there before us in space and is immediately visible, so, to the thinking that has become active and real, the world of time makes itself known; at first our own individual time world. Past experiences that can normally be recovered only as memory pictures come before us as a present tableau, showing us events that happened long ago in the past. The same thing is described by people who experience a shock through the threat of imminent death, by drowning perhaps; and I would like to add that right up to today even persons who think in an entirely materialistic way assert that people in peril of their lives see an inner tableau of their past life. This is in fact what happens to people who have made their thinking active; suddenly before their inner eye arises a tableau of their life from the moment when they first learnt to think up to the present

moment. Time becomes space; the past becomes present, a picture presents itself. The most characteristic feature of this experience—I shall have to go into it in greater detail tomorrow—is that because the whole thing is like a picture one still has a certain feeling of space, but only a feeling. For the space now experienced lacks the third dimension; it is two-dimensional only, as with a picture. For this reason I call this cognition imaginative, a picture-cognition that functions, as a painting does, in two dimensions.

You may ask: ‘If at this point I have this experience of only two dimensions, what about when I advance and again my experience is two-dimensional?’

Nothing different has happened. We entirely lose our experience of a third dimension. On a later occasion I will have to speak of how, in our day, because people are no longer conscious of such things they look for a fourth dimension as a way to reach the spiritual realm. The truth is that when we advance from the physical to the spiritual no fourth dimension arises but the third dimension drops away. We must get used to the actual facts in this sphere, as we have had to do in others. It was once thought that the earth was flat and petered out at the ends, where it was boarded up. And just as it was an advance when people knew that on sailing round the earth we return to our starting point, it will also be an advance in our inner comprehension of the world when we know that on entering the spiritual world we do not continue from the first, second and third dimension to a fourth, but return again to the second. And we shall see that eventually we even return to the first. This is the true state of affairs. We see how, in observing the outer world, people today cling in a superficial way to numbers: first dimension, second, third—so a fourth must follow. No, we return to two dimensions, the third dropping away and leaving us with real imaginative knowledge. We have it first within our own selves, as a kind of life tableau, so that we survey all at once, in powerful pictures, what we have experienced during our life, what emerges into the world from within us.

This is considerably different from mere memories. Ordinary memory pictures make us feel that they are essentially mental images of the outside world, what we have experienced in the way of pleasure and pain, what other people have done to us, their attitude to us. That is what is chiefly experienced in our purely conceptual memories. In the tableau of which I am speaking it is different. There we experience—well, let us take an example. Perhaps we met someone ten years ago. In ordinary memory we would see him coming to meet us, what he did to us that was good or bad, and so on. But in the life tableau we see the first time we

set eyes on this person, what we ourselves did and what we went through to gain his friendship, and how we felt in the process. Thus in the life tableau we feel what emerges into the world from within us, whereas ordinary memory shows us what we have taken into ourselves from the outside world. So of the tableau we can say that it brings us something like an immediate experience in which one thing does not happen after the other, as it does in memory, but the things are side by side in two-dimensional space. We can readily distinguish this life tableau from a memory tableau.

Now what is gained by this is that we have enhanced our inner activity, the active experiencing of one's own personality. This is the essential feature of it. One lives in and develops more intensively the forces which radiate from the personality. Having gone through this experience we have to climb a further step, and this is something that nobody does at all willingly. It entails the most rigorous inner transformation. For what is experienced through this life tableau, through the pictures presented, even in the case of past experiences that were actually painful, we are given a feeling of personal happiness. A tremendously strong feeling of happiness is bound up with this imaginative knowledge.

It is this subjective feeling of happiness which has inspired all those ideals and accounts—in Islam, for instance—where life beyond the earth is pictured in such glowing terms. They are the result of this imaginative experience of happiness.

If the next step is to be taken, this feeling of happiness must be forgotten for the time being. For when we have first deliberately exerted our will to make our thinking active through meditation and concentration, as I have described, and by means of this active thinking we have advanced to the life tableau, we have then to muster all our strength to eliminate this from our consciousness.

In ordinary life this blotting out is often all too easy. Those who go in for examinations have good reason to complain of things that should be in their minds but have been wiped out. Ordinary sleep, too, is after all nothing but a wiping out of everything in our daytime consciousness. But this kind of eliminating happens passively. For exam candidates would hardly wipe out their knowledge deliberately; it is a passive process, a sign of weakness in one's command of present events. But precisely when this strength has been intensified, this eliminating is necessary for the next step in supersensible knowledge.

Now it actually happens very easily that just because we have been concentrating all the forces of our being on a subject we ourselves have chosen, we develop a certain desire to cling to it, particularly as this life tableau is connected with a feeling of happiness. But we must be capable of extinguishing from our consciousness the very things we have increased our forces to be able to reach. As I have pointed out, this is more difficult than the blotting out of anything in ordinary life.

You will of course be aware of the fact that when our sense impressions have been shut off one after another, when all is dark around us and we can see nothing, when all noise is shut out so that we hear nothing, and finally all impressions from outside have closed down, then we fall asleep. This empty consciousness that comes to anyone on the verge of sleep now has to be brought about at will. But while all conscious impressions, even those self-induced, have to be blotted out, it is most important that we remain awake. We must have the strength, the inner activity to keep awake while no longer receiving impressions from without or any experiences whatsoever. An empty consciousness has been produced, but an empty consciousness of which we are fully aware.

When all that has been first brought to consciousness through enhanced forces has been wiped out and the consciousness made empty, it does not remain so, for then the second stage of knowledge occurs. As distinct from imaginative knowledge we may call it inspirational knowledge. Having arrived at empty consciousness through preparation of this kind we are now in the position that, just as the visible world presents itself to our eye and the world of sound to our ear, the spiritual world now presents itself to our inner life of soul. Now it is no longer our own experience but a spiritual world out there pressing in on us. And if we are so strong that we have been able to suppress the entire life tableau all at once, letting it appear and then blotting it out so that after experiencing it we empty our consciousness of it, then the first perception to arise in this emptiness is of our pre-earthly life—the life before conception and descent into a physical body. This is the first real supersensible experience we have after we have emptied our consciousness—looking at our own pre-earthly life. From this moment on we know of immortality from a side which is not given any attention today. Nowadays people talk only of immortality, but this is not the whole picture. Immortality is the negation of death. Certainly this aspect is as important as the other (we shall have a great deal to say about this), but the aspect we first come to know in the way I have briefly indicated is not immortality—the negation of death—but ‘unbornness’, as the negation of birth. Both aspects are

equally real. And only when people come once more to understand that eternity has these two sides, immortality and unbornness, will they be able to recognize again with their understanding the enduring part of the human being, the part that is truly eternal.

Modern languages all still have the word for immortality, but they have lost the word 'unbornness', although older languages certainly had it. This aspect of eternity, unbornness, was lost first, and now, in the materialistic age, the tragic moment is threatening when all knowledge of immortality may be lost—for in the realm of pure materialism people no longer want to know anything whatever of the spiritual part of man.

Today I have been able to indicate, quite briefly, the very first steps on the path to supersensible worlds. During the next few days further things will be described, and then we shall proceed with what can be known on this path about man and the world, in the present and the past, and also with what we need to know for the future.

Lecture 2

Inspiration and Intuition

20 August 1923

Let us once more put our whole minds into recalling where the modern form of initiation leads us after the first steps to imaginative knowledge have been successful. We come to the point where our previous world of purely abstract thoughts is filled with inner life. The thoughts that now present themselves to us are no longer lifeless, passively acquired; they are an inner world of living force which we feel in the same way as we feel the pulsing of our blood or the streaming in and out of the air we breathe. It is therefore a matter of the conceptual nature of thinking passing over into an inner experience of reality. Then indeed the pictures that previously constituted our thoughts are no longer mere abstract, shadowy projections of the outer world but are teeming with an inner, vivid existence. They are real imaginations experienced in two dimensions, as indicated yesterday, but it is not as though we were standing in front of a painting in the physical world, for that would be to experience visions not imaginations. Rather it is as though, having now lost the third dimension, we were moving about in the picture ourselves. It is not at all like seeing something in the physical world; anything that has the look of the physical world will be a vision. Genuine Imagination comes to us only when for example we no longer see colours as we do in the physical world, but when we experience them.

What is this experience like? When you see colours in the physical world they give you different experiences. You perceive red as something that attacks you, that wants to pounce on you. A bull will react violently to the aggressive red which it experiences far more vividly than a human being does in whom the

whole experience is toned down. When you perceive green it gives you a feeling of symmetry, uniformity, an experience neither painful nor particularly pleasant, whereas blue induces a mood of devotion and humility. If we take these various colour experiences we have in the physical world right into us we can realize how it is that when anything in the spiritual world comes at us in the aggressive way red does in physical life it is something corresponding to the colour red. When we encounter something that calls up a mood of humility this has the same effect as the experience of blue or violet-blue in the physical world. And we can simplify this by saying that we have experienced something red or blue in the spiritual world. Otherwise, for the sake of precision, we should always have to say that we have experienced something there in the way that red or blue is experienced in the physical world. To avoid so many words one says simply that one has seen auric colours which can be distinguished as red, blue, green and so on.

But we must fully realize that this crossing over into the supersensible realm, this setting aside of all that comes to us through the senses, is always present as a concrete experience. And in the course of this concrete experience we have the feeling I described yesterday, as if thinking had become an organ of touch extending throughout the human organism, so that spiritually we feel that a new world is opening out and we are touching it. This is not yet the real spiritual world but what I would call the etheric or the world of formative forces. Anyone who really wants to learn to know the ether must grasp it in this way. For no speculation, no abstract reflection about the ether can lead to real knowledge of it. We ourselves now live with our own formative forces or etheric body in this thinking that has become real, but we live in a different way than the way we have been living in the physical world. I should like to describe this other way by means of a comparison.

If you look at one of your fingers you realize it is a living part of your organism. Cut it off, and it is no longer what it was; it is not alive any more, it dies. If this finger of yours was conscious it would say: 'I am only a part of your organism, I have no independent existence.' This is what we have to say, however, directly we enter the etheric world with imaginative cognition. We no longer feel ourselves to be separate beings but a part of the whole etheric world, the whole etheric cosmos. After that we realize that it is only by having a physical body that we become a personality, an individuality. It is the physical body that makes us into separate beings.

We shall come to see how in the spiritual world we can also become individualized—but I will speak of that later. When we first ascend to the spiritual world the way I described we are bound to feel like a part of the etheric cosmos. And if our etheric body were to be cut off from the cosmic ether we should die etherically. It is very important to grasp this, so that we may understand properly what has to be said about a human being's passage through the gate of death. But that will come later.

As I pointed out yesterday, this imaginative experience in the etheric, which becomes a tableau of our whole life from birth up to the present moment, is accompanied by an extraordinarily intense feeling of happiness. And this flooding of the whole picture world by this inner, wonderfully pleasurable feeling is our first experience of a higher kind.

We must then be able—as I also mentioned yesterday—to take all that we have acquired in the way of Imagination in our life tableau and deliberately make it disappear. We must allow our consciousness to become empty. And it is only when we have an empty consciousness that we understand how matters really stand in the spiritual world. For then we know that what we have seen up to now was not yet the spiritual world but merely an imaginative picture of it. It is not until this stage of empty consciousness that the spiritual world streams into our thinking that is reaching out for it, just as the physical world streams into our waiting senses. This is when we begin to have our first real experience, our first real perception of the outer spiritual world. The life tableau was of course only our inner world. Imaginative cognition only shows us this inner world which to higher knowledge proves to be a picture world, pictures of the cosmos. The cosmos itself, together with our own true being as it was before birth, before our earthly existence, appears first at the stage of Inspiration, when the spiritual world streams into us from outside. But when we have arrived at emptying our consciousness our whole soul becomes awake; and at the stage of pure wakefulness we must be able to acquire a certain inner stillness and peace. This peace I can describe only in the following way.

Let us imagine we are in a very noisy city and hear the roar of it all around us. This is terrible—we say—when from all sides tumult assaults our ears. Suppose we are in some great modern city, such as London. But now suppose we leave this city and gradually, with every step we take as we walk away, it becomes quieter and quieter. Let us imagine vividly this fading away of noise. Finally we come, let us say, to a wood where all is perfectly silent; we have as it were

reached the zero-point where nothing can be heard.

But it can go further than this. To illustrate how this can happen I will use a quite trivial comparison. Suppose we have in our purse a certain amount of money. As we spend it from day to day it dwindles, just as the noise dwindles as we leave the town. At last the day comes when, if we do not acquire any more, we have nothing left in our purse. We can compare this nothingness with the silence. But what do we do next if we do not want to go hungry? We get into debt. I am not recommending this—it is meant only as a comparison. How much have we then in our purse? Less than nothing! And the greater the debt the greater the condition of less than nothing becomes.

And now let us imagine it to be the same with this silence. There would not only be the absolute peace of the zero-point of silence, but it would go further and come to the negative of hearing, quieter than quiet, more silent than silence. This would happen! This is what is bound to happen when, in the way described yesterday, we enhance our power to reach this inner peace and silence. When, however, we arrive at this inner negative audibility, at that peace greater than the zero-point of peace, we are then so deeply in the spiritual world that we not only see it but hear it resounding. The world of pictures becomes a world of resounding life; and then we are in the midst of the true spiritual world. During the moments we spend there we have as it were gone to the other shore of existence. Over here the ordinary world of the senses vanishes and we are in the spiritual world. Certainly—and I will say more about this later—we must be properly prepared so that we are able to return at any time. But there is something else to come—we experience something we have never been able to experience before. Directly this peace is achieved in the empty consciousness then our all-embracing feeling of happiness gives way to an equally all-embracing soul pain, tremendous soul sorrow. And we come to feel that the world is built on a foundation of cosmic suffering, a cosmic element which can only be experienced by human beings as pain. And we learn the penetrating truth, so willingly ignored by a humanity who only look outside themselves for happiness, that the whole of existence has ultimately to be born out of pain. And when, through initiation knowledge we have come in this way to the cosmic experience of pain, then out of real inner knowledge we shall be able to say the following.

If we study the human eye—the eye that reveals to us the beauty of the physical world, and is so important that through it we receive nine tenths of the

impressions that make up our life between birth and death—we find that the eye is embedded in a bodily cavity that originated from a wound. What was done originally to bring about the eye sockets could be done today only by actually cutting out a hollow in the physical body. The ordinary account of evolution gives a much too colourless impression of this. These sockets into which the eyeballs were inserted from outside—as indeed the physical record of evolution shows—were hollowed out at a time when human beings were still unconscious beings. If they had been conscious of it, it would have involved a painful wounding of the organism. Indeed, the whole human organism has been brought forth out of an element which for present-day consciousness would be an experience of pain. And at this stage of knowledge we become deeply aware that just as the coming forth of the plants means pain for the earth so all happiness, everything in the world from which we derive pleasure and blessing, has its roots in an element of suffering.

If as human beings we could suddenly be changed into the substance of the ground beneath our feet, and maintain our consciousness in the process, the result would be an infinite enhancement of pain. When these facts, revealed out of the spiritual world, are put before superficially minded people, they say: ‘My idea of God is quite different. I have always thought of God as being so powerful as to be able to make everything come forth from happiness, just as we would wish.’ Such people are like the King of Spain⁷ to whom someone was showing a model of the universe and the course of the stars. The King had the greatest difficulty in understanding how all these movements occurred, and finally exclaimed: ‘If God had left it to me I would have made a much simpler world.’

Strictly speaking, this is the feeling many people have where knowledge and religion are concerned. Had God left the creation to them they would have made a simpler world. They have no idea how naive this is! Genuine initiation knowledge cannot merely satisfy people’s desire for happiness; it has to lead them to acquire a real understanding of the path their being and their destiny is taking as it proceeds in the course of world evolution in the past, the present and the future. For this we need spiritual facts, not merely something that gives immediate pleasure. But there is another thing which these lectures will also bring out. Precisely by experiencing such facts, if only through knowing them conceptually, people will gain a good deal of inner comfort for earthly life as well. Yes indeed, they will be able to find what human beings need for life on earth in order to be whole human beings, just as in order to be whole they need their physical limbs.

The world we meet in this way when we go beyond Imagination into the stillness of existence out of which the spiritual world reveals itself in colour and in sound—this world differs essentially from the world perceived by the senses. When we share in the life of the spiritual world—and we have to be part of its life if we accept its existence—we see that all sense-perceptible things and processes have really proceeded from out of this spiritual world. Therefore as earth beings we see only half the world and the other half is concealed from us and is occult. This other half shows itself, one might say, through all the cracks. And through all the happenings in the physical sense world there is evidence of this spiritual part, first in the pictures of Imagination, and then through its own creative activity in Inspiration. In the world of Inspiration we can feel at home, for here we find the origins of all earthly creations. And here, as I have indicated, we discover our own pre-earthly existence.

Following an image from earlier times, I have called the world lying beyond that of Imagination the astral world—the name is not important—and what we bring along with us from that world, and have carried into our etheric and physical bodies, we may speak of as our astral body. In a certain sense it encloses the ego organization. For higher knowledge, accordingly, the human being consists of four members: physical body, etheric or formative force body, astral body and ego organization. Knowledge of the ego, however, entails a further step in supersensible knowledge which in my books, particularly my book *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds*, I have called Intuition. The term Intuition may easily be misunderstood because, for example, anyone with imaginative, poetic gifts will often give the name intuition to his sensitive feeling for the world. This kind of intuition is only a dim feeling, yet it has some relation to the Intuition of which I am speaking. For just as human beings have sense perception as part of their equipment as earthly beings, they have in feeling and will, which is part of their earthly nature, a reflection of the highest kind of cognition, of Intuition. Otherwise they would not be able to be moral beings. The dim promptings of conscience are a reflection, a kind of shadow image of real Intuition, the highest form of cognition possible for human beings on earth.

As earthly beings, human beings do really possess something of what is at the lowest level and also a shadow image of what is highest, which will only be accessible at the level of Intuition. It is particularly the intermediate levels that people completely lack at first, and these they have to work for: Imagination and Inspiration. They have also to acquire Intuition at the level of a pure light-filled inwardness. At present it is in their moral feeling, their moral conscience that

they possess an earthly image of that which arises as Intuition. So that we could also describe it by saying that when as human beings possessing initiation knowledge people rise to actual Intuitive knowledge of the world, of which previously they had known only the natural laws, the world becomes as intimately close to them as only the moral world is now. And this is indeed a significant feature of human life on earth—that we are linked to the highest sphere of all by way of a dim inner presentiment, whereas in its true form it is accessible only to advanced cognition.

The third step in higher knowledge necessary for reaching Intuition can be achieved only by developing to its highest point an inner faculty which, in our materialistic age, is not recognized as a cognitional force. What is revealed through Intuition can be attained only by developing and spiritualizing to the highest degree the capacity for love. Human beings must be able to make this capacity for love into a cognitional force. A good preparation for this is to free ourselves in a certain way from dependence on external things, and to make it our regular practice for instance to picture our past experiences not in their normal sequence but in reverse order.

In ordinary passive thinking we may be said to accept what happens in the world in an altogether slavish way. As I said yesterday, in our very thought pictures we keep the earlier as the earlier, the later as the later; and when we are watching the course of a play on the stage the first act comes first, then the second, and so on to a possible fifth. But if we can get ourselves to picture it by beginning at the very end and going from the fifth act back through the fourth, the third, the second, to the first, then we break away from the ordinary sequence and imagine it all happening backwards. But that is not how things happen in the world. We have to strain every nerve to call up from within us the force to picture events in reverse. By so doing we free our soul activity from its customary leading strings, and we gradually enable our soul and spirit part to reach the point where they actually break loose from the bodily and also the etheric element. You can prepare yourself well for this breaking away if you are able every evening to make a backward survey of your experiences during the day, beginning with the most recent ones and then moving back. If possible even the small details should be imagined backwards; so that if you have gone upstairs you picture yourself first of all on the top step, then the step below it, and so on backwards down all the stairs.

You will probably say: ‘So much happens during the day that it would take a

long time.' Then first try taking episodes—first of all just this going up and down stairs in reverse. This will give you an inner mobility, so that gradually you are able to go back in imagination through a whole day in three or four minutes. But this is actually only half—the negative part—of what is needed for the enhancement and spiritual development of our capacity for loving. For this has to be brought to the point where we lovingly follow each step in the growth of a plant. In ordinary life this growth is seen only from outside—we do not take part in it. What we have to do is to enter into every detail of plant growth, to dive right down into the plant until in our own soul we become the plant, growing, blossoming, bringing forth fruit with it, and the plant becomes as dear to us as we are to ourselves. In a similar way we can go up a stage and picture the life of animals, or down a stage below the plants to the mineral world. We can feel how the mineral forms itself into a crystal, and acquire an inner feeling of pleasure in the shaping of its planes, corners and angles, and feel something like a sensation of pain flashing through us when minerals are split into fragments. Then we are entering not only with our sympathetic feelings but also with our will into all that happens in nature.

All this must be preceded by a real capacity for love extending to all mankind. We shall never be able to love nature in the way I have been describing until we have first succeeded in loving all our fellow human beings. When in this way we have won through to the capacity to have love with understanding for both humankind and the whole of nature, what will happen is that what we perceived up until now as the colour of the aura and the resounding of the spheres takes on the shapes and contours of real spiritual beings.

Experiencing these spiritual beings, however, is a different matter from experiencing physical beings. When a physical object is in front of me, for example this clock, I stand here and the clock is there, and I can experience it only by looking at it from outside. It is at a certain distance from me, and my relation to it is determined by space. We can never have any real experience of a spiritual being this way. We can have it only by entering right into the spiritual being, and we do so with the aid of the very faculty for loving which we have cultivated first towards nature. Spiritual Intuition is possible only by applying—in stillness and an empty consciousness—the capacity for love we can first learn in the realm of nature. Imagine you have developed this capacity for loving minerals, plants, animals and human beings. At the moment you are now in an emptied consciousness, and all around is that peace which lies beyond its zero-point. You feel the suffering on which the whole existence of the world is

founded, and this suffering is at the same time loneliness. Nothing is there yet. But the capacity for love, flowing up from within in diverse ways, leads you on to enter with your own being into all that now appears visibly, audibly, as Inspiration. Through this capacity for love you enter first into one being then into another.

The beings of the higher hierarchies, which I have described in my book Occult Science, are what we now learn to live with in our experience; they become for us the essential reality of world existence. We experience a particularized spiritual world just as with our eyes and ears, our feelings and our warmth we experience a particularized physical world. And this is the stage we must have reached if we wish to acquire knowledge regarding something of fundamental importance to us. I have already mentioned that through Imagination pre-earthly spiritual existence rises up in our soul, and that not until we reach Inspiration do we find out what we were before we came down into an earthly body through conception. When through this capacity for love we are able to enter clairvoyantly into spiritual beings in the way I have described, then for the first time there is also revealed to us what gives us the inner experience of being complete. We are shown what preceded our life in the spiritual world, what we were before ascending to the last spiritual life between death and rebirth. The preceding earthly life is revealed, and one after another the lives on earth before that. For the true ego, which is present in all the repeated lives on earth, can manifest only when the capacity for love has been so greatly enhanced that any other being, whether outside in nature or in the spiritual world, has become just as dear to us as in our love of self we are dear to ourselves. The true ego—the ego that goes through repeated births and deaths—is never accessible to self-love. The series of our incarnations are revealed to us only when we no longer live egotistically for momentary knowledge but with that kind of love that can forget self-love and love an objective being with the kind of love with which we love ourselves in physical existence. For this ego of our previous earth life has now become as objective for our present life as any stone or plant is to us when we are outside them in space. We must have learnt to take hold in objective love of something which, for our present subjective personality, has become quite objective, quite foreign. We must have acquired mastery over ourselves during our present earthly existence in order to have any insight into a preceding one.

However, when we have achieved this knowledge the whole life of a human being is presented to us as passing rhythmically through cycles of earthly existence from birth or conception till death, and through cycles of purely

spiritual existence between death and rebirth, and then returning to earth again, and so on. A complete earthly life is shown to be a repeated passing through birth and death, with intermediate periods of life in purely spiritual worlds. Only by means of Intuition can this kind of knowledge be acquired as something real derived directly from experience.

I have had to describe the path of initiation to you—in outline to begin with—in the way it has to be followed in our particular time, the present stage of human evolution, so as to reach a real spiritual knowledge of the being of the world and of man. But as long as human beings have existed there has been initiation knowledge, although it has had to take various forms in different evolutionary periods. As humans are the kind of beings who go through each earthly life with a different orientation, conditions for their inner development in the various epochs of world evolution have to vary considerably. We shall be learning more about these variations in the course of the next few days; today I should just like to say that the initiation knowledge which had to be given out in early times was very different from what has to be given out today. We can go back some thousands of years to a time long before the Mystery of Golgotha—details will come later—and we find how greatly people's attitude to both the natural world and the spiritual world differed from that of the present time, and how different, accordingly, was the initiation knowledge from what is appropriate today.

We have now a very highly developed natural science; I shall not be speaking of its most advanced side but only of what is imparted to children of six or seven, as general knowledge. At this comparatively early age children absorb the kind of laws relating, let us say, to the Copernican world system, and on this system are built hypotheses as to how the universe might have arisen. The Kant-Laplace theory⁸ is then put forward and, though this theory has been revised, it is still presented in essentially the same way. The theory is based on a primeval nebula demonstrated in physics by an experiment intended to show the earliest condition of the world system. This primeval nebula can be imitated experimentally, and out of it, through the rotation of certain forces, the planets are assumed to have come into being, and the sun left behind. One of the rings split off from the nebula is thought to have condensed into the shape of the earth, and everything else—minerals, plants, animals and finally human beings themselves—is supposed to have evolved on this basis. And all this is described in a thoroughly scientific way.

The process is made comprehensible for children by means of a practical

demonstration that seems to show it very clearly. A drop of oil is taken, sufficiently fluid to float on a little water; this is placed on a piece of card where the line of the equator is supposed to come, a pin is run through the card and the card is twirled round. It can then be shown how, one after another, drops of oil detach themselves and rotate, and you can get a miniature planetary system out of the oil, with a sun left in the middle. When that has been shown to us in childhood why should we think it impossible for our planetary system to have arisen out of the primeval nebula? With our own eyes we have seen the process reproduced.

Now in our moral life it may be admirable for us to be able to forget ourselves, but in a demonstration of natural phenomena it is not so good! The whole affair of the drop of oil would never have worked if there had been no one there to twirl the pin. This has to be taken into account. If this hypothesis is to hold good a giant schoolmaster would have had to be there in the cosmos to start the primeval nebula revolving and keep it turning. Otherwise the idea has no reality.

It is characteristic of the materialistic age, however, to conceive only a fraction of the truth, a quarter, an eighth or even less, and this fraction then lives on with terrible suggestive power in the human soul. Thus we persist today in seeing only one side of nature and its laws. I could give you plenty of examples from different spheres of life clearly showing this attitude towards nature: how—because people absorb this with the culture of the day—they consider nature to be governed by what is called the law of cause and effect. This colours the whole of human existence today. At best, people can still maintain some connection with the spiritual world through religious tradition, but if they wish to rise to the actual spiritual world they must undertake an inner training through Imagination, Inspiration and Intuition as I have described. They must be brought by initiation science away from this belief in nature as governed throughout by law to a real grasp of its spiritual content. Initiation science must aim nowadays at leading human beings away from a naturalistic grasp of the cosmos, which is now taken for granted, to a grasp of its spirituality.

Thousands of years ago in the initiation science of olden times the opposite prevailed. The sages of the mysteries, the leaders in those centres, which were at one and the same time school, church and art centre, had around them people who knew nothing of nature in the Copernican sense, but who instinctively experienced the cosmic aspect of soul and spirit, expressing this in myths and legends which in the general civilization of today are no longer understood.

About this we shall have more to say. What these people actually experienced, however, was of an instinctive soul/spiritual nature, and this filled their waking hours with the dreamlike pictures of imagination which developed into the myths and legends which made up their life. Sometimes it was these dreamlike imaginations they saw when they looked out into the world, and at other times they lived in actual nature. They saw the rainbow, the clouds, the stars, the sun making its speedy way across the sky; and they saw rivers, the coming into being of mountains, and minerals, plants and animals.

For primeval humanity everything perceived by the senses was the great riddle. For at the time of which I am speaking, some thousands of years before the Mystery of Golgotha—there were both earlier and later times when civilization was different—they felt themselves inwardly blessed when dreamlike imaginations came to them. And the external world of the senses, in which they saw only what their eyes showed them of the rainbow, the clouds, the moving sun, and the minerals, plants and animals, and solely the aspect of the starry world recorded in the pre-Copernican, Ptolemaic system, this external world of the senses gave the general humanity of those times the impression that led them to say: ‘Whereas with my soul I am living in a divine/spiritual world, out there nature is forsaken by the gods. When I look at water springing from the ground I see nothing spiritual there; I see nothing spiritual in the rainbow, in the minerals, plants and animals, or in other physical human beings when I look at them externally with my senses.’ Nature appeared to these people as a whole world that had fallen away from divine spirituality.

This was how people felt at that time when the whole visible cosmos had for them the appearance of having fallen away from the divine/spiritual realm. To connect these two experiences, the inner experience of God and the outer one of a fallen sense world, it was not merely abstract knowledge they needed but a knowledge that could at the same time console them for belonging with their physical and etheric bodies to this fallen sense world. They needed the kind of consolation which would assure them that this fallen sense world was related to all they experienced through their instinctive imaginings, through their experience of the spiritual world which, though dim and dreamlike, was adequate for the conditions of those times. Knowledge had to be a consoling strength, a consoling activity. And indeed it was consolation that was being sought by those who turned eagerly to the mysteries, either to receive the consolation of what could be given out externally or to become pupils of the mystery sages who could initiate them into the secrets of existence, into the

riddles that confronted humankind.

These mystery sages of old, who were at the same time priests, teachers and artists, made it clear to their pupils through everything contained in their mysteries—and which has yet to be described—that even in this fallen world, even in the gushing spring, the blossoming trees and flowers, the crystal-forming minerals, the appearance of the rainbow, the drifting clouds and the journeying sun, there lived those same divine/spiritual powers which human beings experienced instinctively in their dreamlike imagination. They showed humanity a reconciliation of the godforsaken world with the divine world perceived in their imaginations. And this was just what was being sought for in the mysteries—a consoling knowledge that enabled human beings once more to look on nature as filled with the divine.

Thus we learn from what is told of those past ages—told even of the Grecian age—that knowledge now taught to the youngest children in our schools, namely, that the sun stands still and the earth circles round it, for instance, is the kind of knowledge which in the old mysteries was preserved as occult. What for us is knowledge for everyone was for that age occult knowledge, and explanations of nature were an occult science. As anyone can see who looks at the way our present civilization has taken its course, nature and nature's laws have become people's chief concern today, and this has led the spiritual world to withdraw. The old dreamlike imaginations have ceased. People feel nature to be neutral, not entirely satisfying at first encounter, belonging not to a fallen, sinful universe but to a cosmos that by reason of inner necessity has to be as it is. They then feel more sharply conscious of themselves; they learn to find spirituality in this one point, and then they discover an inner urge to unite this inner self with God. All they now need in addition to their knowledge of nature—and in conformity with it—is that a new initiation knowledge shall lead them into the spiritual world. The old initiation knowledge could start from the spirit, which was experienced by the people instinctively and, embodied in the myths, could lead them on to nature. The new initiation knowledge must begin with people's immediate experience today, with the perception of the laws of nature in which they believe, and from there, through Imagination, Inspiration and Intuition, it must point the way back to the spiritual world.

So in human evolution a few thousand years before the Mystery of Golgotha we find the significant moment in time when human beings started out from an instinctive experience of the spirit in order to find the way to concepts and ideas

which, as the most external form of occult science, consisted of the laws of nature. Today these laws of nature are known to us from childhood. In face of this indifferent, prosaic attitude to life, this naturalism, the spiritual world has for the time being withdrawn from the human inner life. But today we must have an initiation knowledge that points in the reverse direction, and shows us the way from nature back to the spirit. For an ancient humanity nature was in darkness, and the spirit was bright and clear. Ancient initiation knowledge had to bring the spiritual light into the darkness of nature, so that nature too might be illumined. Initiation knowledge today has to start from the light thrown upon nature in an external, materialistic way by Copernicus, Giordano Bruno, Galileo, Kepler, Newton and others, restore it to life and open the way for it to the spirit, which has to be sought for by way of its own light in the reverse direction from that of ancient initiation. I shall say more about this tomorrow.

Questions and Answers

Evening of 20 August

People asked about Imagination, Inspiration and Intuition, but the stenographer did not record the actual questions.

Rudolf Steiner: To the question of the difficulty connected with such a word as ‘imagination’ I should like to say the following.

If we pick on a word to convey an important meaning we should always go back to the original meaning of the word rather than ask what meaning we give to it at the present moment in colloquial speech.⁹ For in basically all current languages nowadays the words have become shallow. This very morning I had to point to something, although in that case there was an inner justification. The word ‘intuition’ is also used in an everyday sense, but here it is justified, because the highest level of knowledge regarding spiritual life has, where the moral sphere is concerned, to descend to the simplest, even the most primitive level of human sentiment. With regard to a word such as ‘imagination’ we cannot say the same thing, exactly, therefore we have to start by looking into how the word is made up. The moment you remove the first and the last syllable and look at the middle bit, you are left with the word *Magie* [German for ‘magic’]. The word imagination contains the word ‘magic’; it is an intensification of the sphere of magic. If we go back like this to the original meaning of the word you will find that today’s way of handling language is thoroughly shallow.

What I would like to know is what we are supposed to do in anthroposophy, and altogether where people go more deeply into the spirit, if we do not insist on every word being traced back to its deeper meaning.

You see, we have to take something like anthroposophy so seriously that we

actually come to grips with the idea of whether in actual fact we can get anthroposophy across, in reality, through the medium of today's common language. Can we in fact say anything of significance about anthroposophy in any of today's present languages? Well, all today's common languages originally contained something deeper, and in all of today's colloquial languages we can go back to these deeper meanings.

If we speak about 'imagination' today, and apply the word also to what is incorporated in the word 'fantasy', we have used the word merely to cover what we know of it in our own experience. When people speak of how they experience it inside, what most of them mean is that it is sheer fantasy, and they use the word fantasy as synonymous with imagination. From their point of view they are right. Unless we have the will to go back to the original meaning such as is embedded in the word 'imagination', it will be extremely difficult to convey anthroposophy at all by means of our language.

We must realize that there are a number of things in the word 'magic'. To start with it contains something I would put into words in the following way. If we are curious to look into something in greater detail we look through a microscope and see things that are small—whether it is the much sought for atom, which can be shown in experiments, or the rudiment of a new organism. Today's materialistic science is always curious to magnify small things. But as soon as we turn to the real causes of things and seek out the creative forces and the power within things, we do not move towards smallness but towards immensity. And creating out of the greatest vastness, out of what is immeasurably powerful and impressive, and which itself contains the forces of creation, far surpassing the small figure of man, to encompass this adequately within the human soul means to condense the magical element to such an extent that in its concentrated form the human soul can receive and experience it.

And we have to do exactly the same thing with all the other words we make use of as we should do with the word 'imagination'. Nearly everyone uses the word inspiration today, of course. I will not dispute their right to do so—why should I do that, for everyone has the right to use the word 'inspiration' on the level on which they circulate. But nowadays they use it even if it is only a joke that occurs to them. But of course, with this interpretation of the word 'inspiration', you will not be all set on the path to higher knowledge. But let us again make it our principle to use the words of our present-day languages in the light in which man was once upon a time regarded altogether.

You just have to think of the fact that in the eighteenth century still, people here in Britain and over the whole of the Continent had a great deal to do with so-called Martinism, the philosophy of Saint-Martin,¹⁰ especially with his book *Des erreurs et de la vérité*. In fact in Edinburgh in 1775 a book came out which was translated into every European language, and which treated spirituality in the manner of those days. It was the last offshoot of that way of approaching spirituality which was still possible until the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century, but which is no longer possible today.

Looking at one of the principal ideas in Saint-Martin's book *Des erreurs et de la vérité* we see human beings being regarded in their totality as earth beings, as beings who had fallen from their original greatness; man, as a complete being, is accused of the fall into sin. From Saint-Martin's point of view human beings were mighty beings girded about by a so-called holy armour which provided them with magical protection against all the forces and beings of the world which were frequently hostile to them. Human beings lived in the place that Saint-Martin called the place of the seven sacred trees, which in religious legends, or earlier in the Bible, is called Paradise. Human beings were equipped with a fiery lance by means of which they exerted their power, and so on. Everything originally attributed to human beings was lost because of their own guilt in pre-earthly times; in fact such a terrible sin was attributed to human beings in their pre-earthly state that even today there is something shocking about naming it even in social circles. Human beings are presented in this way as beings who have fallen from their original stature. And the whole of Martinism, Saint-Martin's whole philosophy, sets itself the task of showing what human beings could be if they had not fallen away from their original status.

Now this kind of approach to these mysteries cannot be completely restored again nowadays because they are simply the last offshoots of the kind of perception I described this morning as belonging to the past. Modern initiation science has to take its start from a natural-scientific approach, not from natural science itself, but from a natural-scientific method—for this is the only method that will satisfy people in the foreseeable future. With regard to particular areas, if we want to bring to an anthroposophical content, in fact to the content of spiritual endeavours of any kind, the mood, the flight of soul, the holy enthusiasm we ought to bring to it so that we really understand it, if we really want to do this, the right way to set about it is not to choose our words from our ordinary everyday language but we must regard words as though they had actually gone through a fall into sin on their way to our civilization. Words

nowadays are no longer what they were—they have been corrupted. They have fallen into matter, and do not any longer describe what they once described when they were closely connected with that level of human evolution at which they were used in the mysteries. Indeed, we have in a certain sense to take an upward leap in our feeling for words. We must make an effort not to remain at the level of everyday speech, otherwise words will keep the colouring and the timbre they have in ordinary speech. The easiest area in which we can rise from the level of corrupted words to a kind of sacramental meaning of words is in the Hebrew language. With regard to those languages that belong more to modern life with its thoroughly unsacramental interests, it is difficult, of course, to rise to the innocence of words—if I may use that expression. I do not mean this badly, but from a certain point of view we have to describe it in this way. And so we have to realize that the word ‘inspiration’ has fallen to the level of corruptibility, where anyone who cracks a joke says that he is inspired. And why not? The publishers, even the illustrators of comic papers do, after all, need a great deal of inspiration in today’s sense, but today it is a profane kind of inspiration.

However, if we return to the original meaning of words, we are led into very profound depths of human endeavour.

In this direction I have to remind you of the Indian way— though this is on a decadent level—in which a wonderful and admirable type of knowledge has been maintained, one that was at one time far more important than it is today, but which did not as must be done today take its start from thinking, but which began with a quite specific regulating or even deregulating of the breathing process. Originally the yoga method consisted of bringing the breathing process, which normally functions in human beings unconsciously, onto a conscious level. This can be achieved by altering the rhythm of breathing, in holding the breath and breathing out, from the pattern which applies when breathing takes place unconsciously. If the rhythm of breathing is given a different numerical ratio than we have in our ordinary everyday breathing, this alters the relationship of breathing in, holding the breath and then breathing out. What we call the yoga method depended essentially on this different way of arranging the breathing. This method of yoga brought the whole breathing process into consciousness. Through the fact of consciously changing the breathing process the stream of the breath entered consciously into the blood circulation. This altered breathing process surged through and interpenetrated the whole of the human being. And just as we receive sense observation through a visual or an auditory ray, receiving through sight a knowledge of the colours of the surrounding things,

and through hearing a knowledge of the sounds proceeding from them, those people who turned their breathing process into a higher, a magical perception, received the element of soul and spirit, perceiving by means of their breathing the soul/spirit element that filled them. As soon as the breathing process becomes fully conscious, and if at the same time the kind of soul disposition was present that existed about seven thousand to eight thousand years prior to our era in southern Asia, then because of this altered breathing process people drew into their body on the wings of this surging, interpenetrating force not only physical air but also soul and spirit, and this they experienced in so far as man's soul and spirit is in this streaming breath.

We can, from the physical point of view, call our inbreathing 'inspiration', for this is its literal meaning. If we spiritualize inspiration we do what they did in ancient India; we shall become aware, in the way a thinking person does, by means of spiritual inspiration, by means of the soul and spirit-filled breath. This has to do with what the word 'inspiration' actually meant originally, not only in India but also in Europe. So in the case of the word 'inspiration', too, we have to raise ourselves to the word's innocence. And this is why I have always actually resisted writing so-called 'popular' books on anthroposophy, although this has constantly been proposed to me from every imaginable direction. It would be very easy to do this of course. But even beginners actually should not get hold of easy-to-read books on anthroposophy; they ought rather to be the sort of books they can—spiritually—cut their teeth on, that they have to work at very strenuously, and this does not happen easily! For in the effort people make to struggle—and this is inevitable in order to understand difficult things—there is also something else at stake. For if people imbibe anthroposophy in the same way as they might listen to a popular orator, then they have quite a different taste for it, a different attitude, towards the meaning of the words, and they pull these down to a corrupted level. If, however, they have to cut their teeth on the difficulties of a book for beginners, they will also get a taste for going more deeply into the words.

This might even bring up some historical recollections. Go back and look at the way Jakob Böhme¹¹ reflected in such a profound and wonderful way on words he was about to use. He distilled whole worlds out of them before he used them. And so, regarding such words as 'imagination', 'inspiration' or 'intuition', which we use in ordinary life, their place is on a deeper level than we usually take it to be. And I do indeed think that we should not attempt to deal with words like imagination and inspiration that are used justifiably, by replacing them with

others, but should rather—at least in an anthroposophical context—work at raising these words a little towards their state of innocence in order to understand things in an anthroposophical sense. When we return to ordinary life we can, of course, fall back into the corruptness of words; that doesn't matter. Such an attitude regarding words that have been deepened anthroposophically could be of extraordinary benefit. What I mean is that people who realize what lies in the word 'imagination' would even come to the point—if they were fanatics—of shouting for a new law forbidding the use of the word imagination for the 'play of fantasy' we referred to before, so that a word of this nature remains sacrosanct to the realm where it is used justifiably.

Regarding the question Who or what is it that does the understanding in us? I should like to say the following.

It is unfortunately the case that these questions can really be asked faster than they can be answered, for in order to answer such a far-reaching, comprehensive question it is necessary to include a great deal of things. If a question such as this is asked, we have to ask ourselves what the content actually was of this morning's lecture. Think about what it means when we speak the way we did this morning, and yesterday, too, of the paths to supersensible knowledge. It means that the soul part of a human being such as everyone has in the present incarnation—the spiritual/soul element which, as we know inhabits a physical body between birth or conception and death—ascends to a gradual knowing, firstly of the etheric formative forces in Imagination, secondly in the silence of the emptied consciousness, to a knowledge of the pre-natal world in Inspiration, and then, in Intuition, achieved through a particular development of the capacity to love, a person has a perception of the previous earth life or lives, and these earth lives are perceived as objectively, as I said this morning, as any outside object or process of nature, or as objectively, if you like, as another person who approaches us. If in ordinary social life I meet other people I am of course related to them by way of the inner relationship of belonging to the human race, and yet we confront one another objectively. If I wish to have a true perception of my previous incarnations I have to confront them as objectively as I do other people. One then gets to understand by way of the spiritual/soul element, which is now incarnated in my present earthly body, the actual true ego which passes through repeated earth lives.

It seems to me that the question is actually going in the direction of: 'Who is it really, or what part of the human being is it that actually recognizes this true ego which passes through repeated earth lives?' This question itself, my dear friends, is actually a question with no real, concrete content. It is asking who is the subject doing the questioning and the recognizing. This subject is of course that ego which is incarnated in the present earthly body, and this it is that musters the strength to reach this knowing. So we only reach the true ego by first of all grasping with our consciousness what it is that is enclosed in our earthly body between birth and death, when one then lives in the ego on a certain level, that is, one lives in this ego without knowing as yet the true ego that passes through many births and deaths. However, by means of the methods I have described, the higher ego which we have in earthly life, in that it develops its own selflessness, acquires the ability to recognize the true ego.

And just think of this. In the course of pursuing this path of knowledge you are actually bringing about a change in the subject. First of all we are dealing with the ego that lives between birth and death, and which as yet has no knowledge at all of the true ego. Then this ego makes the effort to ascend, and becomes for the first time able to recognize the true ego that passes through repeated earth lives. This enables it really to identify on the level of knowledge with the true ego. That is, in going through a metamorphosis this higher ego is raised to the true ego. And once it has been raised to the level of the true ego it can also recognize the true ego as such.

Therefore we cannot ask: 'Who or what is it in us that does the understanding?' Rather we have to say: 'That which does the understanding in us in ordinary life is changed in its very nature into a different kind of ego; going through a metamorphosis in rising from Imagination through Inspiration to Intuition.' Then, however, we recognize it to be a transformed ego. In fact the transformation actually happens in order for us to reach the true ego.

Lecture 3

New and Old Initiation Science

21 August 1923

In the study of anthroposophy a justifiable objection at first can be that the anthroposophical investigation of facts concerning the spiritual worlds depends upon calling up, through the training I have described, forces that are more deeply embedded in the human being, before these facts can be reached. Therefore it might be said: All those who have not gone through such a development, and have actually not yet reached the point of seeing and experiencing supersensible facts and supersensible beings for themselves, have no means of proving the truth of what is said by the investigator of those worlds. And often, when the spiritual world is spoken of in public, and information about it is given, the protest is heard: ‘What are those people who cannot yet see into the supersensible world meant to do about these ideas?’

This objection rests on an entirely mistaken idea—the idea that anyone who speaks about supersensible worlds is talking of things totally unknown to his listeners. This is not so at all. But there is an important distinction with regard to this kind of initiation knowledge between what is right for today and what was once right for the olden days of which I was speaking yesterday.

You will remember me describing the path into the spiritual worlds. I spoke of how it leads us first to a great life tableau in which we see the experiences that have become part of our personality during this life on earth. I went on to speak of how, having progressed from imaginative knowledge to that of Inspiration human beings are able, with empty consciousness and in absolute stillness and

peace, to survey their pre-earthly life. They are in fact led into that world of spiritual deeds which they have passed through between their last death and their descent into the present earth life.

You have to realize that before undertaking this descent every human being has gone through such experiences; there is no one who has not experienced in its full reality what the spiritual investigator has to tell. And when the investigator clothes in words facts at first unrecognized, he is not appealing to something quite unknown to his hearers, but to what everyone has experienced before earthly life. And the investigator of spiritual worlds is simply evoking people's cosmic memories; and all that he says about the spiritual worlds is living in the souls of everyone, though in the transition from pre-earthly to earthly life it has been forgotten. In fact all an investigator of the spiritual world is doing is simply recalling to people's memories something they have forgotten.

Now imagine that during life on earth you come across another person with whom you remember experiencing something 20 years before, but which he has completely forgotten. By talking with him, however, about the incident which you yourself remember clearly, you can bring the other person to recall it also. It is just the same process, though on a higher level, when I speak to you about the spiritual worlds, the only difference being that pre-earthly experiences are more completely forgotten than those of earthly life. It is only because people are disinclined to ask themselves seriously whether they find anything in their souls in tune with what is said by the spiritual investigator—only because of this feeling of antipathy they do not probe into their souls deeply enough when hearing or reading what the investigator relates. This is the reason why this is thought to be something of which he alone has knowledge, and which is incapable of proof. But it can quite well be proved by those who throw off the prejudice arising from the antipathy referred to. For the spiritual investigator is only recalling what has been experienced by each one of us in pre-earthly existence.

Now people might say: 'Why should we be asked during our life on earth to take on this extra task of concerning ourselves with matters which, in accordance with cosmic ordering or, one might say, with divine decree, we experience during life beyond the earth?' There are those, too, who ask: 'Why should I go to this trouble before death to gain knowledge about the supersensible worlds? I can very well wait until I am dead. Then, if all these things really exist, I shall come face to face with them.'

All this, however, arises from a total misunderstanding of earthly life. The facts of which the spiritual investigator speaks are experienced by human beings in pre-earthly existence, but they are not then the subject of thought, and only during life on earth can thoughts about them be experienced. And only those thoughts about the supersensible world that have been worked upon during earthly life can be carried with us through the gate of death, and only then can we understand the facts we experience between death and rebirth.

One might say—if one wished to give an uncompromising picture—that at this present stage of human evolution people's lives are extraordinarily hard if, during life on earth they give no thought to the spiritual world. For having passed through the gate of death they can no longer acquire any real knowledge of their surroundings. They are in the midst of what is incomprehensible to them. An understanding of what is experienced after death has to be striven for during life on earth. You will learn from further descriptions that it was different for people of earlier ages. But, at the present moment of humanity's evolution people will have to rely more and more on acquiring here on earth an understanding of what they are going to experience in the supersensible world between death and rebirth. So one can say that speaking publicly about spiritual science is fully justified, because it can be proved by everyone. For if we look deeply enough into our own souls we shall gradually realize that what has been brought by the spiritual investigator lights things up for us. It is just as if we had already experienced it all, and we were now being given the thoughts in which to clothe the experience. For this reason, when speaking of spiritual science, of spiritual knowledge, it is very necessary to choose terms of expression different from those used in ordinary life. The point is that when people approach spiritual science, through the very words used they should have the impression: We are finding out about something which does not apply to the sense world; something which in the sense world is frequently nonsense.

Then, you just see, our opponents will come and say: 'What is said there from out of spiritual knowledge is all nonsense, pure illusion.' As long as these people know of nothing beyond the world of the senses and do not want to know of anything else, such a statement is justified, for the supersensible world, of course, looks different from that of the senses. But for those who are prepared to forego the onesided witness of their senses and delve more deeply into their own soul will then admit that what the spiritual investigator says simply gives them the stimulus to draw up from their own soul what is already there.

Naturally there is much to hinder our making such a confession. Yet where an understanding of the supersensible worlds is concerned it is the most necessary confession of all. And it will be found that even the most difficult things become comprehensible when we are willing to observe our own inner self in this deeper way. And there is no doubt that mathematical truths have to be considered as belonging among those most difficult things. They are held to be irrefutable. But the curious fact is that on entering the spiritual world even mathematics and geometry cease to be correct. A very simple example will make this clear. From early youth we have learnt to look upon the ancient truths of Euclid as axiomatic, self-evident. For instance, it is stated as obvious that given two points, A and B, the shortest distance between them is a straight line, and that a curve of any kind would be longer.

On a recognition of this fact—obvious for the physical world—rests the greatest part of our geometry. But in the spiritual world it is the other way round. There, the straight line from A to B is the longest way, and any other way is shorter, because on any other path in the spiritual world there are no restrictions, and we are left free. If, at point A, you have the intention to get to point B, then the very thought is enough for you to get there easily by any indirect path; but to hold to a straight course, that is, at each single point to keep to the same direction, is the most difficult thing to do and causes most delay. Therefore if you choose to go on a straight path in the spiritual world in two-dimensional or one-dimensional space you will need the longest time.

Now people who reflect about attentiveness and delve deeply into their souls to discover what attentiveness really means will find that in this connection, also, what is said by the investigator from his own experience is true. For they will realize that when they get on with the day's business without stopping to think overmuch, they get through their jobs easily, and that what applies to covering a particular stretch of ground can just as well apply to what they do every day. Most people are bustling around from morning to night. They are in such a hurry that they hardly notice how much of all they do is done from sheer habit—what they have done the day before, what other people say they should do, and so forth. Then it all goes smoothly. Just think what it would be like if you had to pay careful attention to every detail of what you do during the day. Try it! You will soon see how this slows you down.

Now in the spiritual world nothing is done without attentiveness, for there is no such thing as habit. Also there is no such word as the impersonal pronoun

‘one’—at a certain hour one must have lunch, at another time one has dinner, and so on. For this occasion one ought to dress in a certain way—all that under the aegis of this little word plays such a great part in the physical world, particularly in our present civilization, has no place in the spiritual world. There, we have to follow with individual attention the smallest step, and even less than a step. This is expressed in the words: In the spiritual world the straight path between two points is the longest way. And the opposite of this is: In the physical world a straight line is the shortest way from point A to point B.

If we delve far enough into our soul we find that we can draw up from its depths a real understanding for these curious circumstances, and it becomes easier and easier to admit that what the spiritual investigator says is actually wisdom we ourselves possess—we have only to be reminded of it.

Then, side by side with this—since the steps to be taken for acquiring supersensible cognition can be found today in books such as *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds*¹²—everyone, in so far as their destiny, their karma, makes it possible, can, as we shall see, follow this path and thus acquire their own perception of the spiritual worlds. They then perceive the actual details. However, an understanding for the thoughts about the spiritual world can absolutely be acquired by human beings recognizing in themselves what has been forgotten on entering earthly life.

Now it may be said that anyone is capable of grasping knowledge of the spiritual world when it is communicated in ideas, that for understanding what the spiritual investigator offers all that people need is their own sound, unprejudiced common sense, provided it delves deeply enough into the soul. The investigator of spiritual facts, entering into the spiritual world and speaking of its facts from first-hand knowledge—all this naturally requires a person to have pursued the path of knowledge on his own account. So it is justifiable for anyone who has acquired knowledge of the spiritual worlds to speak about them absolutely publicly today; for what people now acquire in life, if only at school, is that particular intellectual capacity, that power of discrimination which equips them to understand what spiritual science offers. Here, too, things were different in earlier times, and the teachers in the mysteries, those who cultivated art and religion, went about it in a different way. Anyone today who speaks about spiritual knowledge to his contemporaries must bring his ideas into such a form that they arouse memories of pre-earthly life. What he says to his audience, what he writes for his readers, must be put in the form of memories of life before

birth. Whenever one speaks about spiritual science it is as if this appeal were being made to the audience: 'listen to what is said, and if you look deeply enough into your soul you will find it all there.' In fact it will dawn on you that you cannot have learnt it during your life on earth; no flower, no cloud, no spring, nothing earthly can have told you, not even science, for that is founded on the senses and the intellect. You will come to realize that you have brought this knowledge with you into earthly life, and that before this life you took part in things which have lingered on in your soul as a cosmic memory. All this has been stirred up in you by the spiritual investigator. What he says therefore is indeed a call to the very depths of the human soul, not a demand that you should accept anything unknown. It is simply an appeal to people to call up in memory the most profound treasures of their own souls.

It was not so for people in older times. The sages of the mysteries, the priests, had to proceed in another way, for people in those times had a spontaneous memory of their pre-earthly existence. A few thousand years ago even the most primitive human beings would never have questioned the presence in their souls of something brought down with them from a supersensible life into the life of the senses, for they experienced it daily in dreamlike imaginations. In their souls was something of which they said: 'I do not owe this to my eyes with which I see the trees, I do not hear it with my ears with which I listen to the nightingale's song; nor have I received it through any other physical sense organ, for it is in my soul. I cannot have absorbed it since I have been on earth, therefore it was there when I descended into earth existence; and when as an embryo I was given my earthly physical body by another human body, that which lights up now in my dreamlike imagination was already within me. I have clothed it in my physical human body.'

Therefore in those olden days people would not have been shown the way to further development by their attention being called to what must be emphasized today: that we have a memory, at first unconscious but capable of being made conscious, of pre-earthly existence. In the old Mysteries attention had to be drawn to something quite different.

In those days human beings had a feeling of intense sadness when looking at all that was most lovely in the sense world. They looked at the flowers springing out of the earth in their amazing beauty, and watched the blossoms unfold. And they also saw how salutary the flowers were for them. They saw the beauty of the springs as they bubbled forth in shady places, and their senses spoke to them

of their refreshing powers. But this was followed by the thought: 'It seems as though all this has fallen—fallen through sin from the world I bear within me, and which I brought down into physical existence when I descended from spiritual worlds.' So the teachers in the mysteries then had the task of explaining how in the flowers, in the rippling waters, in the woodland murmurings and the song of the nightingale—in all these things spirit is working and weaving, spiritual beings are to be found. They had to impart to human beings the greatest truth that what lived in them was also living in outer nature. For at the very time when their senses were freshest and most responsive—a time when their intellects had hardly begun to speak to them of natural laws—human beings looked at the external world with these primitive senses and felt pain and sorrow. Beauty burst upon their sight, their hearing and their other senses, but all they felt was sorrow; for they were unable to reconcile it with the content of their pre-natal existence which still lived on in their souls. Therefore the sages in the mysteries had the task to point out how the divine/spiritual element dwelt in all things, even those of the senses. The particular knowledge these sages of olden times had to bring to human beings was the fact of the spirituality in nature. This could only be done, however, by taking a different path from today. Just as now it is necessary above all to guide human beings to a remembrance of their life before birth, for teachers in the ancient mysteries it was necessary to call up in those around them a totally different memory.

Now a human being's life passes rhythmically between two states of being, or really three: waking, dreaming, sleeping. Sleep takes its course in unconsciousness. The human beings of older epochs already had this state of unconsciousness in sleep, although it differed in certain respects from that of people today. They did sleep, however; they did sink down into the state of experiencing nothing in their souls, in their consciousness. But during sleep we are of course still alive; we do not die and are born again when we wake. As soul and spirit we have a life during sleep, but the experience of it is completely wiped out for ordinary everyday consciousness. People remember their waking experiences and at the most those during their dreaming, but in ordinary consciousness they have no memory of anything they experience during dreamless sleep. The mystery teachers of old worked with their pupils—and through the ideas these spread abroad they came indirectly in touch with everybody—so that with regard to the history of these ancient times a memory was awakened of what was experienced in sleep.

More recent initiation knowledge has to recall what lives in people's souls before

earthly existence, whereas the old initiation knowledge had to evoke a memory of experiences during sleep. Thus all the knowledge that the mystery teachers clothed in ideas was so designed that their students, or anyone else who heard it, could say: 'What we are being told are the very things we go through every time we are asleep. But we push it down into unconsciousness. What the priests of the mysteries tell us is not unknown to us at all; it is simply that they have been enabled through initiation to perceive in sleep what we all live through but with ordinary consciousness cannot see.'

Just as in the old initiation wisdom there was a recall to memory of what a human being had lived through in sleep, today there is a recalling to memory of pre-earthly life. However, one of the signs distinguishing the old initiation from the new is that in the old initiation human beings were reminded of what they normally slept through, meaning that they had no recollection of it in waking life. The mystery sages drew these night-time experiences up into waking consciousness, and to the people they said: 'During the night your soul dwells in the spiritual world, and this spiritual world lives in every spring and in every nightingale and flower. Every night you enter right into all that you merely look at and perceive with your senses during the day.'

Human beings were then convinced that the gods they experienced in their waking dreams were also there outside in nature. So that in showing their pupils what happened in sleep the sages of the mysteries were also showing them that there were divine/spiritual beings active in the natural world of their daytime experiences. And the task of the more recent spiritual investigator is to show human beings that before they descend to earth they live in the spiritual world as spiritual beings among spiritual beings, and that they can now re-create in concepts and ideas a memory of what they experienced in their pre-earthly existence.

In the initiation science of today the real facts that distinguish sleep from waking come to be known when we advance from Imagination to Inspiration. What human beings actually are, as soul, as spirit, from when we fall asleep until we wake, becomes perceptible only to inspired knowledge; whereas on the level of imaginative knowledge we arrive at our life tableau. When we proceed to pure wakefulness and an empty consciousness to a cosmic stillness—as I have described—the next step is that there enters the soul, as an inspiration from the cosmos, the life before birth. And then our own true being appears to us in the form it has as a soul and spirit being between going to sleep and waking.

Through Inspiration we become conscious of that which remains unconscious during sleep, and we learn to perceive what we do as soul and spirit while asleep. We become aware that on falling asleep the soul and spirit leave the physical and etheric body, or body of formative forces, as it is seen to be in Imagination, and as I have described, and return to them again when we wake. This cleavage of our being, which comes about in the rhythmical alternation of sleeping and waking, can be seen in its real nature only through Inspiration. And we then perceive that everything acquired in ordinary waking life through our thinking, our world of thought, is left behind. The thoughts we work upon, the thoughts we struggle with at school, whatever we have done to sharpen our earthly intelligence—all this has to be left behind with our physical and etheric body every time we sleep. Out of these two bodies we take into the spiritual world, where as ego and astral body we spend the time of sleeping, something quite different from anything we experience in our waking state. In fact what we do experience is something of which we are not normally conscious. Therefore in speaking to you of these experiences I have to clothe the ideas in the kind of concepts which can arouse memories when reflected on by sound human understanding. These reflections, which are mere shadows of really living thoughts, are left behind when we fall asleep and live our way into a world where we actually do not think in the sense we do here in the earthly world, but where everything is inwardly experienced. During sleep we in fact unconsciously experience light. In waking life we think about what light does—how it makes colours and shadows appear in relation to objects. All these thoughts, as I have said, we leave behind. And instead we enter into weaving, living light itself; we pour ourselves out into it. And just as here in the daytime on earth, when we are in our bodies, together with our soul and spirit we move through air as we go about on the earth, as soon as we are asleep we enter into the weaving light, becoming ourselves beings consisting of the substance of light. We become light within the light.

Now when human beings attain inspired knowledge of what they actually become every night, when this rises up into their waking consciousness, they at once realize that during sleep they live like a cloud of light in cosmic light. This does not mean, however, simply living as light substance in light, but living in the forces that in waking life become thoughts, are grasped as thoughts. This light they are experiencing is completely permeated by creative forces, forces that work inwardly in the plants, in the animals, besides existing independently as spiritual worlds. Light is not experienced in the same way as it is for instance in the physical world but—if I may express it figuratively—the living, weaving

light is experienced as the body of spiritual weaving, weaving spirit, and also the body of individual spiritual beings.

Here, in the physical world, we human beings are enclosed in our skins, and we see other people similarly enclosed. But in our sleeping state we are light within light, and the others, too, are light within light. We no longer, however, perceive the light as light in the way we are used to perceiving it in the physical world, but—again figuratively—the clouds of light that we ourselves are perceive the other clouds of light as objective beings. And these objective clouds of light are maybe another human being or some kind of being bringing life to the plant world, or a being who, never incarnating in a physical body, dwells always in the spiritual world.

Light, accordingly, is not experienced there as it is in earthly life but as a living, creative spirituality. And you know how, as physical beings here on earth, we live in something besides light—in the warmth our senses perceive. We know if we are warm or cold; we experience it with our senses and we feel it.

So, when on going to sleep we pass out of our physical and etheric body, we live as warmth substance in the cosmic warmth substance just as we live as light in the light. Thus we are not only a cloud of light but a cloud of light woven through by warmth, so what we perceive also bears warmth within it. However, just as when we are asleep, and as beings of soul and spirit we experience light not as light but as living spirit—when through Inspiration we realize ourselves and other beings also to be living spirit—so it is also in the case of warmth. It is impossible to make any headway in the spiritual world, even with Inspiration, if we cling to ideas we acquired here on earth. We have already found it necessary to get used to a different conception concerning the distance between two points, and we must do likewise for everything else. And just as when experiencing ourselves as light within light we actually experience ourselves as spirit in the spirit world, so when experiencing ourselves as warmth within the cosmic warmth we do not experience this as warmth in the usual way of the sense world but as weaving, strength-engendering love. As the beings of love which we are in the supersensible world, we experience ourselves among beings who can do no other than draw their essence out of love, and live their existence of love in a shared cosmic existence of love. Thus do we experience ourselves in the first instance, between going to sleep and waking, as being in a spiritual existence imbued through and through with love.

Therefore if we wish really to enter this world in which we are every time we go to sleep until we wake, we must enhance our capacity for love; otherwise this world is bound to remain an unknown world. Here in our earthly world it is not spiritualized love that is dominant but a love that is a carnally driven, instinctive urge. In the spiritual world, however, there is a spiritual love—as I have been picturing it. Therefore, whoever aspires to enter consciously into the world they experience every night has to develop first of all a capacity for love in the way described yesterday.

In fact people cannot ever find their true self without this capacity for love; for what they truly are during sleep—during a third part of their life on earth—remains a closed book unless they can find their way into it through the training and enhancement of love. All that is experienced during sleep would have to remain an unsolved riddle for earthly beings if they had no wish to enhance their capacity for love so as to gain some degree of knowledge about their own existence, their own being in the other state between going to sleep and waking. But the form of activity we develop in our thinking when we are together with our physical and etheric body—that is, in our waking state—we leave behind in bed, and during sleep this takes part in the general movement of the whole cosmos. If human beings were actually able to discover what goes on in their physical and etheric bodies during the night they would be able to perceive from outside, while living as a being of warmth and light, the way the etheric body goes on thinking all through the night.

We can still think, even when our souls are not there at all, for what we leave behind in bed drives the waves of thinking on and on. And when we wake in the morning we dive down into what has continued to think while lying there in bed. We meet up again with our own thoughts. They did not die away between our going to sleep and waking. We just happened not to be there. And tomorrow I shall be describing the way we are able, in our absence, to be much cleverer, far more intelligent, than we are during the day when our soul is present in our thoughts.

Today I wished just to touch on the fact that thinking is continuous in the etheric and physical body, and that on waking in the morning, when we are aware of having had a dream, the dream is as it were telling us: When your soul wakes up and re-enters your etheric and physical body it gets jammed. On the one hand you have the physical body and the etheric body, the body of formative forces, and on the other hand you have the astral organization and the ego organization

which in the morning re-enter the physical and etheric body. As they enter in, however, it is as if a denser wave were playing into a less dense one and a blockage occurs. It is this blockage that is experienced as a morning dream. The ego and the astral body, which have been weaving their way through light and warmth, dive back into your thoughts, but do not immediately understand them, so they get them confused, and this blockage is experienced as a morning dream.

What more there is to say about dreams and their being a puzzling element in human life, and what more can be said about the relation between sleeping and waking, we shall consider tomorrow.

Questions and Answers

21 August 1923

Written questions were handed in, the text of which has not been kept.

In answer to the question on the nature of sleep

My dear friends,

I think, after all, that it is appropriate to say a few words about these questions that have been handed in. Firstly, someone expresses surprise what little interest is shown by mainstream medicine in the processes taking place in sleep. We do not need to be surprised at all, for present-day natural science has achieved its greatness solely through its disregard of all things spiritual, restricting itself only to what is not spiritual; yet the condition of sleep and everything that has to do with that can really only be studied if we can find the way from the physical into the spiritual world. Therefore it is very explicable that in the medical profession today they speak at most about the border areas of waking and sleeping, and not actually about what extends from the sleep condition into the waking one, and vice versa. Tomorrow morning I shall actually be speaking in my lecture about these images. It is always preferable if these questions are discussed in context.

We often hear about people who remember nothing at all of what they have experienced during sleep, but that there are people who remember all sorts of things. Now I would like to forestall this matter by asking first: How do we know whether what people tell us on waking up is really the whole of what they experienced during sleep? How do we know that what they tell us is true? If these things are to be externally provable, we would have to test the depth of

their sleep. It is thoroughly possible that one or another thing creeps into their sleep from their waking life. These matters cannot be taken lightly, however, but have to be examined quite exactly, for we must make sure that right from the start the general opinion does not take hold that some people will tell you all sorts of things about their sleep. All this has to be carefully checked, and I myself will have a few more things to tell you in these lectures about what people experience in sleep. You will see, then, that what was probably meant by this question included extremely little of what human beings really experience every night in sleep when they pass into quite a different world and have experiences in quite a different way. This is what has to be considered. Therefore it would be a good thing that regarding this question in particular we would perhaps wait for the coming lectures, for things will change automatically. So it is not at all the case that I do not want to go into these questions, but that certain matters can be answered only in the course of the lectures, and then they will be answered more fully and properly than they can be dealt with at another time. Therefore I am not being unkind if I postpone this, for this is really the proper way to do it.

Regarding the question about the effect of alcohol and similar substances

Let me return for a moment to something that is being requested. Physical substances do of course contain certain spiritual forces. If something seems to be a physical substance, that is actually due to its outer appearance; for physical substances do have spiritual forces in them. You see, I said this morning, in normal sleep the ego and astral body are separated from the etheric and physical body which are in bed, and I said that human beings sometimes think more cleverly when their soul life is not present than when it is.

Now some physical substances have the characteristic that without sending people to sleep they do loosen the ego and astral body. Ordinary alcohol can have this effect. When, as well, there is a somewhat irregular connection between the etheric body and either the organ of speech or the organ of thought, people can possibly speak or write with their ego and astral body in a loosened state, and then that which is doing the writing is what is vibrating on in their etheric body, and this can certainly be something of much greater importance

than anything people say or write when their ego and astral body are present. We must not of course make rules out of these things; we certainly should not conclude that people can become accomplished poets by indulging in the use of opium, though on the other hand these things really do represent reality. This actually brings us into a really dangerous area of human life. And in regard to a great number of this world's phenomena we need, absolutely need, to understand the conditions. We entirely fail to understand how some people achieve what they do, if we do not know in the act of achieving it what substance—of a purely outer material nature—they are being influenced by. It is possible, both in the case of Nietzsche¹³ and of Coleridge¹⁴ that, at least in some of their works, each single mode of expression can actually be interpreted as arising from the independent vibrations of their etheric body.

So we really do have to concede that the etheric body we have in us is a very, very clever entity. And it is actually being hindered by our astral body and ego when we are in the waking state, from expressing its cleverness all the time. We really have no idea what an amount of cleverness is on hand in any gathering of people! It is just that the ego and astral bodies are the whole time preventing this cleverness from coming to the surface. This is what I have always said, in lectures too, that the ego is actually, on the human level, the baby; it is the least developed part of us.

With reference to the question of perceptions of smell

Regarding the various sense perceptions we are used to having in the physical world, the following should be said. We must not expect to find them in the spiritual world in exactly the same form they possess in the physical world. It was for this very reason that when I was talking about colours I tried to express myself very precisely. I said that the experience in the spiritual world consists in meeting with the same thing in the case of a spiritual impression as we experience here when we perceive colour. And I told you that when we perceive red in the physical world we have the kind of inner experience, the feeling that we are being attacked, while in the case of blue, for instance, we experience the feeling that we should surrender ourselves humbly to what the colour is revealing to us. When we understand these experiences—the attacking quality of

red, the capacity of blue, or of blue/violet, to call forth humility—then when we have perceptions in the spiritual world which have a similar effect on us as perceiving red or blue in the physical world, we can then speak of things in the spiritual world as corresponding to red or blue. The moment we pass on to imaginative knowledge—especially then, in fact—we grow together with the object, and we experience things altogether differently than in the physical world. So that particularly where perceptions of colour in the spiritual world are concerned there is this total immersion in colour, and this gives the whole experience a different character. Nevertheless it is fully justified to speak of colour perceptions in the spiritual world—fully justified actually to experience red, blue or green when encountering spiritual entities. And the reason why this is justified is that even when colours appear in the physical world, colours are by no means what they are considered to be in modern physics, but are always physical projections, filtered down versions of what is in the spiritual, the astral world. So that if we have an example of, say, red, it is a physical filtering down, a physical shadow of a process taking place in the spiritual, the astral world which, if one were to experience it directly would, as we said, give one the impression of being attacked.

We can now say the following. If thinking becomes as inwardly alive as I have been describing, then in a spiritual way it is similar to a feeling of touch. So that perception in the etheric world actually starts from a kind of spiritual touch sensation. We then gradually progress, and we differentiate these feelings of touch until we arrive at the point where we can speak of colours, sounds, and so on.

Someone has asked about perceptions of smell. What has to be said about this is that here in the physical world perceptions of smell are comparatively speaking influenced most of all by spirit, however odd this may sound. When they occur directly in the physical world smells are actually always caused by a spiritual/astral element coming as close as possible to the material world. We can therefore say: Fragrances are the physical manifestation of spiritual things. This is why, although we can find correspondences in the spiritual world for all the other sense impressions, and can speak of a spiritual perception of touch, or of visual or audible perceptions that are spiritual, and so on, we can hardly speak of a spiritual perception of smell because our perception of smell actually comes to full expression in the physical world. When the spirit—if I can put it as figuratively as this—descends deepest into the physical world, it produces a sense of smell.

Where the sense of taste is concerned the spirit descends slightly less deeply, therefore we can talk here of a spiritual correlation, which is less the case with our sense of smell. You know, we could now continue with the chapter I started on yesterday with regard to language. But I will just stress one point, namely, if you actually experience language you will find that each of the languages has a real spiritual core, and we are not only speaking figuratively, or we ought at least not only to talk figuratively, of the genius of language. There really is spirit in it! And there is more in language than the man in the street realizes. The way in which the sounds, the timbres, letters and words combine to make syllables has its own spirituality, its own soul, and we grow into this spirituality, this ensoulment. And there really are, in language, expressions, terms, which actually indicate deep inner connections. It is not for nothing that in the aesthetic realm we speak of taste. We can see, even for our ordinary consciousness, the sense of taste being translated onto the soul level. Yet we cannot in the same way speak of an ensoulment of the sense of smell; this is actually more or less completely expressed on the physical level.

At most, our excellent German poet, Christian Morgenstern,¹⁵ writer of both serious and humorous poems, who died in 1914 and who, during his lifetime, was for quite some time a member of the Anthroposophical Society—this Christian Morgenstern applied smell in an imaginatively humorous way for drawing smells up into the spiritual world. And just as he expressed other things in his humorous poems in a way that did not correspond to reality, but which are just as comic and funny, he also wrote one about an organ that people did not hear, that did not express itself in sounds, harmonies and so on, but which sent out various fragrances through its different holes; when you struck the various keys particular scents came out of the holes, and these joined together to produce scent harmonies, scent melodies, and so on. This is the famous ‘Scent Organ’ by Christian Morgenstern, and he describes it in a very humorous way in this poem.

But this is altogether on the level of a joke, and one has to say that where the physical world is concerned smell is something complete in itself. In this area the spirit has descended the furthest—manifests in the physical world—and that smells cannot be raised to a higher plane in the same way as for instance taste can, and especially those things that come to expression in the higher senses. Therefore it is absolutely the right thing to do, and is thoroughly true to reality, that in literature evil spirits that take such delight in coming onto the physical plane to do all sorts of mischief to human beings are described as giving out a smell. There are references in abundance in literature that evil spirits have a

particularly obtrusive smell. This fully corresponds to the truth in the sense that in the physical world smell is something complete in itself. To a certain extent it can also be referred to in regard to the higher worlds, but not very high up. But as we said, smell is something which exists only because the spiritual part of it descends right onto the material plane, and breaks down into the smallest parts, so that where smells are concerned material is at its most spiritual. This is why it was that in earlier times people felt in a particular way that smell was an expression of spirit. This is what one can say about this theme in a few words.

To the question of being wiser in one's sleep

I do not wish to talk about the healing method cited here because it leads to a theme I do not like speaking about. The manner in which contemporaries pass judgment in one or another field is not my way; I would like to disregard this healing method altogether, and indicate with a few words what might possibly be of interest in this matter.

Let us take the etheric body; this is actually the bearer of our thoughts. To be precise, the etheric body is the bearer altogether of our directly present thoughts, and it is also the force that brings it about that thoughts pass over into memories, and that memories can be recaptured. It is necessary for an earthly human being, however, that this etheric body is at it were inside the physical body. The reason why this is necessary is because human beings as earthly beings need some resistance, as it were, with regard to what is going on in their etheric body. Just as we cannot as earthly beings walk in the air but need the ground to walk on, yet the ground does nothing at all to assist our walking but just provides a basis of resistance, it is just the same regarding what takes place in the etheric body. The whole thinking process is going on in the etheric body, but thoughts would not be alive in conscious human beings if there were not a basis of resistance, and each movement of living thinking were not to knock up against the physical body. It does nothing at all other than providing a basis of resistance. And it is due to this that the thoughts running their course in our etheric body become conscious in our waking state.

Now it really is the case that while we are asleep, that is, the physical and etheric

body are in bed and we are separated in our astral body and ego from the physical and etheric body, that our etheric body continues to think. In actual fact the etheric body is, with regard to its thinking, i.e. the processes going on within it, dependent on rhythm and repetition, and it keeps hold of things better if they happen in the way of rhythm and repetition. Therefore it is basically quite the wrong thing to do if we apply our western habits to oriental writings and leave out the repetition, presenting the content once only. Where the authors of these oriental writings were concerned these works did not hinge solely on the content. Western writers, on the other hand, regard this as the all-important factor, for lecturers are Europeans and when Europeans have thought something through they have thought it and do not want to think it again. At the most they say the Lord's Prayer every day, but on the whole their main characteristic as Europeans is that they do not experience their own disposition as being based on rhythm, and through this very characteristic they sin daily against what their etheric body actually requires of them. The etheric body wants to carry out its activities in repetition, and in the days of the ancient Orient, when they were thoroughly acquainted with these habits, they cultivated these repetitions fully consciously, because they knew what they were doing. I do not know whether people also commit this sin in England, but in Germany we have translations that render the text in the most incredible form. If the Buddha speeches contain a great many repetitions the German translator presents them just the once. But the heart of the matter is not the bare content of the Buddha's speeches—the heart of the matter is that people take in the whole of these speeches and actually allow each repetition to run its course, over and over again. However many repetitions there are, the number of these repetitions has its significance. These secrets were known in those times. And the people who translate the Buddha speeches into prose in such fashion just show that they have not the slightest understanding of anything to do with oriental civilization or oriental life.

Now the etheric body is at the same time the actual principle of healing in our make-up. And when we concoct medicines, if we do this with real understanding, we bear this in mind. Today the medical world does everything by experimentation; they try things out to see what the effect is. If the effect has been so-and-so much per cent they put it on the list of remedies, but not if the percentage is too low—then they do not broadcast the particulars.

Now the wish has been expressed that in the course of this Summer Conference I should give a lecture on anthroposophy's contribution to medical science. I shall then be able to talk about things such as these. But, as was said, actual healing is

not solely dependent on these remedies. When we prepare medicaments with our full consciousness we always have in view the part of the body that this should be affecting, in order to arouse the etheric body into being particularly active there. Supposing someone has a liver complaint; if we can apply the right remedy for stirring the etheric body of the liver into being particularly active, that would signify a cure. And this principle of stirring the etheric body into being active is the very principle on which the frequently applied method of interrupting the circulation is justifiably based. If, say, a finger is injured, and the circulation is held up at a point above the damaged spot, so that to external, physical observation the finger has ‘gone to sleep’, this is the simplest way to make the etheric body more active than usual, because it is being driven out of the physical body, and the tying off of the finger simply provokes it into greater activity.

We can also just as well say this: if we get someone, especially a western person, to do something related to his health repeatedly in the right way—someone who is not at all used to applying this method in this particular area, nor in any other area—then his etheric body will come into a certain rhythm, and at the same time he will be shutting himself off from his physical habits, and healing forces can then be aroused. This can certainly happen. One just has to realize that these things can work well in the case of a westerner, just because he is not used to applying rhythm to his life. Whereas an oriental who, as I have said, is more used to applying rhythm in his spiritual life, will be immune to these things, and has to find other remedies. What one chooses to take as a remedy must be something one is not accustomed to taking, something one uses seldom or not at all. So it is a good thing, in the case of a chronic but not of an acute illness, if you have certain ingredients that make a very effective remedy to keep these away from your patient for a while, get him out of the habit of taking them, then after he has been without them for a time you can give them to him again. These things are all connected.

Here we see best of all the way the material aspect is connected with the spiritual aspect, and that merely the repetition that is done for reasons of health calls up healing forces in the etheric body.

We must of course be aware of how much dilettantism is carried out in this area at present. And it is precisely for this reason that I would prefer not to speak about individual healing methods cropping up here and there. All I want to do is point to the fact that not until we have a real knowledge of the way things

interpenetrate human beings as a whole, with regard to their physical body, their etheric body, astral body and ego, do we have the chance to speak comprehensively about human beings and the art of healing.

Lecture 4

Dream Life

22 August 1923

In between our waking life and our life of sleep—which yesterday I was able to picture for you at least in outline—our dream life makes its appearance. It may have little significance for the immediate activities of daily existence, but it has the greatest imaginable significance for a deeper understanding of both the world and human beings. This is not only because what a dream signifies must, in the spiritual science spoken of here, be fully recognized, so that the study of it may lead on to many other matters, but also because of the particular importance of dream life as a chink, shall we say, through which certain other worlds, different from this one we experience when awake, shine into our usual world. So it is often the case that it is precisely because of the puzzling nature of dream pictures that our attention is drawn not only to other worlds below or above the one normally accessible, but also to what these worlds might be like.

On the other hand it is extraordinarily difficult, from the standpoint of higher consciousness, to go deeply into the enigma of dream life, for dreams have the power to lead people into the greatest imaginable illusions. And particularly where dreams are concerned people are inclined to go wrong over the relation of something illusory to the reality behind it. Let us continue along these lines and take into consideration what I have said about sleep life and also about repeated lives on earth.

An example of dream life constantly recurring in one form or another is this. We dream we have made something that when awake we never would have thought

of making—something in fact outside the scope of anything we could have achieved in real life. We go on to dream that we cannot find the thing we have made and start frantically hunting for it.

Let us look at this example more closely. In the form I have described, it figures in the dream life of everyone, with variations. Let us take a concrete instance. Let us say that a tailor—though a tailor only in a small way—dreams that he has made a ceremonial robe for a Minister of State. He feels quite satisfied with his work on the robe, which should now be lying ready. Suddenly, however, the mood of the dream changes, and when he looks round for the robe that has to be delivered it is nowhere to be found.

Here you have a dream of something that could never happen to the dreamer, but of something he can very well imagine as highly desirable. He is only a small tailor for lowly folk who could never order such a robe. But occasionally in his ambitious daydreams he may have had the wish to make some high-rank garment; though perhaps incapable of it, he may still have cherished it as an ambition.

What is at the back of all this? Something very real. When in sleep you are outside your physical and etheric body with your ego and astral body you are part of that aspect of yourself that goes through repeated lives on earth. Now what is inwardly active within you at this point, while you are asleep, is the ego and the astral body; and the memories now experienced do not need to be restricted to memories of the present incarnation, but can be memories of other lives on earth. And I am not theorizing but telling you about something rooted in reality when I say: It may be that our dreamer once had something to do—let us say in an earlier Roman incarnation—with an order for a certain ceremonial toga. He need not have been the tailor in this case; he may have been the servant, or perhaps even the friend of a Roman statesman. And because at that time he had such a fervent desire for his lord to appear before the world in the most dignified possible guise, destiny may have brought him to his present-day calling. For in human life generally wishes, thoughts, have an extraordinary significance; it is possible for the memory of what has been lived through in a former life on earth to play into a person's soul and spirit, his ego and astral body. Then, in the morning, when he dives down with his ego and astral body into his etheric and physical body a lingering memory of the splendid ceremonial toga comes up against the conceptions possible for the tailor in his present life—conceptions always there in his etheric body. Then what has just been

experienced regarding what happened in Roman times is checked; it has to accommodate itself to ideas that are limited to making garments for quite lowly people. The soul has great difficulty transposing into another key the feeling it had about the fine toga; it is hard to relate this to the picture of the terrible clothes the tailor is obliged to make. So the picture of the toga changes into the picture of a present-day official uniform and only later, when the tailor has entered fully into his etheric and physical body, is this picture wiped away.

So between falling asleep and waking the span of our whole existence is present. In our inner being our life as a whole has to confront that which, in this particular earth incarnation, we can think and grasp according to our experiences in this life, and we arrive at the strange patterns of our dreams. The great difficulty is to distinguish the immediate content of the dream, which may be sheer delusion, from the actual reality which is always concealed within it, and which in fact can be something quite different. But you will gradually get used to finding your way among the intricacies of dream life as soon as you become aware that it is not so much the pictures conjured up before the soul that we should pay attention to, for these pictures are shaped by the etheric body we have left behind in bed. The etheric body is the bearer of our thoughts and mental images, and these do not accompany our actual inner being during sleep. The contents of these mental images have to be distinguished from something else, and I would like to call this other element the dramatic course of the dream. We must gradually learn to fix our attention on the dramatic elements in the dreams, so that we are prompted to ask questions such as: 'If these things happened to me in waking life, would I enjoy them immensely?' 'Did I feel this joy and liberation in my dream, or was I heading for a catastrophe?' 'Did it start with a clear and open portrayal of the facts, which then became confused, followed by a crash leading to some kind of catastrophe?' Such questions must be given first place in studying dreams—that is, not the thought content but the dramatic events.

Some people may dream they are climbing a mountain, and the going gets harder and harder. Eventually such huge obstructions tower up in front of them that they can go no further. They experience these obstructions just as though they were important events intruding into their lives. This is certainly a dream someone could have; we could enlarge on it. But this person, or others, may have a different dream. They are going through a tunnel leading to a mountain cavern. There is still a certain amount of light, but it becomes darker and darker, until they arrive at a spot where it is not only completely dark but it is so cold and

frightening that they can go no further.

Here, you see, we have two dreams quite different from one another in content. From the dramatic standpoint they both deal with an enterprise that begins well, becomes more and more difficult, and ends with insurmountable obstacles. The pictures are quite different, but the dramatic course is the same. In the supersensible world, behind the scene of life as it were, the same event can be the basis of both dreams. In the case of both dreams the same thing can have affected the soul, and the same thing can be symbolized in a wide variety of images.

This shows us that we must not look for the key to a dream by considering its content in an external way, as is in fact often done, but by studying its dramatic course, and what the dreamer's soul and spirit may have been through. Then when our conceptual faculty has been strengthened by the exercises referred to in the last few days, we shall become more and more able to see through the illusory picture world of the dream to the underlying dramatic element which points to the supersensible reality we have experienced between going to sleep and waking, and which is at the root of the dream.

Before speaking in detail—as I shall be doing—of dreams and their relation to the physical body and the spiritual part of a human being, I should like today to give a description of how, through the dream world, human beings are shown to be part of the whole cosmos. We can of course see that in our dreams quite a different connection exists among the various events of our life than the one we experience when awake. As we have just seen in the examples given, in waking life things happen the way they do according to the laws holding good in the sense world—a later event always follows an earlier one. In dreams, events that could happen in the sense world entirely lose their connection; everything is different, and they relate differently. Everything that is normally attached to the ground by gravity, as human beings themselves are, is suddenly—in a dream—able to fly. Human beings in their dreams perform skilful flying feats without an aeroplane. And a mathematical problem, for instance, such as we strain every nerve to solve in ordinary life, appears in a dream to be mere child's play. The solution is probably forgotten on waking—well, that is a personal misfortune—but at any rate we get the impression that the obstacles which hamper our thinking in daily life are non-existent. In fact everything that has a solid relationship in daily life has in a certain way become detached. If we want to picture what actually happens—or appears to happen—in dreams, we can

imagine the following. Into a glass of water we put some kind of soluble salt in crystalline form and watch it dissolve. We can see how its clear-cut forms melt away, take on the most fantastic shapes, until all the salt has dissolved and the liquid is again more or less homogeneous.

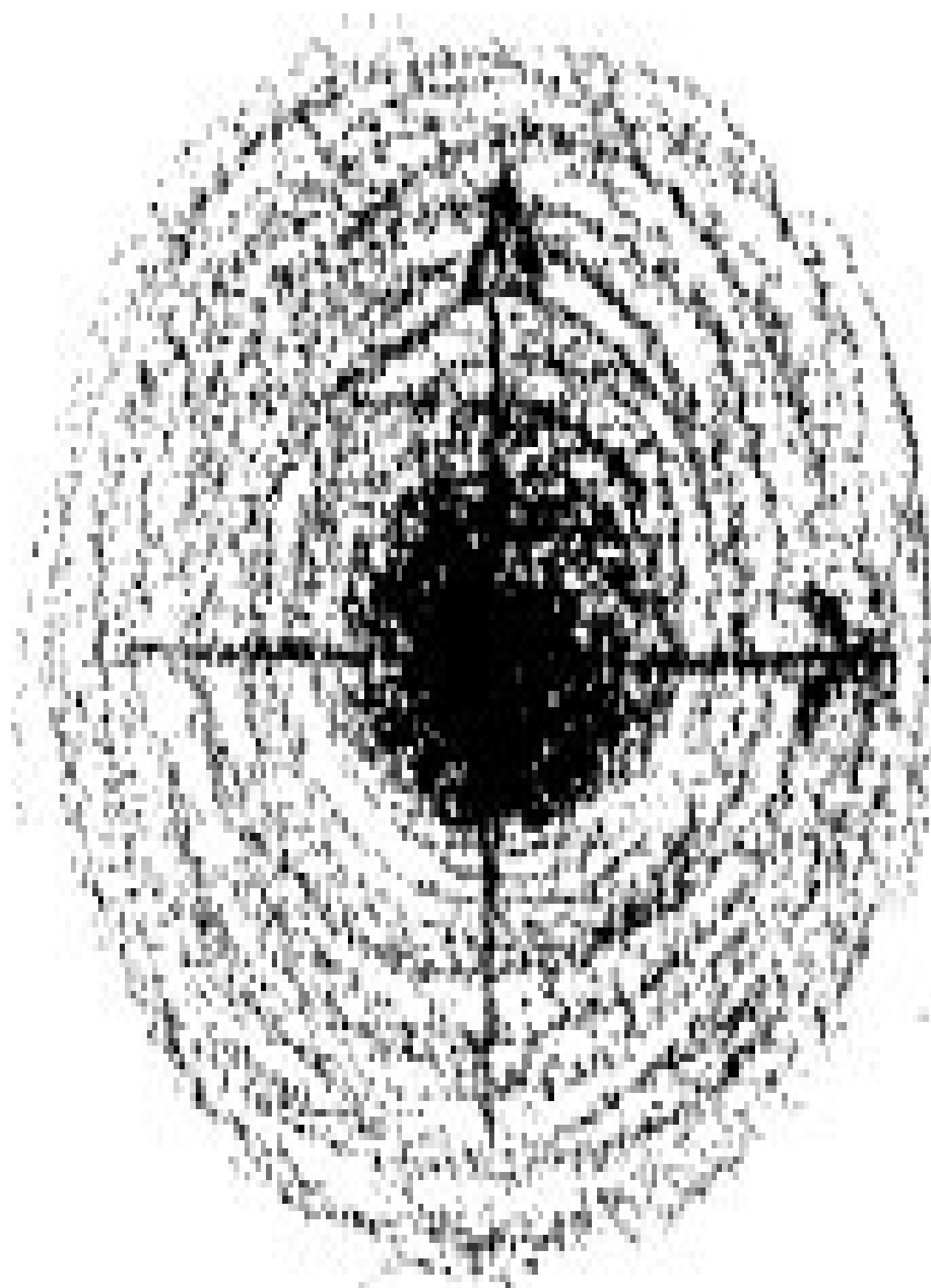
This is very like the kind of experience we have in dreams. The kind of dream we have as we go to sleep and the kind of dream we have just before waking both draw on the experiences of the day, break them up and give them all sorts of fantastic forms and meanings—at least we call them fantastic from the point of view of ordinary consciousness. The dissolving of a salt in liquid is a good simile for the kind of thing that happens within us in a dream.

It will not be easy for those who have grown up in the world of present-day ideas to be unbiased enough to understand facts of this kind, for people today—especially those who regard themselves as scientific—know remarkably little about certain things. Actually I am not saying this because I like picking holes in science. That is not at all my intention. I value the scientific approach and should certainly never wish to see it replaced by the work of amateurs or dilettanti. Especially from the standpoint of spiritual science the great progress, even the limited truthfulness and trustworthiness of science today, must be given full recognition. That is an understood thing. Nevertheless, the following has to be said.

When people want to know something today they turn to earthly objects and processes. They observe these and arrive at the underlying laws of nature. They also do experiments to bring to light the secrets of nature, and results of their experiments are further laws. Thus they come to laws of a certain type and call this science. Then they turn their gaze to the expanses of the sky; they see there—let us say—the wonderful spiral nebulae, where they see individual cosmic bodies emerging, and so on. Today these things are photographed, and this gives far more detail than telescopic observation can give. And how do astronomers proceed in order to learn what is going on in these far spaces of the heavens? They turn to the laws of nature, laws founded on earth conditions and earthly experiments, and then start speculating as to how, in conformity with those laws, a spiral nebula could have taken form in distant space. They form hypotheses and theories about the arising and passing away of worlds, by treating facts discovered in their laboratories about manganese, oxygen, hydrogen as laws that still hold good in outer space. When by such means a new substance is discovered, they indicate now and again, unconsciously, that they are coming

scientifically into really dubious areas. Hydrogen has been found all over outer space, and helium, for example, and another substance that has been given a curious name, curious because it points to the confused thinking that comes in. It has been called nebulium. Thinking itself becomes nebulous here, so we find this nebulium in company with helium and hydrogen. If these people simply apply as laws of nature the knowledge they have acquired in their laboratory on earth, and indulge in speculation about what could be going on in the wide realms of space, after the manner of the Swedish thinker Arrhenius¹⁶—who has done untold harm in this connection—they are bound to pass from one error to another, if they cannot take an unprejudiced look at the following.

Again I should like to start with a comparison. From the history of natural science you will know that Newton,¹⁷ the English physicist and natural scientist, established the theory of what is called gravitation—the effect of weight in universal space. He extended this law, illustrated in the ordinary falling of a stone attracted by the earth, to the reciprocal relation between all bodies in the cosmos. He stated also that the strength of gravity diminishes with distance. For any physicists who may be present I can add the specifications that gravity decreases with the square of the distance. Thus if the distance doubles, gravity becomes four times weaker, and so on. For such a force it is quite right to set up a law of this kind. But if we remain stuck in purely physical existence it is not possible to think out this law far enough for universal application. We imagine, in the case of a cosmic body, that the force of gravity must diminish with distance, that it is strong at first and then gets weaker and weaker.



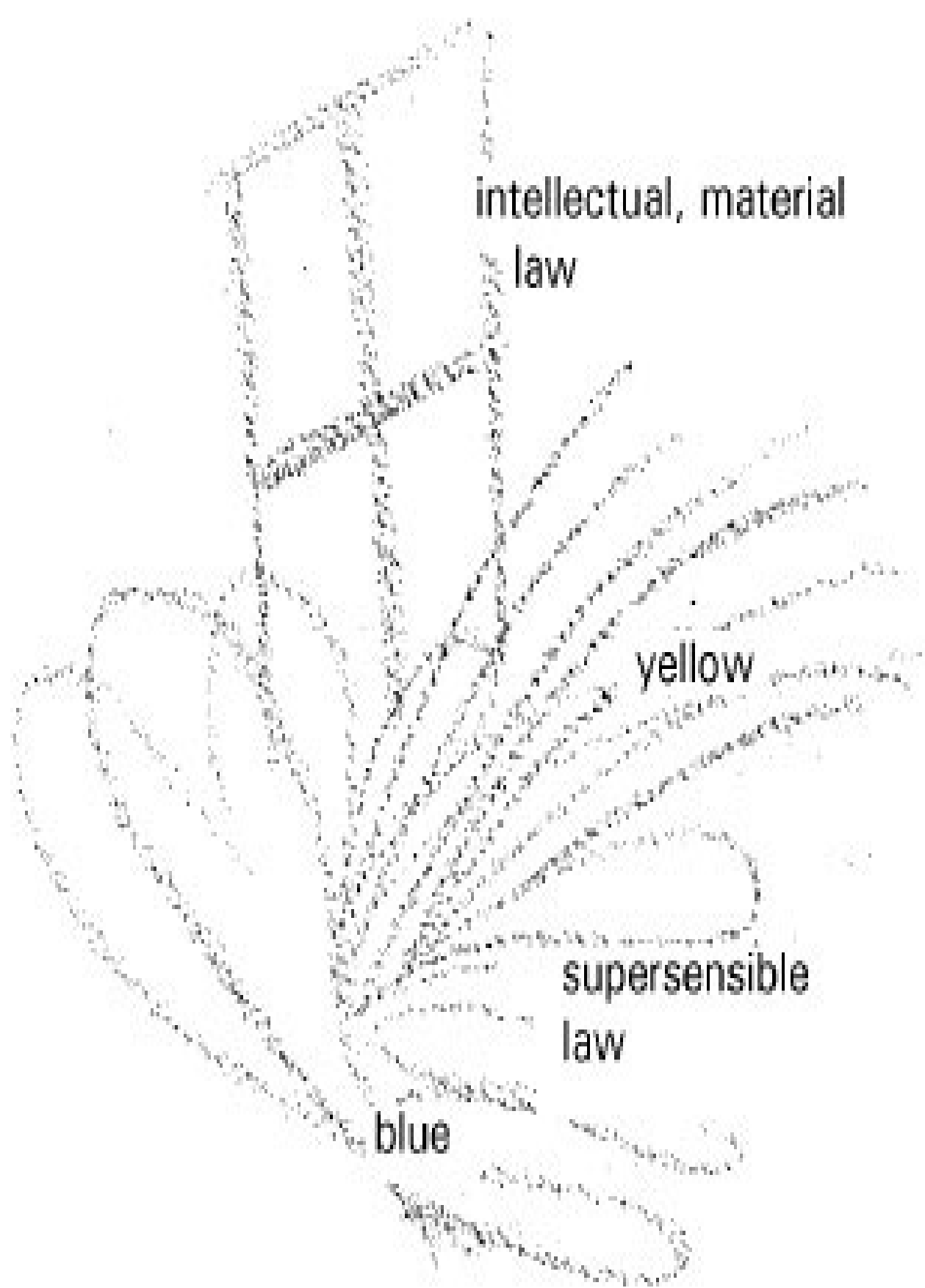
It is the same with the spreading of light. As it spreads out from a given source it becomes weaker and weaker. Science tells people this today. But they fail to recognize something else, namely, that when they establish laws of nature in a laboratory and clothe them in ideas, the truth and content of these laws diminishes as distance from the earth increases. When, therefore, a law is established on earth for the combining of elements—oxygen, hydrogen, among others—and if a law of gravity is set up for the earth, then, as one goes out into cosmic space, the application of this law diminishes. If here in my laboratory I set up a law of nature and then apply it to a spiral nebula in far-off cosmic space I am doing just the same as if I were to light a candle and then believe that if I could project its rays through cosmic space onto the spiral nebula the candle would give the same amount of light out there. I am making precisely the same mistake if I believe that a finding I establish in my laboratory is valid in the far reaches of the cosmos. This is how the widely prevalent mistaken idea arises that what is discovered quite rightly to be a natural law in a laboratory down here on earth can be applied also throughout the vast spaces of the heavens.

Now human beings are of course not exempt from the laws we encounter when earthly laws, such as those of gravity or of light, no longer hold good. And if we wished to discover laws that are different from our laws of nature we would have to travel further and further away from the earth; and to find such laws in an inward, human way we pass from being awake to being asleep. When awake we are in the sphere where the laws of nature hold good, and in all that we do we are subject to them. For example, when we want to raise our hand or our arm, the chemico-physical processes taking place in the muscles and the mechanical play of the bony structure are governed by the laws discovered in earthly laboratories or by means of observation. But our soul goes out in sleep from our physical and etheric body and enters a world not subject to the laws of nature. This is why dreams make a mockery of these laws. We enter an entirely different world, a world to which we grow accustomed in sleep, just as when we are awake and in our physical body we accustom ourselves to the world of the senses. This different world is not governed by our laws of nature; it has laws of its own. Every night when we leave our physical and etheric body we dive into a world in which our natural laws no longer apply, and dreams are a powerful force which confront the intense opposition of these laws.

While I am dreaming the dream itself shows me that I am living in a world

opposed to these laws, a world which refuses to be subject to them. While going to sleep in the evening and moving out of my physical and etheric body I am still half living within the laws of nature, although I am already entering the world where they cease to be valid. Hence the confusion arises in our dreams between natural laws and supersensible laws; and it is similar while we are waking up again.

Thus we can say that each time we go to sleep we sink into a world where the laws of nature are not valid; and each time we wake we emerge from this world and re-emerge into the world where our natural laws apply. If we are to imagine the actual process, it is like this. Picture the world of dreams as a sea in which you are living, and imagine yourself in the morning waking up out of the waves of dream-life as if coming forth from a surging sea. You move from a realm of supersensible law into the realm of intellectual, sensory law. And it seems to you as if everything you see on waking, in sharp outlines, were being born out of a fluid and volatile element. Suppose you are looking, say, at a window. If you were dreaming of the window beforehand, it will appear as though this window were being born out of something that is all blended together and indefinite, raying out fiery flashes. This is how the window appears, and if you were having a particularly vivid dream you would see the whole, sharply outlined, settled world of our waking consciousness emerging out of this undefined background as if, out of the sea, waves arose which then took on the form of the everyday world.



intellectual, material
law

yellow

supersensible
law

blue

Here we come to a point where—if as present-day human beings we are investigating these things afresh—we feel reverent wonder at the dreamlike imaginations of earlier humanity. As I have said during these days, if we look back to the dreamy imaginations experienced even in waking life within the souls of those early peoples, which they then embodied in their mythology and legends, in pictures which are so indeterminable compared with our solid and dependable view of nature—when we look back on all this with the help of what can now be discovered quite independently about those old dreamy imaginations, we are filled with veneration and wonder. And if in this area we search again for truth, it echoes down from ancient Greece in an expression which shows that the Greeks still retained some knowledge of these things. They pictured something underlying the shaping of the world, something out of which all definite forms arise, but it is accessible only when we leave behind the world of the senses and enter the state of sleep and dreaming. The Greeks called this ‘chaos’.¹⁸ All speculation, all abstract enquiry into the nature of this chaos has been fruitless, but human beings today come near to it when they are dreaming. Only up until medieval times was there still some knowledge of a supersensible, scarcely material substance underlying all material substance; for a so-called quintessence, a fifth mode of being, was spoken of besides the four other elements, earth, water, air and fire.

Or we find something recalling the medieval vision when a poet with his intuitive perception describes the world as being woven out of dreams.¹⁹ The Greeks would have said: ‘What the world is woven out of is what you experience when you leave sense existence and enter the world you go to when you are free of your body—and what you experience there is chaos.’ So to understand what the Greeks meant by chaos we must turn not to the material but to the supersensible world.

When from the point of view of what is revealed to us on the path I have been describing here, the path leading through Imagination, Inspiration and Intuition to higher knowledge and supersensible worlds, when we follow all that goes on during our dreaming, sleeping and awakening, then we see that a condition of sleep carries human beings from their daytime state into the life of sleep, out of which dreams may arise in a way that is chaotically indefinite but also admirably consistent. The physical body is left behind in bed together with the etheric body which is interwoven with the physical, giving it life, form and the power to grow.

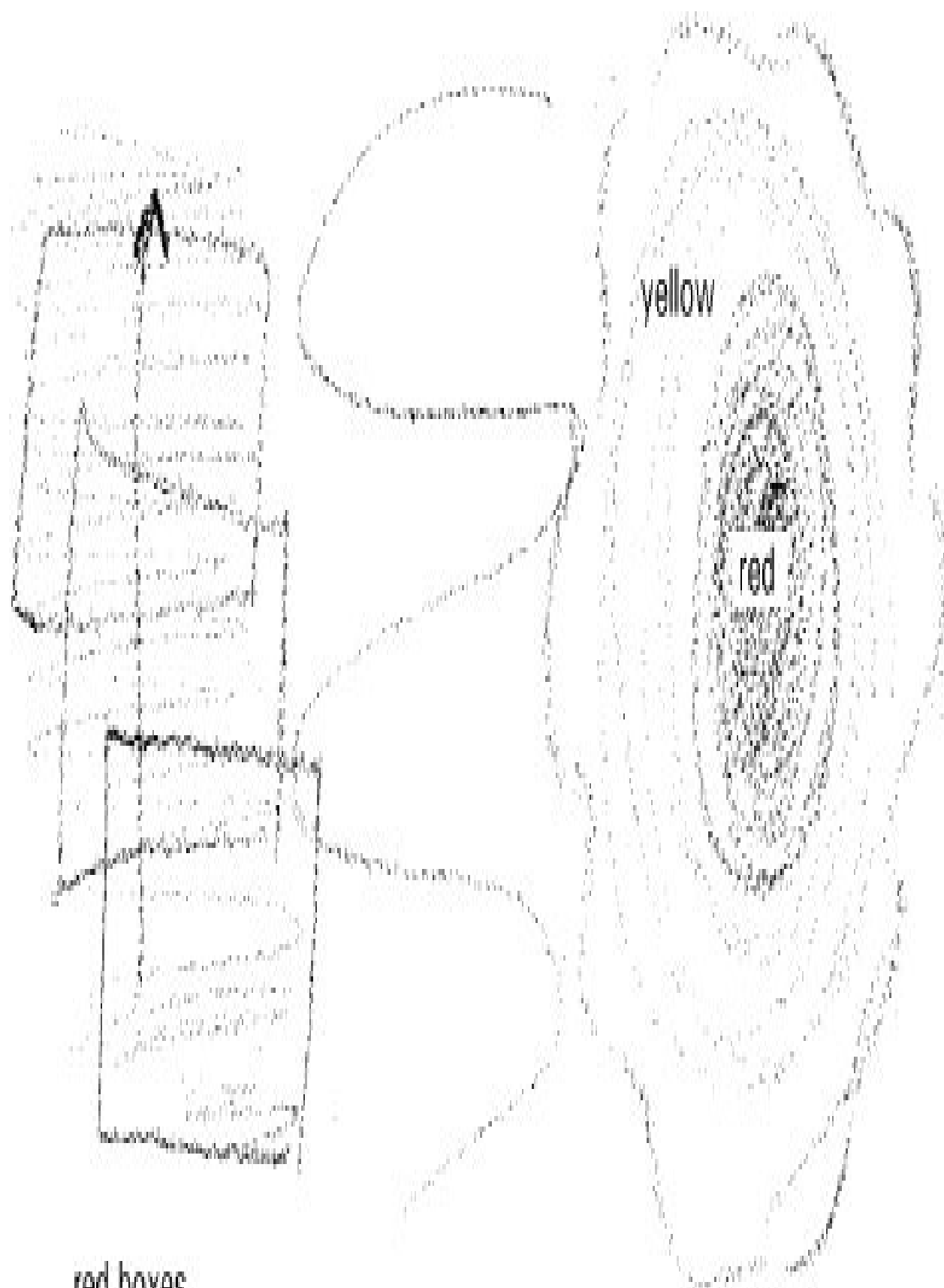
A twofold entity is left in bed. But another twofold entity goes out into the sort of supersensible existence between going to sleep and waking up, which I could also describe to you today from the point of view of dream experience. This is how this twofold entity presents itself to the higher stages of Imagination, Inspiration and Intuition. When human beings go out of their physical and etheric bodies, what they are in their inner being is there as their astral body. As I have said before, there is no need to be held up by words. We must have words, but we could just as well call the astral body something else. I am about to describe something concerning the astral body, and we shall see that the name is not important but rather the mental images that can be attached to it. Now this astral body is a sum of processes. Something happens in human beings which grows out of their physical and etheric bodies, and it is these happenings, these processes which represent the astral body. On the other hand the mental images, the thoughts, have been left behind in the etheric body. Within the astral body there is spiritual light, cosmic warmth permeated by the forces of the capacity for love. All this is present in the astral body, and when we wake up it can dive down into the etheric body, become dammed up and appear as the fabric, the action of dreams, or again, it can appear in this way when it frees itself from the physical and etheric bodies and the world of mental images. Thus it belongs to the nature of the astral body to take us out of our physical and etheric bodies.

As I have already said, the astral body is that part of our being which actually opposes the laws of nature. From morning to evening, from waking up until going to sleep, we are subject to these laws—laws which we can grasp by means of mathematics in relation to space and time. When we are asleep, however, we extricate ourselves both from the laws of nature and from the laws of mathematics—from the latter because our astral body contains not a dead, abstract mathematics of three-dimensional space, but a mathematics of its own, which is alive, spiritually alive, and has only one dimension, moving in a straight line. I shall have more to say about these dimensions. It is actually the astral body that releases us from the laws of nature by which we are fettered between waking up and going to sleep; our astral body transports us into a completely different world, the supersensible world.

To describe this process schematically we must say: When we are awake we carry on our life in the sphere where the laws of nature hold good, but on going to sleep we go out from there with our astral body (yellow). While we are living here in our physical and etheric body our astral body is subject to the laws of nature and in all its movements and functions lives entirely under the laws which

I have presented by these figures (red boxes).

On leaving the physical and etheric body the astral body enters the supersensible world where it is subject to different laws, supersensible laws. The astral body has become something quite different. While we are awake it is, as it were, in the straitjacket of nature's laws. Then it goes to sleep, which means that it leaves the physical and etheric body and moves in the world of free, independent laws which are in tune with its own nature. Now what is this world like? It is a world which gives freedom of movement to the ego-organization which is within the astral body and which has come forth with it out of the physical and etheric body. Every night the ego becomes free in the world in which the astral body brings it, free to go into action in this world where the laws of nature no longer prevail.



red boxes

In the time between going to sleep and waking up, when the astral body is no longer subject to these laws, and we are in a world where the forces of gravity, the laws of energy, in fact all laws of that kind, have ceased to be valid, the way is open for those moral impulses to live and become active which down here, during waking life, can find expression only under the constraint of the world of the senses and its ordering. Between going to sleep and waking up the ego lives in a world where moral law has the same force and power as the laws of nature have down here. And in that world where in sleep it is set free from the laws of nature, the ego can prepare for what it will have to be doing after death. In coming lectures we shall be speaking about the road we go on from death to a new birth.

Between going to sleep and waking up the ego can prepare in picture form, in imaginations—which are not concepts but strength-producing impulses—potent images of what it has to bring to realization through the strength of the spirit. For when the ego has passed through the gate of death moral laws take the place that the laws of nature hold in the physical world of the senses. So the ego, released by the astral body between falling asleep and waking up, prepares pictures of what it will have to go through in spirit reality between death and a new incarnation. Thus we can say that the ego works on a small, very small seedlike plan of what it has to achieve in the spiritual universe after death. And what the ego works out in picture-form during sleep is indicative of what we shall be able to carry over—not through any laws of nature but solely with the help of the spiritual world—from this incarnation to the next. The causal effects of the moral impulses we have absorbed can only be followed up here when we have disposed ourselves to inner obedience to them. Just as the ego during sleep works on its moral impulses, and continues its work between death and a new birth, so do these impulses acquire the force that otherwise the laws of nature possess, and in the human body that we shall have in our following incarnation they will clothe themselves in our moral disposition, in our temperament, in the whole trend of our character—all wrongly ascribed to heredity. This has to be worked on during sleep by the ego when, freed by the astral body from the world of nature, it enters a purely spiritual world. Thus we see how in sleep human beings prepare and grow familiar with their own future.

And what do dreams show us? I would put it like this. Although the ego is busily at work during sleep, what it actually does is shown in dreams in illusory

pictures. We are not yet able to bring into earthly life what is already being woven together during sleep for our next incarnation. At the beginning of this lecture I explained how dreams, in a similar confused way in which they present the experiences of a past incarnation, also show, in a chaotic form, what is being prepared in essence for humanity in future times.

So the right interpretation of dreams does indeed enable us to recognize that they are like a window through which we have only to look in the right way to see into the supersensible world. For behind this window is the fabric resulting from the activity of the ego as it weaves together the strands of earlier incarnations and those incarnations still to come. If we can interpret dreams correctly, then, through this window from the transitory world in which we live as earthly beings, we already have the means of looking in a certain way into the world of eternity to which in our true inner being we belong.

I will say more about this tomorrow.

Lecture 5

The Relationship of Human Beings to the Three Worlds

23 August 1923

Dreams, which I have already said something about, pointing out that they should not be given too much importance in ordinary earthly life, are nevertheless of immeasurable significance to those wishing to gain knowledge of our human relationship to the supersensible world. And in the first place they do indeed lead to that world of experience where we come in contact with the supersensible world, and the laws of nature cease to hold good. So the world of dream pictures is really like a veil concealing the spiritual world. And we can say: 'Here is a human being, and there the veil of dreams. Behind it lies the spiritual world.' But it makes a great difference whether, as happens in dreams, we enter the spiritual world unconsciously, or consciously through Imagination and Inspiration. For if we enter by way of Imagination and Inspiration consciously then everything looks different than it does in the physical world of nature. Then, behind the veil of the dream, that is, behind what the Greeks called 'chaos', the moral world proves to be just as real a world as here in the sense world the natural world is, the world governed by the laws of nature. It is just this chaotic quality of dreams, its whirling confusion, that draws our attention to the fact that quite special circumstances apply to this world behind the veil of chaos.

It is really only possible to speak of this world because our studies have reached the point to which these lectures have brought us. What human beings in their ordinary state of consciousness see of the external world is merely its outer manifestation, is actually a huge illusion. For the spiritual reality that activates it

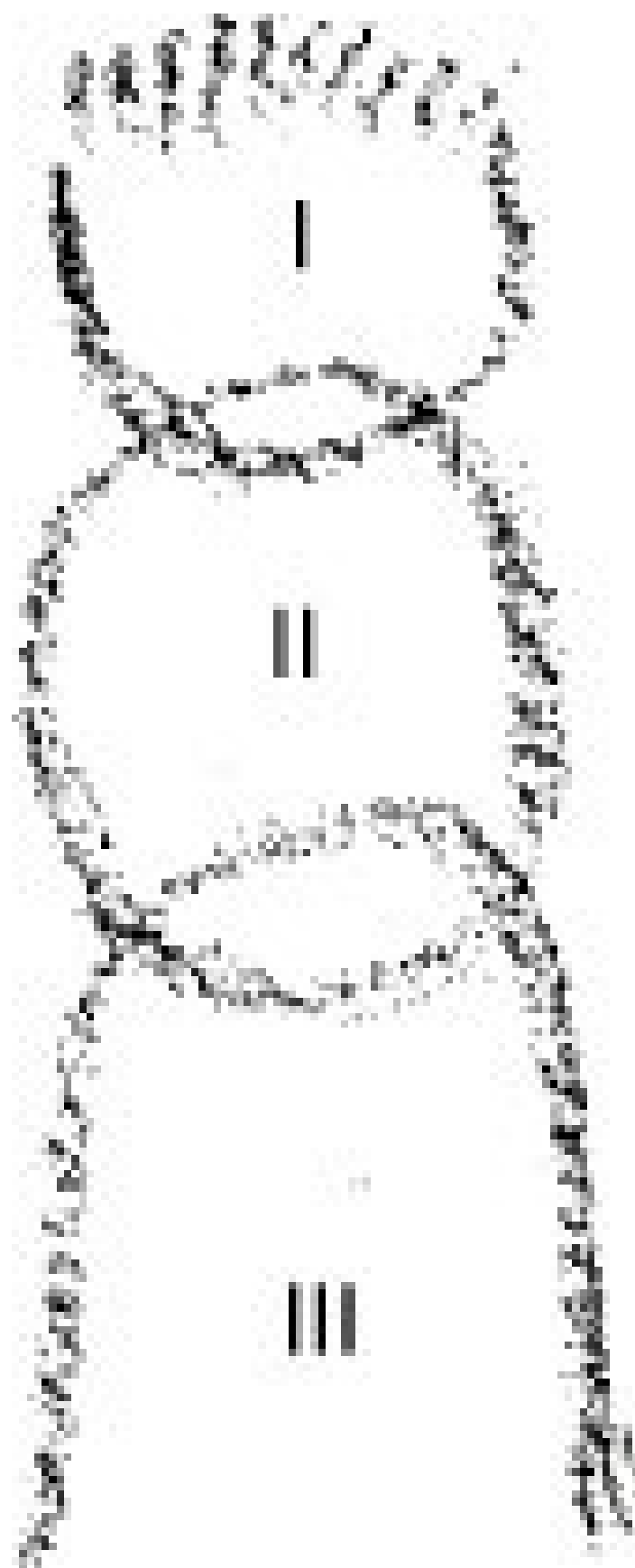
is not seen until we get behind it. And fundamentally speaking, when human beings dream, they become submerged in this spiritual reality, though without being fully prepared, so that what they meet with appears to them in this whirling confusion. So, to begin with, our chief task is to learn why, when we dream, we enter a world which, compared with that of nature, is so disorganized and chaotic.

To help us forward in our study of dreams I must now tell you something about what Imagination and Inspiration can perceive in the spiritual world. We find first and foremost that when in full consciousness we enter this spiritual world by way of Imagination and Inspiration it immediately appears to us to be threefold. Therefore we can only speak about the world and our theme, i.e. the evolution of the world and of humankind, when we have come to the point we have now reached. For only now can I speak of the fact that when human beings confront the external world that shows itself to their senses they are really facing a spiritual world that is threefold, that is, they are actually confronting three worlds. Once we have penetrated the veil, which is chaos, we do not have one world only before us but three worlds, and each of the three has its definite connection with the human being.

When we succeed in penetrating the veil of chaos—later I shall be showing how we can also describe this as crossing the threshold to the spiritual world—we perceive the three worlds. The first of the three is really the world we have just left, somewhat transformed but still there where spiritual existence is concerned. When the veil of chaos has been thrust aside this world appears as though in memory. We have passed over into the spiritual world; and just as we remember something in this world, in the spiritual world we remember what the physical/sense world is altogether. This, then, is the first of the three worlds. The second world we encounter is the one I have called in my book *Theosophy* the soul world, the world of souls. And the third world, the highest of the three, is the actual spiritual world, the world of the spirit.

To start with I shall give you only a schematic account of all this, but from the way these three worlds are related to the human being you will gather many things about them. To these three worlds, appearing as they do to be ascending through three stages, the lowest, the middle and the highest world, I will now relate the human being: to the first world, the head; to the second, the chest organization, including all that it embraces in the way of rhythm, the breathing organization and blood circulation; and to the third, the metabolic/limb system,

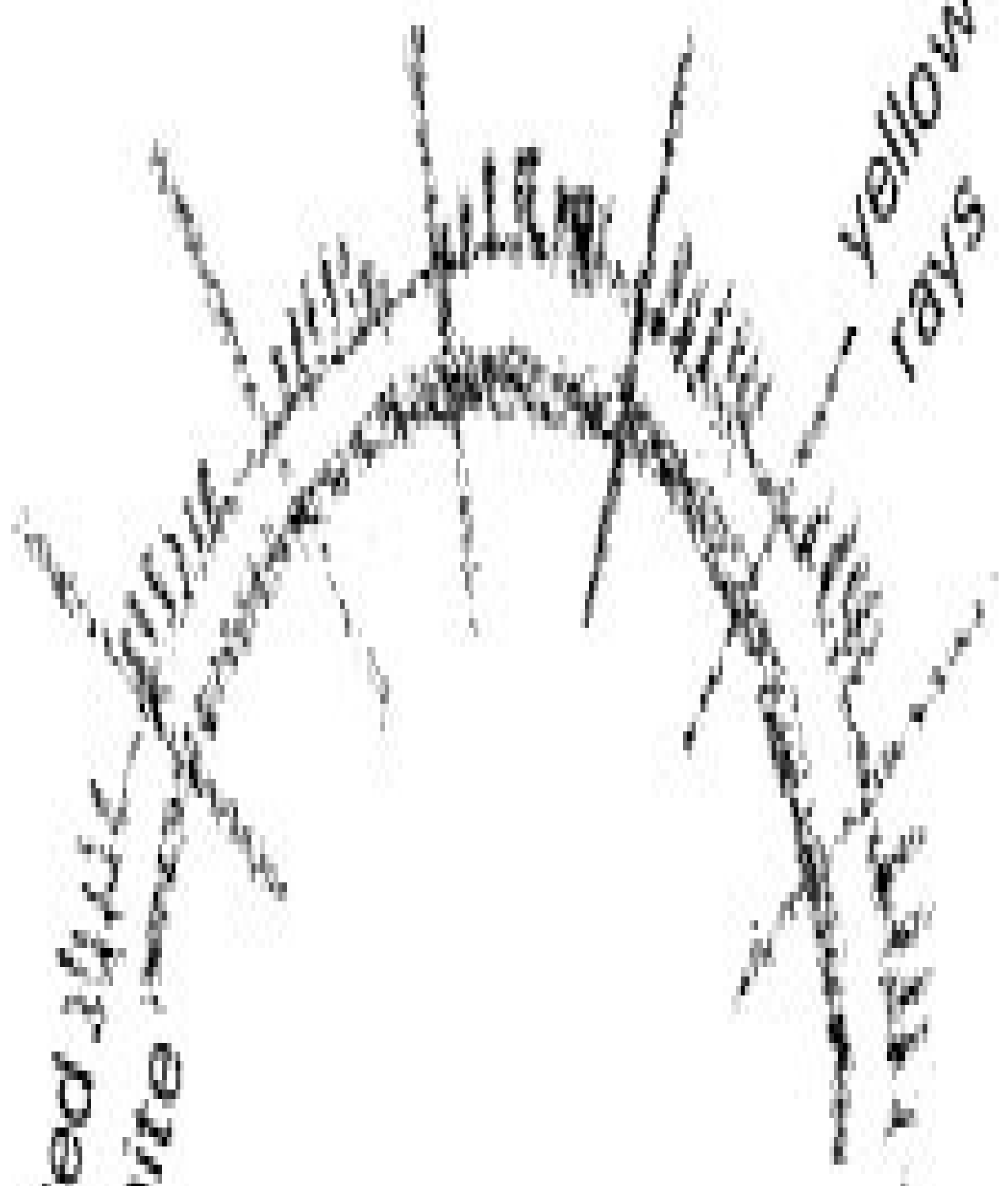
which includes nutrition, digestion and the distribution throughout the body of the products of digestion, all of which engenders movement. All this has to do with the metabolic/limb system.



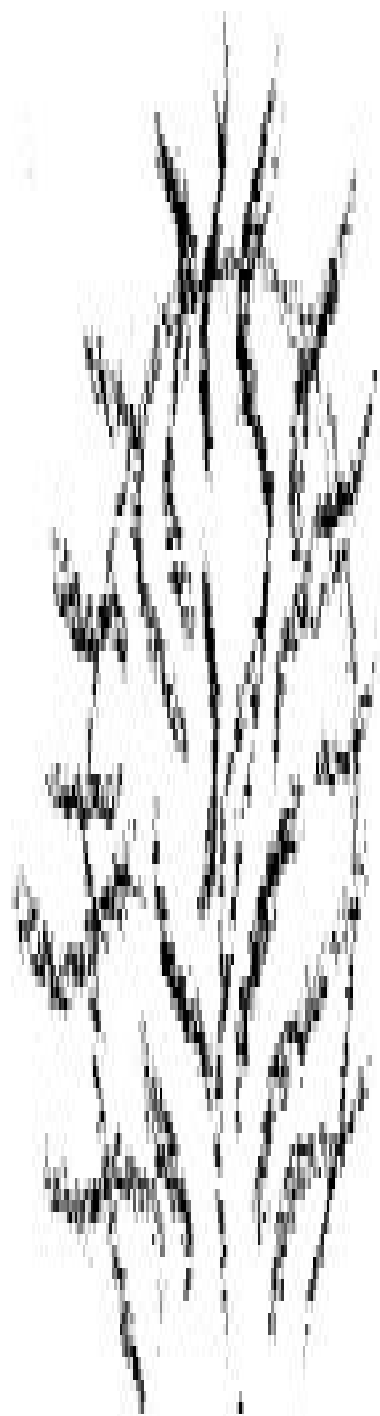
I am intentionally drawing a closed circle for the chest and an open circle for the head, and for the limb system, too, a circle that is not closed. I am doing this for a purpose, for the human head, perceived physically, appears to be thoroughly closed on top, and would have to be drawn so, but perceived spiritually it is open towards the top. The part of a human being which does not belong at all to the realm of the spirit is the bony system, which is entirely of a physical nature. When spiritually you study the human head its thick skull is invisible to spiritual observation. Only the skin is visible where the hair grows (red).

red - blue
white - black

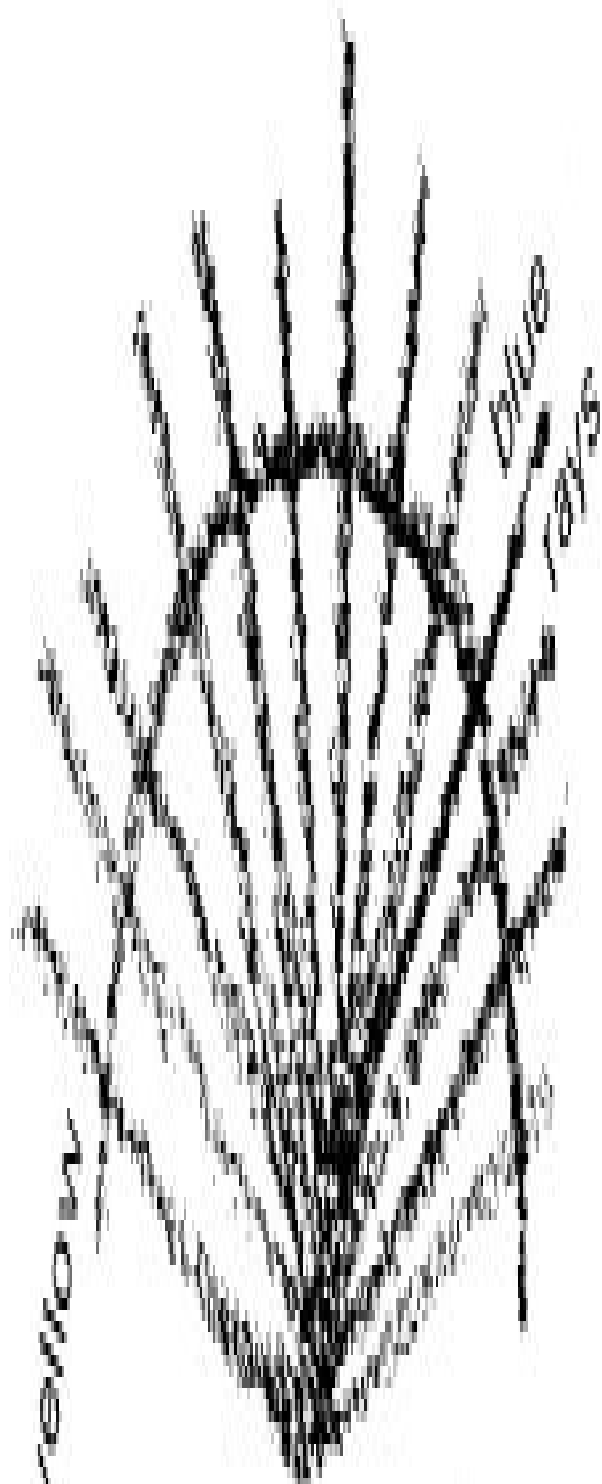
yellow
rays



When this is looked at spiritually, however, something else appears. You see, what I have drawn here in white is not there, and instead of this there is 'spiritual hair', that is, there are rays shooting into the human being which, however, are slightly hindered from doing so by the physical skin (yellow rays). But where there is bone there the spirit can enter most easily, and this it does in the form of rays. So on first looking at a human being, that is, with your physical eyes, you see, if he is not bald, hair on his head (red). But, seen spiritually, where the dome of the skull is, you will see nothing physical, and instead you see rays, sunlike rays, pouring into him from the spiritual world (blue). So that the way things overlap when the human being is observed has to be drawn like this:



red
head with hair



yellow

one
ray

On the left is the human being as physical being, and on the right as spiritual being he is nothing but incoming rays.

So the reason why I have not drawn the head as a closed circle but have left it open is in fact because, due to the periphery of the dome of the skull, the spirit has continual access to it.

Nothing in a human being is without purpose. By deliberate intent of the ruling powers—one might say—human beings have been given a head that is closed at the top, for here the spirit has the easiest access to their inner being because of the very thickness of the bone.

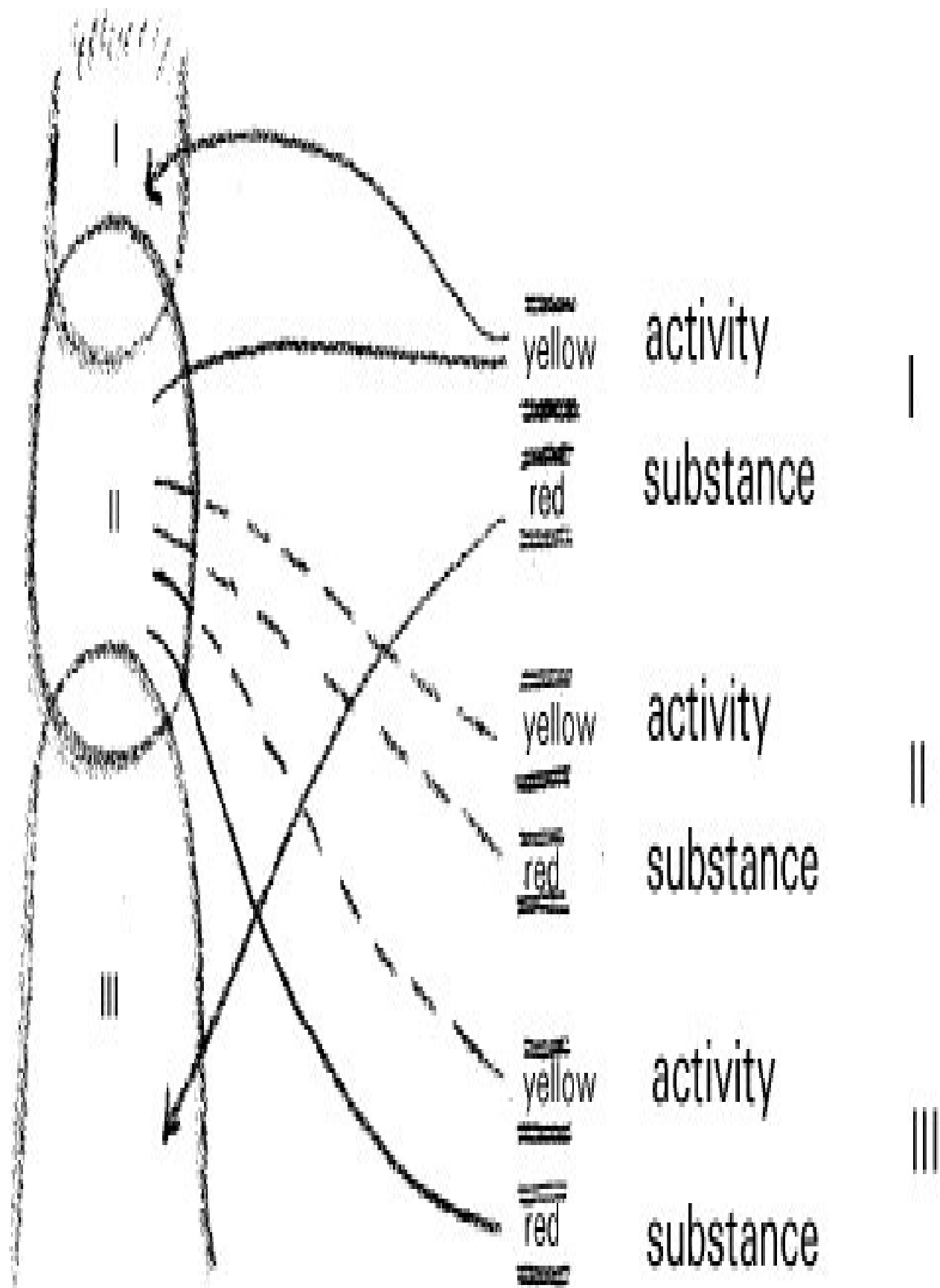
When we are in a position to observe human beings spiritually we are astonished to discover how empty the human head is of anything coming from their own inner being. The head receives least of all from a person's inner being. With regard to anything of a spiritual element coming from themselves, human beings have a hollow and empty ball sitting on their shoulders. Everything spiritual has to enter it from outside.

It is not so with the other members of the human organism. As we shall soon hear, these are by their very nature spiritual. So we can distinguish in the human being these three members—the head or nerves and senses system, the rhythmic system or the breathing and circulation system, and the metabolic/limb system. I shall be speaking further about the relationship these have to the three worlds: the physical world, the soul world and the spiritual world.

First of all it will be well to distinguish in each of the three worlds substance from activity. In reality, substance and activity are one, but they work in different ways in the world. You can acquire a clear idea of this from the substance of your own being. You have substance in your arm, and when this substance is out of order you will feel pain of some kind, and you will feel this inside. If the activity in your arm is out of order you may perhaps hit another human being, and this hurts him. Here it is the activity that is out of order. Nevertheless, though manifesting outwardly in different ways, the substance and activity in your arm are one.

In each of the three worlds we must distinguish between substance and activity. I will do this by depicting the substance as red, the activity as yellow. So that in

the spiritual world we have activity (yellow) and substance (red); in the soul world activity (yellow) and substance (red), and in the physical/sense world activity (yellow) and substance (red).



If we now turn to the human head we find its substance derived entirely from the physical world. During the formation of the human embryo the substance of the head comes from the parents, and the subsequent development of the head and of the whole head and nerve/senses system depends for its substance entirely on the earthly/material world. So I have to say that the head is formed out of the substance of the physical/sense world. On the other hand the activity that shapes and forms the substance of the head happens entirely from out of the spiritual world. Therefore the head has to be left open—in a spiritual sense—so that spiritual activity can flow in.

So at any time of your life you can say: ‘The substance of my head comes entirely from the earth, but it is put together and moulded in such a way that it could never be the work of earthly forces.’ The forms of the human head are shaped entirely from out of the spiritual world; they might be called a heavenly creation. Anyone who contemplates the way in which the human head relates spiritually to the world has to go far and deep. With the same approach we can turn our gaze to a plant, and observation shows that the plant has a certain form. Its substance is drawn from the earth, but its form comes from the etheric world, which is still in the world of space. When we look at an animal we see that it derives the substance of its head entirely from the world of space, but something spiritual has entered into its activity. When we come to the human head, however, we find for the first time that something of the highest spirituality, something that can be called heavenly, is playing in. The human head could never arise through earthly forces, although its substance is taken from earthly materials. So in the human head, which is itself a kind of miniature cosmos, the spirit world creates a structure out of earthly substance.

It is precisely the reverse in the case of the metabolic/limb system, which contains the organs for outer movement, arms and legs, and the extension of these limbs inwards, the digestive system.

For the moment I am leaving out the middle system—the rhythmic system, embracing breathing and the circulation of the blood. I will deal now with the system that combines the processes of digestion and nourishment, and proceeding from this, the inner combustion which enables us to move.

Now the substance of this system is not derived from the earth at all. Improbable

as it may sound, it is specifically in your metabolic/limb system that you have something in you which is not of earthly origin but consists wholly of substance from world number three, substance that exists in the spiritual world. You will say: 'But I can see my legs, can't I? Of course they are physically perceptible, which they would not be if they consisted of spiritual substance.' This is a perfectly justified objection, but there is something more to be considered.

Your real legs are actually entirely spiritual, only the material part is sent there from the head. The head is the organ which fills out our spirit arms, spirit hands, spirit legs and spirit feet with substance; this just makes its way into the spirituality of the limbs and the digestive organs. So that something which in reality belongs entirely to the spiritual world is permeated, flooded with physical matter by the head. This is why it is so difficult to begin to understand with the ideas of physical science that human beings consist of the organs of the head, the chest and the limb/digestive organs. People think of the head as being there on top, and they assume when a person is decapitated he has no head left. But this is not so, for as regards our material content we are head all over. A person is head right into his big toe, for it is his head that supplies it with substance. Primarily, however, it is only the substance of the head that is earthly, but then the head passes on earthly materiality to the other substances, while the original substance of the metabolic/limb system is taken from the spiritual world.

If through vigorous autosuggestion of a negative kind we can suggest away a person's head, so that we do not only think this but are capable of seeing the person as headless, then the rest of his organism also disappears; for with the head goes the rest of his sense-perceptible being. The rest of the human being has then to be seen with soul/spiritual faculties if it is to be there for us at all. For in reality, defined by higher worlds, we go about with spirit legs and spirit arms, and it is only the head that as it were fills them with physical matter.

On the other hand the forces, the activity for all that comprises the metabolic/limb sphere are drawn from the physical world. If you put your foot forward or lift an arm, the mechanism involved, and even the chemical processes that take place in moving an arm or leg, or the chemical processes in the digestive organs—all this activity is earthly. So that in your limbs you have invisible substances but forces drawn from the earth. Therefore we are built up as regards our head and its substance out of the earth; but the forces permeating our head come from the heavens. In our limbs it is the substance of which they are built up that comes from the heavens, but the forces playing into this

heavenly substance during our whole lifetime are earthly forces—gravitation, and other physical and chemical forces belonging to the earth.

You see, therefore, that head and limbs are opposites. The head consists of earthly matter and its forms are sculpted by heavenly activity. The limbs and together with them the digestive organization are formed wholly of heavenly substance, and would not be visible if it were not for the head saturating them with earthly substance. But when we walk, or take hold of something with our hand, or digest food, the heavenly substance engages the services of earthly forces, so that between our birth and our death our earthly life can run its course.

This is the complicated way in which human beings stand in relation to the three worlds. The spiritual world participates with its activity in the head; with its substance it participates in a human being's third organization, the metabolic/limb system. The lowest world, the world most dominated by the senses, participates through its activity in the metabolism and the movement of the limbs, and through its substance in the head; whereas the substance in a human being's third system is wholly spiritual.

In the middle system, which embraces the breathing and circulation of the blood, spiritual activity and material substance intermingle. The spiritual activity flowing through the movement of our breathing and the beating of our heart is always accompanied to some extent by substantiality. And similarly, the substantiality of earthly existence, inasmuch as it enters the breathing by way of oxygen, is to some extent accompanied by earthly activity. So you see that in our middle system, the second, everything flows together. Both heavenly substantiality and activity flow in, and earthly activity and substantiality flow in. Because of this we become receptive in this area to both the activity and the substantiality of the middle world.

So in this middle system there is a considerable intermingling. And this is why, in our middle organization, we have to have our wonderfully perfect rhythmic system, the rhythm of the heart, the rhythm of the lungs in our breathing, because all the intermingling arising between the activity and the substantiality needs to be balanced, harmonized and made melodious by means of these rhythms—not only needs to be but can be, because human beings are organized for it.

Whilst in the head system and the limb system activity and substantiality come

from quite different sources, in the middle system they come from all three worlds, and in a variety of ways—at one place activity accompanied by substance, in another place substance accompanied by activity, here pure activity, there pure substance [see previous drawing].

If as a doctor you observe someone's pulse you can actually feel there the balancing between the heavenly nature of the soul and the earthly activity and substantiality. Again, if you observe the breathing, you again feel a person's inner striving for balance between the various agencies to which he is related in the middle world. You see, this is how human beings relate to the three worlds.

All this is very complicated, you will say. It is true that a lecture course is generally easy to understand up to this point; but when it comes to the point where the relation of the human being to the world has to be grasped, the audience often says: 'This is becoming very difficult. We cannot follow any more.'

But, you know, with really flexible, unbiased thinking you will doubtless be able to keep up. And for people who think with healthy human understanding there is even a consolation. As I said before, the actual thrusting aside of the veil of chaos and the entry into the threefold world, which sends its activity and its substance into the physical world in so vastly complicated a way, this experience is so bewildering that full warning of it is given before the threshold is crossed. I will put it pictorially, but in full accord with the facts. The warning is: 'If you are not willing to forgo what you have regarded as ordinary naturalistic logic and as the customary connection between things, if you are reluctant to leave behind this physical cloak, it is better that you should not enter the spiritual world, for there you will be obliged to make use of other associations of ideas, other orderings, and a completely different logic.' If you want to take anything of your physical logic with you into the spiritual world you will inevitably get confused. And among the matters that have to do with preparing ourselves for meditation and concentration we have to remember the warning never to carry over the logic of the sense world into the logic of the spiritual world.

This is the important warning given by the power we may call the Guardian of the Threshold—and whom we shall hear more about in coming lectures—to those who want to pass through the veil.

But when we want to return to the physical world we receive from the Guardian

another warning distinct and powerful. So long as we are citizens of earth we have to return, otherwise we should never get away from what goes on in the spiritual world, and our deserted physical body would die. We must always return. We have to eat and drink in accordance with naturalistic logic, and submit to all our daily routine. We are obliged to re-enter a world where things follow a naturalistic course, where, for example, we need to have meals at the regular times. So when we return from the spiritual world to the physical world we must, to avoid an impossible situation, heed the second warning given by the Guardian who stands where the veil of chaos separates the physical/sense world from the spiritual/heavenly world. And this is the warning: 'During your life in the physical world never for a moment forget that you have been in the spiritual world, for only then, during the time you have to spend in the physical world, will you be able to guide your steps with certainty.'

Thus at the threshold of this threefold spiritual world, to which human beings are related through their three members in the way described, they are warned to lay aside all naturalistic logic, to leave behind the cloak of the senses and go forward under the condition they acquire a real spiritual logic, spiritual thinking and a spiritual association of ideas. And on their return they are given a second warning just as stern or even sterner than the first one, never for a moment to forget their experience in the spiritual world—in other words, not to abandon themselves to their ordinary consciousness and the impulses coming from the sense world, but always to be aware of having to bring the spiritual element into the physical world.

You will see that the two warnings are quite different from one another. At the entrance to the spiritual world the Guardian of the Threshold says: 'Forget the physical world of the senses during those moments when you are open to the spirit.' On your return from the spiritual world to the physical world the Guardian's warning is: 'Never forget, always remember, even when you are in the physical world again, your experiences in the spiritual, heavenly world.'

With regard to what I just said, there is a considerable difference between people of an older evolutionary epoch and those of the present time. In the case of those I described as coming to the mystery centres either as inspired pupils or just as ordinary folk, the transition from sleeping to waking or from waking to sleeping was not made without their being instinctively aware of the Guardian of the Threshold. Three or four thousand years ago, as people were entering sleep, there arose in their souls like a dream a picture of the Guardian. They went past

him. And as they were returning from sleep to ordinary life this picture appeared again. The warnings they received on entering and leaving the spiritual world were not so clear as the warnings which I have said are given to those entering the spiritual world through Inspiration and Imagination. But as they fell asleep, and again as they awoke, they had a dreamlike experience of passing the Guardian of the Threshold not unlike their other instinctive perceptions of the spiritual world. Further progress in the evolution of humanity—as we shall see in later lectures—requires that human beings should gain their freedom by losing their spiritual vision, and they had to forfeit that half-sleeping, half-waking state during which they were able to behold, at least in a kind of dream, the majestic figure of the Guardian of the Threshold. Nowadays, when human beings pass the Guardian on going to sleep or awakening, they ignore him. And this is why they find themselves in a dream world which is so disorganized.

Just consider with a totally open mind in what a different way the people of an older epoch could talk about their dreams than people do today. Because of ignoring the Guardian twice every evening and morning, as well as every time they take an afternoon nap, people nowadays experience this utter disorder and chaos of their dream world. This can be seen in the form taken by any dream.

Only think: when we cross the threshold—and we do so every time we go to sleep—there stands the majestic Guardian. He cannot be ignored without everything we meet in the spiritual world becoming disordered. How this happens is best seen in the metamorphosis undergone by the orderly thinking proper to the physical/naturalistic world when it passes into the imagery of dreams. Individual dreams can show this very clearly.

In the physical/naturalistic world people behave as they learn to do in accordance with its conditions. Let us take a case in point. Someone goes for a walk. Why does a person go for a walk? Now in a town today, you will agree, people go on certain walks particularly for the experiences they offer. For example, during a walk people meet their friends; they can show off their clothes, if so inclined, both to those they know and to strangers. All this can be experienced during a walk, and the point of it is that it gives occasion for us to have thoughts, mental images, so that we are able to say with our heads—and it is just our head organization that is concerned here—‘I think’. It is by virtue of this ‘I think’ that it is possible to experience in the outside world the kind of thing I have just been describing. One meets other people, and it is an experience for them too. One displays one’s clothes, and perhaps a pretty face into the

bargain. What matters is the experience. In this seeing of other people, however, in this exhibiting to them our outward appearance, feeling also plays its part. One thing pleases us, another does not. Sympathies and antipathies are aroused. We like it when people say what is agreeable to us, and we don't like it when they say the opposite. So what is expressed on such walks is both connected with what the head conceives by way of this 'I think' and through the 'I feel' of the rhythmic organization—that is, connected with feelings of sympathy and antipathy. Because with this second member of our being we can say 'I feel', we can add this to the experiences that come to us in thought during a walk.

But the third member of the human being also plays a part on this walk, if we are fully awake. Here we must turn to certain intimate details of human experience. There is a general feeling that civilized people do not show themselves in public without having clothes on, and do not go for walks without them. There is a general antipathy regarding nudity, and sympathy towards being properly clad. This goes right into our impulses of will. We wear clothes, even clothes of a particular type. This involves the will, the third member of the human organization. Dressing ourselves is thus connected with the part of us that enables us to say 'I will'.

I think

I feel

I will

So, through being able to say 'I will' we go for our walks clothed, and show that our will has done its work. When we are awake in the physical world all this is regulated by the logic of the world. Either we are brought up to do it or we learn to conform to the outer conditions prescribed by the physical world and its logic. If we do not conform, and go for a walk without our clothes on, then something in us is out of order. The ordering of the physical world, the logic of the physical world, determines this. It never occurs to us when we go for a walk to want to see other people without their clothes on. In this respect our soul experiences are governed not by us but by the way things are connected in the world. The result is that all three—I think, I feel, I will—all connect up with one another. It is the

world that brings this about; the external world prompts us to form this connection between thinking, feeling and willing.

When, ignoring the Guardian, we cross the threshold, we confront three worlds and cannot, to start with, find our bearings because we partly carry over into the world of the spirit the outlook we are familiar with here, though the spiritual world does assert its own ordering to a certain extent. Then the following happens. Imagine you are asleep in bed, and for the time being you are, in your feeling, with the middle part of your organism entirely under the influence of sleep. Then the bedcover slips, a part of your body gets cold, and it enters your dream consciousness that this part of you is not dressed. And because you cannot find your bearings in the spiritual world and you do not connect the sensation with a part of you but relate it to the whole world, this feeling expands, and you fancy you are wearing no clothes at all. It may be only a bit of your body that is exposed, but because that bit gets cold you feel bare all over.

Now in your dream you are immediately engaged in an impulse of will which holds good when you are awake, which is to put clothes on if you are not dressed. In your sleep, however, you feel you cannot put them on; something is preventing you. In your dream consciousness this is because you cannot move your limbs. You see, these two things, 'I feel I have nothing on', and 'I cannot put on my clothes', the physical world being no longer there to combine the two, one of which belongs to world two, the other to world one, are wrongly combined in your dream. And because in that same night you have the experience of having had a walk, this also enters the course of the dream. Three separate conditions arise: I am going on a walk; I am horrified to find I have nothing on; I cannot put my clothes on.

Now just think. These three things, which in our ordinary material/physical life can be logically combined, fall apart when in passing by the Guardian of the Threshold you ignore him.

In world 1: going for a walk

In world 2: being without clothes

In world 3: not being able to get dressed, because that is quite impossible.

In this situation you feel yourself split into three, among strangers, exposed to everyone's view without clothes on, and powerless to put them on. This is what you go through in your dream. What is connected for you in ordinary life through natural logic is presented separately in your dream, and you connect it chaotically in conformity with a habit you have taken with you across the threshold; you connect it as if in the spiritual world, too, you would feel the same if you were undressed. Because of ignoring the Guardian of the Threshold you carry over into the spiritual world a habit suited to the physical world, and you connect the three worlds chaotically according to the laws of the physical world, and this is the situation in which you feel yourself.

In countless dreams the essential thing is that as soon as we pass the threshold without heeding the Guardian's warning what we sense here in the physical/naturalistic world to be a harmonious unity falls apart, and we are confronted by three different worlds. By faithfully observing the warning given by the Guardian of the Threshold we must find the way to unite these three worlds. Nowadays our dreams bring us face to face with three worlds. It was not so to the same extent in older times, as can be seen from the dreams recorded in the Old Testament, but when people of modern times face these three worlds they try to connect them in accordance with laws valid in physical life. This is the reason for the chaotic connections in these three worlds in which we now are.

You will see, therefore, that even dreams can show us this serious fact—that the moment we cross the threshold to the spiritual world we are at once faced with three worlds, and that we have both to enter them and to leave them in the right way. It is precisely dreams that can teach modern people a very great deal about the characteristics of both this physical/ sense world and the other world, the world of soul and spirit.

We shall say more about this matter tomorrow.

Lecture 6

The Ruling of Spirit in Nature

24 August 1923

Yesterday I tried to show how the confusion in dreams arises from the fact that during sleep human beings cross the so-called threshold unconsciously or half-consciously. Leaving the physical world of the senses they enter the spiritual world and there encounter three worlds: a memory of the ordinary physical world, the soul world, and the actual spiritual world. Events, both inner and outer ones, experienced in our ordinary earthly life are drawn together from what all three worlds reveal. But they split apart when in sleep we enter the spiritual world, and what we experience is then not related to the world where it belongs. This is why for our usual memory consciousness illusion arises in dreams. Imaginative consciousness does not perceive the dream merely in this way, but makes it an object of observation, just as we look towards a distant point in physical space—though now, by means of Imagination, we look towards something distant in time. We do not simply remember what has been dreamt; we look at it, and for the first time we arrive at a true conception of what a dream is. Then we realize that a dream is interpreted rightly only when we do not relate it to the physical/naturalistic world but to the spiritual world—above all, in most cases, to the moral world. The dream will not tell us what it is expressing if we interpret it physically, but only if we interpret it on a moral/spiritual basis.

To illustrate this let us turn to the dream I told you about yesterday, and the confusion of someone going for a walk and feeling terribly ashamed at finding themselves naked in a crowded street. I remarked that the whole mood of soul in

dream consciousness is due to our confronting three different worlds. If we now look at this dream in the right way, however, we have to admit that although its content appears to belong to the realm of the senses, yet through this medium the spiritual/moral content is seeking to reveal itself. So people who have a dream like that ought not to look at the immediate symbolic course it takes, but should ask themselves: 'Haven't I sometimes had a tendency in my daytime consciousness not to show my true being to other people? Haven't I perhaps been too fond of following the fashion in my outer appearance—been altogether too apt to take refuge in all kinds of conventions? And in doing this, has it not been a characteristic of mine sometimes to be dishonest enough to want to give people a false impression of myself?'

When people let their thoughts take this course they gradually arrive at the moral/spiritual interpretation of the dream. They relate the dream pictures not to the naturalistic world but to the spiritual world, and realize that whilst during sleep they were in the supersensible world spiritual beings had approached them and told them that they should not present themselves in a cloak of falsehood but as they truly are in their inner being. When we interpret dreams in this way we arrive at their moral/spiritual truth. A whole number of dreams can be interpreted in this way.

People of an older chapter of history who even in the dreamy symbolism of sleep were conscious of the Guardian of the Threshold took to heart his warning not to take with them what belonged to the physical world of the senses when they entered the spiritual world. Had these people dreamt they had no clothes on in the street it would never have occurred to them to pick on the interpretation that they ought to be ashamed; this is something that holds good for the physical world, for a person's physical body. They would have given heed to the warning that what holds good for the physical does not hold good for the spiritual world, and that what presents itself in the spiritual world is being said to human beings by the gods. A dream, therefore, has to be interpreted as an utterance of the gods. Only during the course of human evolution have dreams come to be interpreted in a naturalistic sense.

Or let us take another common dream. The dreamer is going along a path that leads him into a wood. After a while he realizes that he has lost his way and cannot go any further. He tries to do so, but the path comes to an end and trees block the way. He feels uneasy.

Now in ordinary consciousness a dream like this is easily taken at its face value. But if we forget the naturalistic associations, the direct message from the spiritual world is that the confusion you have met with is in your thoughts. In waking consciousness, however, people are often reluctant to admit how confused their thinking is, and how easily they reach a point when they can make no progress but only go round in a circle. This inclination is particularly characteristic of our present civilization. People consider themselves enlightened thinkers, but in reality they dance round in a circle with their thoughts—either where conventional trivialities are concerned or regarding the matter of atoms, which are intellectual constructions of their own, or about something else again. In ordinary consciousness, of course, they are not disposed to admit this. Dreams are a series of symbolic pictures that reveal to people their true nature, and spiritual beings are telling them this. When people accept their dream experiences as real self-knowledge their understanding of themselves will be greatly enhanced.

Another common human characteristic is that people allow themselves to be led by their instincts, their urges, to do what is most congenial to them. For example, they find pleasure in doing something or other, but they are not ready to admit that they are doing it for their own satisfaction. They invent some way of interpreting it differently for their ordinary consciousness—they say perhaps that they are doing it for anthroposophical, occult or esoteric reasons, connected with a great mission or something of that sort. With this kind of self-justification they cover up—and this occurs with extraordinary frequency—an endless amount of all that is stirring around in the depths of their animal life. Dreams which choose their imagery in the beyond but which are actually trying to show the forces that really live even in the soul and spirit of the dreamer show us pictures of the dreamer being pursued by wild beasts but being unable to escape. We shall correctly interpret the moral significance of such a dream, not by looking at its physical content, but by accepting it as self-knowledge, and seeing it as a warning to open our eyes to the inner truths of our own nature, and to consider whether this does not resemble—if only slightly—animal instinct rather than what we imagine to be our ideals.

There are so many ways in which dreams can warn us and straighten us out. When they are taken to refer not to the lower but to the higher world they can have a guiding influence on people's lives, and then when the stage of conscious Imagination is reached we can see how dreams, which in the first place present even to imaginative knowledge pictures drawn from the sense world, are

completely transformed into moral/spiritual happenings.

So we see that dreams are something that can bring even ordinary consciousness into the spiritual world. They have only to be taken in the right way. But I have also said that by raising ourselves by way of Imagination into the spiritual world we are not in the same state of soul as in our physical existence. In this condition I am here and the table is there, outside me; there is a physical separation between me and the table. The moment I enter the spiritual world this separation ceases. It is no longer as though I were standing here and the table were over there, but as if I were spreading my whole being over the table and the table were taking me into itself. In the spiritual worlds we enter right into whatever we perceive. Therefore our experience either in dreams or consciously in Imagination should not be related merely to our inner life, but we can speak in a spiritual-scientific sense if we say in the words of the poet that the whole world is woven out of dreams.²⁰ It is certainly not woven out of a play of atoms, which is a dream of the scientists, but out of what I have described as the ‘chaos’ of the Greeks, out of the weaving of our dreams and of our conscious Imagination. I have called it both subjective and objective, for the world is not woven purely subjectively, and certain aspects of the world certainly have to be explained as being woven out of dreams.

For example, if we are looking at a seed, we should not be content to explain it with the laws of physics and chemistry. A scientist who sees nothing more than those laws in a seed or in an embryo cannot possibly explain them, for nature is dreaming in a seed and embryo—their very essence is the weaving life of a dream. Take the seed of a plant—in it a dream is living and weaving. You can never enter into this with the intellect, which is limited to nature’s laws, but you must approach it with the human faculty that exists in dreams and in conscious Imagination.

The same kind of life that there is in a seed is also active in our whole organism throughout our earthly life. Therefore we should not expect to find in our organism merely the working of chemical and physical forces. Looked at from the point of view of the physical body we have to regard that aspect of the human being that is characterized by the externally visible contours as the part that exists in the earthly/physical sense world. But behind this lives something else, invisible to the eye and inaudible to the ear, in so far as these are physical, but which can be perceived in Imagination and also experienced as unconscious imagination in dreams. In the whole of the human body nature is dreaming.

Nature's way of thinking is not like our human intellectual thinking—it is a dreaming. And it is out of this dreaming that the forces of our digestion and of our growth are guided, and that our whole organism is fashioned.

When we look back in earthly existence we generally start from this epoch of time. What shall we call this age of ours? We could take one of its symptoms and call it the age of the typewriter. So let us go back from the age of the typewriter, on to the time when printing was first introduced; and going still further back we come, let us say, to the time of the Romans, to the Greek age, and arrive at the oriental period from which the Vedic records come. We are then left with no external documents. Many treasures have been excavated from the tomb of Egyptian pharaohs, but we come at last to a time of no records, where we have to rely on imaginative and inspired spiritual knowledge. Then we meet with a frontier beyond which, for ordinary consciousness, the past is vague, very much as sleep lives beyond our dreaming. By going back in this way through time and through world evolution we come in fact to the dream-veil we can experience every night.

If we reach that point with conscious Imagination, the more distant past lights up spiritually. But it looks different from the world we can know of with our intellect or by means of ancient records. This remote past, which lies behind a veil of dreams in world evolution, shows us human beings in direct contact with divine spirits. Human beings themselves were still of a divine soul nature, and while they awaited incarnation on the earth they were in the company of divine spirit beings whose destiny does not include earthly incarnation. When, therefore, we look back through this veil of chaos to the dream-veil of the remote past, and which we have been speaking of during the last few days, we see the divine spirits foregathering with the still spiritual human souls who were destined to come down fully onto the earth.

We shall also see that these things, connected as they are with human evolution, are at the same time related to cosmic evolution. Where in a remote past this veil appears to inspired Imagination, we see, too, that in cosmic evolution—of which we shall have more to say—the moon, previously united with the earth, detaches itself and goes out into cosmic space to circle round the earth. Thus we gaze back on a dream-veil, an imaginative veil, and looking through it we find the earth united with the moon, and human beings in direct contact with divine spiritual beings. When this dream-veil appears to the retrospective gaze of Imagination, we perceive the momentous cosmic event of the moon, in quite a

different form, pushing its way out of the earth and going forth into cosmic space as a separate body. So we look back to the evolution of earth, humanity and cosmos when these were all still united with the moon, yet humanity was already there, only still as a being of spirit/soul.

As we gaze further and further back we find that there is absolutely no epoch in cosmic evolution when we do not find humanity in its beginnings. So that from the standpoint of spiritual science we cannot say that for millions of years the earth evolved merely inorganically or only with creatures of a lower order, with humankind arising only after that. We find humanity in other forms connected at every stage with that cosmic evolution to which we can look back to what appears to us when we raise ourselves in this way to the divine/ spiritual reality of the world behind the veil of chaos pertaining to dream and the veil of conscious Imagination.

When, as I have said, we look at a seed or anything in an embryonic state, imaginative cognition reveals in it the weaving of a dream. And we see how something real, though expressed in dream pictures, governs the natural part of the seed. Anyone able to perceive this element will find it everywhere, but in a great variety of forms. It is precisely the spiritual element that passes through the most varied metamorphoses. And when we have thoroughly grasped that in the seeds of plants and in the embryos of animals the predominant part is this dream-weaving, we are quite justified in asking how it stands with the apparently dead world of the minerals. If we look out of the window or walk along the street we see the bare hills, a world that seems quite lifeless, and we have to ask: If in the seed we look at the governing force as a dream picture, how does it stand with these mountainous masses and with all the lifeless substance that forms the ground we tread on in the physical world? Just as in the plants we find a governing spirit that takes a comparatively gentle hold of the material in a state of weaving-dreaming, in the same way, with imaginative cognition, we also find a spiritual element in these rocky masses—but in this case the spiritual part consists of individual spiritual beings.

These spiritual beings, however, are in a state not of dreaming but of deep sleep. When you look at the rocks and hills you must not think of them as permeated by a slumbering amorphous mist, but by individual spiritual beings sleeping there. Presently we shall see how these spiritual beings came into existence through having been split off from beings of light with a high level of consciousness. We shall see how they themselves, having in their present state

only a sleep consciousness, are the result of that separation, and that these elemental beings are asleep everywhere out there in the inanimate world. So that when we walk over this mountainous mass of rock we should be aware that in the ground beneath our feet spiritual forces are active in separate, individual form. And if we follow the course of this sleeping spiritual activity in the lifeless world we become aware that in this sleep of the elemental beings a particular mood exists. Imagination shows us these beings, but it is Inspiration that tells us about this mood. In these elementals of the mountains, the rocks and the ground, there lives what we can discover in ourselves when we are waiting for something with a real mood of expectation. The soul/spiritual activity taking place in the apparently lifeless rocks is full of an expectant mood.

In fact, these beings are waiting to awaken from deep sleep into a state of dreaming. We learn this through Inspiration, and more particularly when we enter right into these beings through Intuition. All that confronts us out there in those hills is expecting that one day it will be able to dream, and with dream consciousness to take hold of earthly substance that is ground down to lifeless matter, and from those rocks and hills to conjure forth once more as embryos, as seeds, living plants. It is indeed these beings who present our souls with a wonderful natural magic, a creating from out of the spirit.

And so, as we go about among the rocks and look at them in the physical light they reflect, they can reveal to us, not in any symbolic sense but as real, actual knowledge, that they are now sleeping, and that in the future they will be dreaming, and later still, they will awaken to a full waking life as elemental nature spirits who will one day become purely spiritual beings.

The physical matter in plants is still in a condition accessible to the dream-weaving of the spirit. In the rocks matter is crumbling away. Looking back in Imagination and Inspiration we become aware that everything that is lifeless has arisen from something living. But when the living becomes lifeless, sleeping spirituality is put into it. And this sleeping spirituality is waiting in what is lifeless until it can awaken into dreaming and lead lifeless existence over into cosmic embryonic life.

Now the various parts of the earth show in different ways this sleeping of spiritual beings in the mountains and the firm crust of the earth. And we can actually say that the kind of sleep that beings awaiting their future have in regions such as this is different from the kind of sleep they have in other parts of

the earth. Here in Penmaenmawr we find that the particular configuration of the earth, the kind of rock that has evolved here, enables these sleeping beings to rise to the aeriform state, to interweave even with the light, while in other parts of the earth this is far from the case. Therefore here, if we look on the weaving as due not to the aerial atmosphere alone, but to the prevailing soul atmosphere which permeates the air just as the human soul permeates a human body, then specifically in Penmaenmawr we find that this soul element in the atmosphere is different from elsewhere. I will give just one example to make this clear.

Suppose that in a certain region imaginative cognition exerts itself to call up an imagination of what is really going on there. This imagination may be more or less difficult to hold on to, for the possibility of retaining an imagination in consciousness varies in different regions. We are in a region where imaginations continue for a remarkably long time and so are able to become very vivid. It was precisely in regions such as this that Druids or similar wise men sought out places for their temples, their sanctuaries, where the conditions were such as to allow imaginations to remain and not immediately to disperse like clouds do. Therefore we can understand that it would have been precisely such places that were chosen as Druid sanctuaries up to comparatively recent times. In this region they always felt that the difficulty of holding an imagination was not so great as in other places. Everything, of course, has its light and shadow side. When an imagination remains it is harder to reach inspirations, though these gain in strength. Because of this, whatever the spiritual world has to say in this place streams down, one might say, with greater intensity, but is expressed with greater difficulty and more emphasis. Therefore, even where the spiritual aspect is concerned, differentiations can be noticed in the various places. A map might be drawn indicating where for imaginative consciousness there is no difficulty in holding imaginations. If those regions where they soon dissolve were given a different colour, we should arrive at an extraordinarily interesting map of the world. For the prevailing character of the soul atmosphere here we should need a particularly strong colour—a sparkling, radiant, vivid colour.

Therefore I fully believe that those taking part in this lecture course will be able to sense something of what I would call an esoteric mood conveyed by the elements. We are right in the thick of it here; we meet it on our walks, it exists in this area in quite a different way from elsewhere. So I am extremely grateful to the organizers of this course for having chosen a spot where we feel the immediate presence of an esoteric mood. We feel it in other places too, of course, but not so immediately. I am especially thankful that this place was

included in the choice of places where a course could be held. For precisely the reasons I have just stated this course takes its place in a most beautiful way in the whole evolution of the anthroposophical movement.

It will be clear from the descriptions I have been giving you that between the physical world of the senses and the spiritual/supersensible world there is a boundary which we have a certain right to call the threshold of the spiritual world. [See drawing, at end of this chapter.] And I have in the most varied ways pointed out how necessary it is that we should be able to cross this threshold. We shall have more to say about this. However, you will have gathered from previous lectures that in former periods of human evolution this crossing of the threshold was a rather different matter from what it is at the present moment in history. In those ancient times people were able to cross in another way because even by day their consciousness was dreamlike, but for that very reason more alive to the supersensible. Therefore, in the way I have characterized, they passed the Guardian of the Threshold half-consciously, dreamily, both on going to sleep and on awaking.

Here we can see a transition from a humanity of an older type, with little freedom, to a humanity who were becoming increasingly free. This former determinism was bound up with the fact that each time, on going to sleep or awaking, human beings had some perception of the Guardian of the Threshold standing there and warning them. Now, in place of this unfree situation, we have the incapacity of present-day consciousness to see into the spiritual world, signifying on the other hand an increasing freedom, which represents a principle of human progress.

So we can say that, looked at from the point of view of the spiritual world, people have lost many a thing precisely because in the course of their evolution they have had to be led towards freedom. What has been lost, however, has to be regained, in the way that anthroposophy, for example, would like to show. And now is the historic moment when we have to begin to try and regain it.

But everywhere, among quite different kinds of people, there still emerges at the present time things inherited from past ages, when human beings had a different relationship to the spiritual world. Actually, in the consciousness of those given up to intellectualism, a strict frontier is set up as a rule between what they experience in the world of the senses and what lies beyond in the spiritual world. The frontier is in fact so rigorously maintained that even enlightened minds are

unwilling to admit the possibility of crossing it.

In my brief sketch of the way into the supersensible world I have indicated that it is possible to cross the frontier and to enter that world in full consciousness. But as a relic of the time when human beings entered the spiritual world in a more instinctive, unconscious way, and even in their day consciousness had more in them of the spiritual world, there still emerges a certain heritage from the past even at the present point of evolution. And this affects us in such a manner that it is imperative that we acquire a conscious spiritual understanding of it. For if we do not understand it correctly it will bring much delusion, which could be very dangerous. Therefore by way of these lectures describing the evolution of humankind and of the world I must include a review of these borderline matters, where what was natural and taken for granted among the people of former epochs emerges today, but which can lead to dangerous illusions in those who have not got the right knowledge for dealing with them.

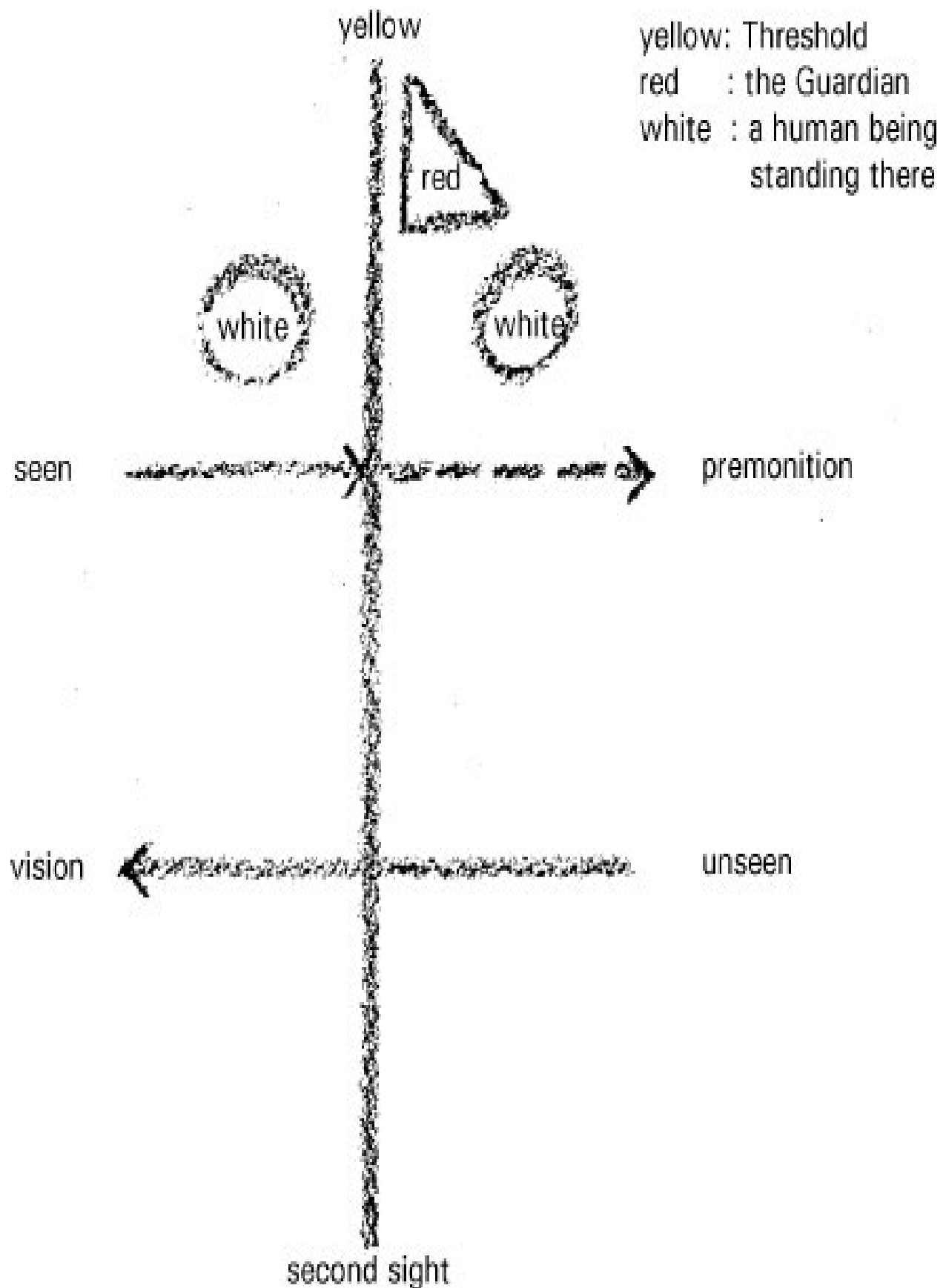
Among these phenomena situated for ordinary consciousness at the frontier between the sense world and the supersensible world are visions. I mean the kind of visions where, in a state of hallucination more or less controlled by the person concerned, pictures arise in a quite definite form, the content of which can include even more than colour and sound, but which do not resemble anything in our external world. For normal perception the object is outside; the image, in a very shadowy form, is inside, but the person is perfectly aware that the shadowy mental image refers to the outside world. Visions arise by themselves, claiming to be a reality on their own account. People do not know, either, how to judge whether these pictures that appear without their agency are real or not.

Our foremost question is: How, then, do visions come about? This happens because the people concerned still possess the capacity for carrying over into their waking world what they experience during sleep, and for bringing it into conceptual form just as they do with their sense perceptions. Whether, after perceiving a clock that exists physically for my senses, I make an inner picture of it, or whether after experiencing in a dream the configuration, the inner reality of an external object, I wake up and make a picture of my experience, the only difference between the two processes is that I am in control of one of them—hence the image of it is more shadowy—while the other process is out of my control. In the latter case I am not bringing into the life of my mind something that exists at this present moment, but something experienced last night, or further back still, while my soul was outside, and I am making it into a vision.

In an earlier age, when the relation of people both to the physical world and to the spiritual world was ruled by instinct, such visions were perfectly natural; it is human progress that has made them the uncontrolled, illusory things they are today. Therefore it is essential that we understand the whole situation. Nowadays when people return to the physical world after experiencing something in the spiritual world they no longer hear the warning of the Guardian of the Threshold: 'You should take careful note of all that you have experienced in the spiritual world and take it back with you into the physical world.' If people were to do this consciously they would know what the vision contains. But if the vision appears to them only in the physical world, without their realizing that they have brought it back from the spiritual world, and therefore do not know what it is, they are without guidance and at the mercy of illusion. So we can conclude: Visions come about because people carry over unawares their sleep experience into their waking life, and in waking life they then form conceptions of the experiences—conceptions which are much richer and more significant than the ordinary shadowy ones, and these they turn into vivid visionary images complete with colour and sound.

Another phenomenon is the following. People carry over into their sleep life the kind of feelings and perceptions they have in physical life. Then when they are in the act of carrying these over into the open sea of sleep life they are of course warned to be careful not to do anything foolish. If, however, the sleep is very light—a far more common condition in ordinary life than is realized, for we are often just a little asleep when walking about quite normally, and we ought to be more aware of this—we may then, without noticing it, carry over the threshold our everyday way of feeling about things. There then arise those vague sensations as if we were inwardly watching something in the future. This is how premonitions arise. So, whereas visions come about when something we experience during sleep is brought down into waking life, and the threshold is crossed unconsciously, premonitions come about when we are in such a light sleep that we do not notice it, and, believing ourselves to be awake, carry over the threshold, again ignoring the Guardian, our everyday experience. This, however, lies so deep down in the subconscious that it is not noticed. We are of course connected with the whole world all the time. And if we could draw up the knowledge of this connection out of our subconscious there would be many a thing available to us.

If we carry over here something from the other side of the threshold, whilst ignoring the Guardian of the Threshold, a vision arises:



So we can say: If this is the threshold, indicated by a yellow line, where the Guardian stands visions arise when we bring across from the supersensible realm what we have experienced there. And when we take across into the spiritual world what we have experienced in the sense world in the course of a light sleep, then premonitions arise (what in German we call Ahnungen).

So you will now see that because it is still possible to experience these legacies from the evolutionary past, visions arise on one side of the threshold, premonitions on the other. But people can stand right at the threshold and not notice the Guardian. Moments can then occur when inwardly, in their soul, people are as it were under a spell. But the expression ‘under a spell’ does not quite meet the case, because it does not mean here what we usually associate with the term—it is rather that we are in a particular soul state. When people stand at the threshold, so that they are as it were still aware of the physical world, but already aware of the supersensible world, they experience something which is very widespread in certain localities—what we can call second sight, a half-conscious experience at the threshold. So to sum up these legacies from the past, these phenomena in human life occurring when the consciousness is dimmed happen on this side of the threshold as visions, beyond the threshold as premonitions, and on the threshold itself as second sight.

Tomorrow I shall be speaking in greater detail about the characteristics of these three regions, and proceed from there to describe the world obscurely indicated by visions, premonitions and second sight—worlds which a new knowledge will have to bring into the full clarity of enhanced consciousness.

Lecture 7

The Interplay of the Different Worlds

25 August 1923

In human life there is a perpetual interplay between the supersensible world and the world of the senses; and I have also referred to extreme cases where the two worlds—or actually all three—play into one another without human beings contributing anything to it through their own development. Today we shall be speaking about examples of interplay between the different worlds. I will first describe the ordinary sleepwalking type, then the Jakob Böhme type, and lastly the type represented by Swedenborg.²¹

The relation of these three types to one another is such that each of them may be said to indicate, at the same time, as if by way of a universal experiment, how evolution is connected with the whole of the evolution of the universe. This too, I want particularly to bring to your attention in connection with these three types. In studying these three types of people, who enter and leave the spiritual world without fully recognizing the presence of the Guardian of the Threshold, we find indeed that all three, the sleepwalking type, the Jakob Böhme type and the Swedenborg type, have a way of perceiving the supersensible world—or, as is particularly the case with the sleepwalker, are active in it—that is different from the way opened by imaginative, inspired and intuitive cognition. This derives from the fact that when people enter the spiritual world—everyone does so, unconsciously, whenever they go to sleep—everything, as I have already pointed out, becomes different from what it is in the physical world.

Above all, there are three features of the supersensible world that are absolutely

opposed to those in the physical world. These contrasts have such a strong effect on human beings and influence to such an extent all they hold to be true, right and salutary in the physical world that, given the present earthly condition of soul and body, people should never be transplanted suddenly into the supersensible world without due preparation. This is why in my book *How to Know Higher Worlds* I emphasize so strongly the necessity for the right sort of preparation. It is described there in such a way that anyone who follows the directions will be prepared in all respects for entering the supersensible world in the right way. But none of the three types I am speaking about today enter after having acquired such preparation but more for reasons of their destiny, and their destiny, their karma, then protects them from any dangers. Indeed, through their karma things are made known to humanity in general which could otherwise only be known through imaginative, inspired and intuitive knowledge.

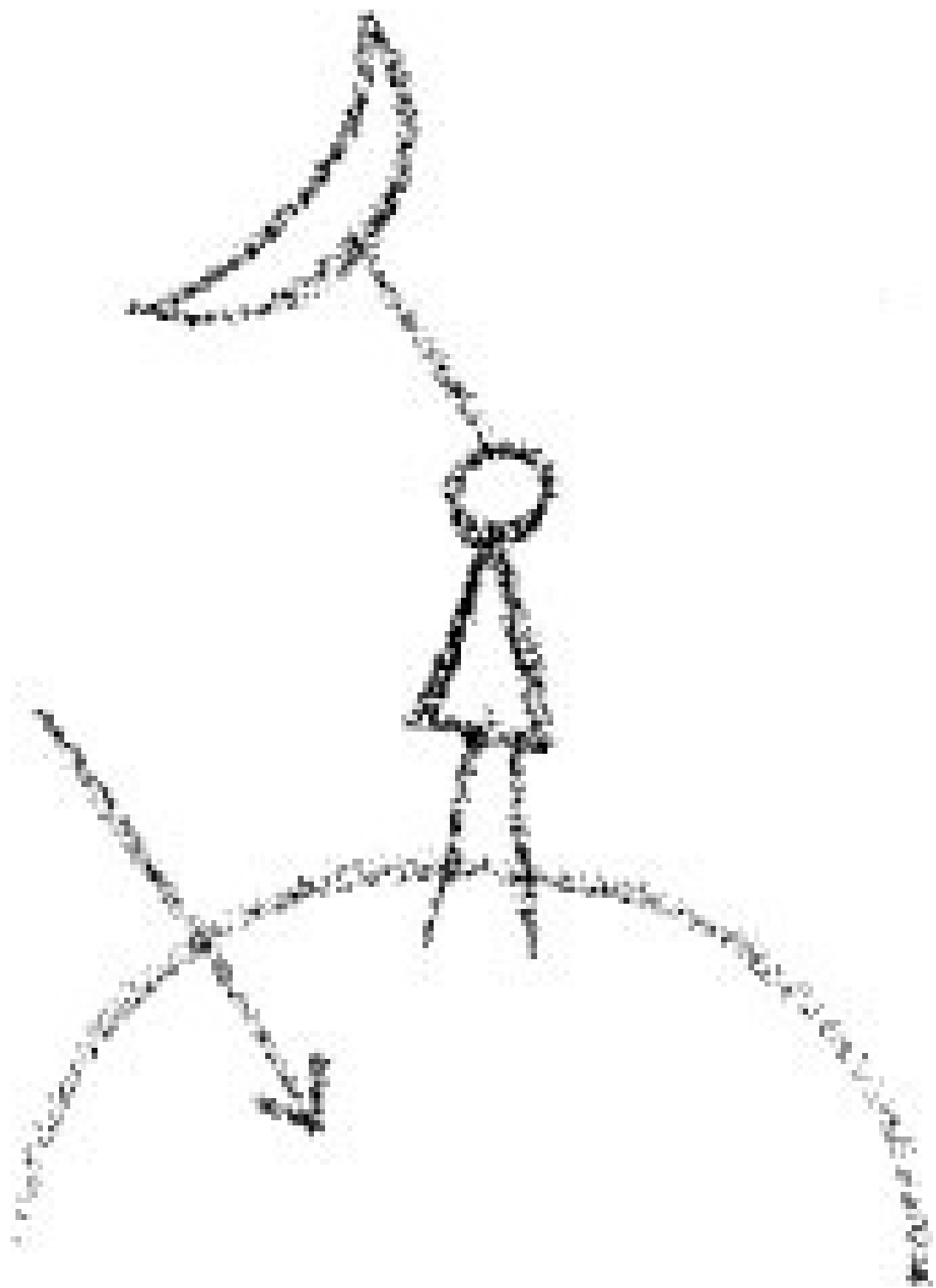
Firstly, in the spiritual/supersensible world all trace of weight, of gravity, ceases. When actually within the spiritual world we are never in the element of what is ponderable, but in the imponderable. The first conscious experience there is like the feeling we might have in the physical world if the ground were being taken away from under our feet and we had to stay in our place through our own inner strength. So you must imagine that if we really want to enter the spiritual world we are bound to have the feeling of the ground being spirited away from under us, and that, with no gravity to rely on, we have to maintain ourselves independently in cosmic space by means of our own strength.

Secondly, in the supersensible world all trace of what we have in the way of sense perception in the physical world ceases. In short, in the supersensible world light ceases and one is left in darkness. But that is not the whole story, for in reality it is not only light that ceases; this ceases in the physical world for the blind, but they still have other sense perceptions. But in the science of the spirit the concept of light often embraces not only light and colour but everything audible, tangible or perceptible as warmth, and so on. In the supersensible world all this ceases, and we can imply this by referring simply to what for most people is their chief sense experience, and say: Instead of being irradiated by light everything becomes dark.

And the third thing to be met with in the spiritual world— and we have to try hard to feel this in its full reality—is emptiness in place of fullness. Here in the physical world there is generally something to touch, and when there is nothing else you are still surrounded by the air. On all sides there is fullness. In the

spiritual world it is just the opposite; emptiness is everywhere. Therefore we can say: In the physical world of the senses the prevailing experiences are of things being ponderable, of there being light in the physical sense, meaning the whole gamut of sense perceptions, and of a state of fullness; whereas the spiritual world is the realm of the imponderable, of darkness which human beings must themselves irradiate with the light they have developed inwardly during their evolution, and an emptiness which they have to fill with the substance they have absorbed by entering into other spiritual beings through their own intuitive strength, thus filling the emptiness with higher consciousness.

Now when human beings are led through an instinctive destiny not into the realm of the ponderable but into the realm of the imponderable they are taken hold of by forces from beyond the earth. When people are moving around on the earth, or even when they are lying down, they are always subject to the law of gravity. When they are lifted out of weight for a few moments the counter-thrust to gravity comes into play, levity. Then they experience a force drawing them away from the earth instead of chaining them to it. This is the same force that comes from the moon, besides the light it reflects. When therefore people are moving about on the earth they are exposed in normal life to the force of gravity in this direction [arrow]. It draws them down and holds them fast to the earth.



If through their karma, which is linked up with the nature forces working in them, this earthly gravity is withdrawn for a short time, then the moon forces begin to act on them as a counter-force, countering gravity, and then, although they are asleep, they start to walk about. They are then exposed to those forces that govern their physical and etheric bodies, and that are related not only to the forces reflected back from the moon in the light but to the many other forces that are also reflected back from the moon to the earth. These forces pull them upwards; in fact they are constantly trying to tear them away from the earth. So at these moments when, instead of being in the grip of earthly gravity they are in the grip of anti-gravitational forces of the moon, which work in the opposite direction from the earth forces, they wander around in the moonstruck way of the somnambulist. The forces that are influencing them at these moments are quite different from the normal earthly ones; but this applies only to the present day. Such forces found only in sleepwalkers are abnormal nowadays. If you call them by the name they are known by in this world whilst they are walking about on the roof under the influence of the moon forces they will fall off. The fall brings them straight back into the realm of earth forces, because the way people acquire their names only applies to nowadays. In other epochs they were not given names such as they have today. Also, the temporary condition of the sleepwalker was then normal. Anyone who looks right into the matter will realize that what we call a person's normal condition today is tied up with the present-day earth forces. A moonstruck person refers us beyond the evolution of humankind to world evolution, in fact to that epoch when world evolution was Moon evolution.

But the moment human beings enter the realm of Moon evolution they behave as though they did not live in the physical realm of the earth at all but in the astral world; the astral element transfers itself to the physical and uses it. In fact this kind of activity on the part of the astral was what was Moon evolution way back in time. The circumstances that remind us of this astral activity in the physical was once world evolution—Moon evolution—and will at some time in the future occur again. But by then human beings will be able in full consciousness to walk up steeply sloping surfaces and vertical walls, as only flies can do today. This points to what will come about in the future during the Jupiter evolution. So if we really understand the somnambulist we can study the physical picture we are given as if nature herself were giving us a demonstration of what we experienced during our Moon existence—though certainly not in a physical body of flesh but

in an infinitely finer substance—and of what we shall experience again when we learn to master physical substance quite consciously during the Jupiter evolution. Thus this sleepwalking state points both to the past and to the future in world evolution. In fact this state is showing us an example of an absolute moon citizen, and moon citizens occasionally become somnambulists.

This actual achievement of sleepwalkers, this going about free of weight in the element of the imponderable, can be accomplished spiritually, in full consciousness, if one can muster the strength to keep perfectly still. Whereas the somnambulist responds to the stimuli of the moon forces, surrendering unconsciously to them and doing every movement to which they impel him, those who go through the experience with exact, conscious clairvoyance refrain from any such movements and keep quite still. The fact of holding movement back enables these movements to undergo metamorphosis and become intuitions. Conscious Intuition, therefore, the highest level of exact clairvoyance, actually consists of arresting the actions that a sleepwalker is instinctively compelled by the moon forces to perform. Those who bring about this metamorphosis do not give themselves up to the physical forces of the moon but, holding these in check, they are thus able to reach the spirit at the intuitive level.

So it is really very good to study by way of these moon citizens how on the one hand human beings are related to world evolution, and in what way sleepwalkers and people who have exact clairvoyance are opposites. Whereas it is instinctive people who are the moonstruck sleepwalkers, exact clairvoyants are intuitive seers who, refraining from action, hold their own against the moon. This is what this example shows us about the relation of human beings to the world.

Now the second of the three types of people I would like to speak about today is exemplified in Jakob Böhme. Jakob Böhme's whole character was of such a nature that at certain moments, as though through his natural destiny, his karma, he perceived while completely awake not the sunlit world but dark space. From what I have already told you, you realize that this did not mean merely a darkness due to absence of light but the blotting out of everything perceived by the senses. When he was in a particular state it was possible for Jakob Böhme to be faced by darkness instead of light, silence and stillness instead of sounds, and, instead of warmth, something that was as unlike warmth as it was unlike cold, and that we could call anti-warmth. So that, if through Inspiration one had examined these states of his, without experiencing them oneself, one would have had to say that Jakob Böhme, instead of having sunlit space around him, was at

certain times faced by absolute darkness.

People who can experience this without being conscious of it—who are, that is, in a light sleep though still feeling themselves to be in the sunlit world—have what is called second sight. And Jakob Böhme had this to the highest degree. Only in his case he had the kind that did not refer him to individual particulars but more to the constitution of the whole earth. So how did things look to him?

Just picture this to yourselves. Whereas other people face the sun's brightness, Jakob Böhme had—precisely from the point where the visual rays of the eyes meet, when looking at some object from far away or near, that is looking beyond that point, or behind the point where if one puts one's right hand on top of one's left hand one has instead of an external feeling the feeling of one's own self, so that it is like a wall—Jakob Böhme was faced by darkness, the silencing of all his senses. Imagine this complete darkness! There is a sense-perceptible picture that absolutely corresponds to this. If you stand in front of a mirror you do not see what is behind it, but only what is in front of it. Spiritually it is like this for anyone who sees the way Jakob Böhme did. Because there is a darkness behind, it turns the mirror into a wall, and one sees what is spiritually behind it. One sees the spirituality of the earthly world. So if you were to belong to the Jakob Böhme type you would see into the darkness at certain moments, and because this darkness rayed back to you the spiritual life of the earth, you behold the spiritual constitution of the earth, what is taking place in the course of its life.

Jakob Böhme had tremendous second sight. Other people may have certain moments in their lives when they are faced by darkness which shuts out the physical light, enabling them to look into the spiritual aspect. Then, if they understand how to make the right use of this spiritual mirror, which consists simply of the existence of the darkness, then, through the inner communications between everything on the earth—deeds and even thoughts—they will be able, while in Europe, to perceive a friend in America. For what we perceive with our physical eyes and senses are primarily the effects of the sun. But there are also hidden workings of the sun active in everything—in minerals, plants, animals and also in human beings. And while you may be in Europe, yet through these hidden activities of the sun within you, you are in communication with what a friend of yours is also experiencing through these hidden workings of the sun, even if he lives as far away as America.

These communications have an effect on people's karma. The karma of many a

person has led them into marriage, friendship or love with someone who was unknown to them at that time, and who was temporarily in America; for the hidden sun workings are active in the way karma works on earth. In these instances the hidden sun effects are seen as through a mirror.

This applies particularly to people leading isolated lives on islands, in mountain valleys or in other places favourable in this respect, and the fact that second sight is fairly common in such places is because persons leading secluded lives respond more readily than others to these inner communications, and are able to spread a partial darkness around themselves in life. Hence the Scottish and the Westphalian second sight, and the second sight in a secluded rocky valley of Alsace so beautifully described by Oberlin.²² These things occur in particular earth localities. Where they are genuine, like those stemming from hidden sun workings, they need to be judged quite differently from the way people tend to describe them in our materialistic age.

Certain people nowadays, proud of their cleverness, discuss whether there ever was a King Arthur, whether he was a real or a legendary figure. But those who can look more deeply into the matter will speak differently. For them, anyone who doubts whether King Arthur ever lived is himself far more legendary than King Arthur! The sort of scholar who denies the existence of Arthur belongs in fact, despite being physically present among us, far more to the realm of saga and legend than King Arthur does, at least in the opinion of those who can see into the truth of these things.

So people who have second sight, the gift manifest to the highest degree in Jakob Böhme, are in a special sense sun people. Just as we normally see the effects of the sun externally in the outer world, these sun people are inwardly permeated by the sun's hidden forces. And just as our first type of person was a moon human being, the second-sight type of person, like Jakob Böhme, was a sun human being. These sun people bear within them through their natural karma something which is abnormal for today but is nevertheless thoroughly in accordance with reality, for what is abnormal today has been at some time quite normal.

So by realizing what people with second sight are able to perceive, and by bringing home to ourselves the nature of the sun's hidden forces, by which these sun people are permeated, we are able to say: This experience of living in the hidden effects of the sun, now abnormal, was normal at an earlier stage of the

earth's evolution, and will become normal again. It was normal during the period which, as Sun evolution, preceded Earth evolution. It was normal then for people everywhere to look into the darkness as if into a mirror, so that the spiritual content was reflected back to them. The whole earth went through that stage of evolution which made human beings, in the tenuous, volatile materiality in which they had their existence at that time, into Sun people. Their consciousness was then very dim.

This condition will come again. Human beings will then, in a fully conscious state, be able to penetrate with their whole consciousness into the darkness around them, producing by their own efforts a reflected image of the whole world. By that time we shall have arrived at the Venus evolution, a future stage of Earth evolution.

People wishing to acquire second sight must cast off their coarse sensuality and sensitivity to the physical aspect of their environment and draw out of themselves their own independent sensitivity. Second sight can also be acquired entirely inwardly, though this is not without its dangers. It can be achieved—though I am not advising this, simply giving you facts—by fixing your gaze on some glittering object to induce a state of fascination. This somewhat weakens outer sensitivity and, encouraging inner sensitivity, evokes second sight. In former times second sight was evoked quite systematically in suitable circumstances. Accounts of this refer to a 'magic mirror'; this was in fact an instrument designed to fascinate and so to dampen down outer sensation, thereby calling up inner sensation as its polar opposite. Through the instrument of a physical mirror they called up a spiritual mirroring. The important thing was not what they saw in the physical mirror; the physical mirror merely dampened down the outer sensation and evoked inner sensation. This is how the belief arose that in the magical mirror itself one could see the thoughts and feelings of distant friends. In reality they saw the state of soul brought about within themselves by the external sense-perceptible mirror.

People who see in this way definitely see realities. What they see is the spiritual activity going on in the kingdoms of nature, and they as it were become connected to everything that is sunlike in the earth itself. Really to understand Jakob Böhme's writings it is essential to realize that their whole content comes by way of a wonderful and complicated form of second sight. Another personality, Paracelsus,²³ was constituted in a similar yet somewhat different way. Sensation in his case was combined with greater intellectual power,

therefore he always interpreted the pictures his second sight revealed to him. When we reflect intellectually about physical, sense-perceptible things we do not change them; for the intellect is powerless in face of the way these are constituted. But it is not powerless in face of anything seen reflected in the way I have described. To perceive the inner constitution of the world so purely in terms of second sight is only possible for someone like Jakob Böhme, who was able to surrender himself quite selflessly to external things. The endless love with which he saw everything and which made itself felt in his whole way of grasping the mirror images of the spiritual in the world speaks in almost every line he wrote. This is why these reflections, which were a kind of imagination of the world's spiritual essence, remained so pure. With Paracelsus these reflections went through a change in accordance with his strong intellectual bent. So they are modified reflections. You can convince yourself of the fact that even in the physical realm mirror images can alter what they mirror if you look at your face in a concave mirror. You will certainly not want to have a face like the one you see there! This is more or less what intellectuality does to the reflecting surface you look at, if you are an intellectual such as Paracelsus. By this means, however, one penetrates more deeply into the inner forces.

Thus Jakob Böhme, beholding everything with his truly sublime love, became a contemplative observer, whereas Paracelsus, concentrating more on the inner forces and distorting and manipulating them, tended more towards finding the healing forces that are within things as hidden sun forces.

When people learn to master consciously the hidden sun forces in the human being, so that they do not make use of the outspread darkness for seeing reflected images but carry into the darkness the inner light kindled in them through meditation and concentration on a soul/spiritual level, when they become able to fill with inner hidden sun forces the space otherwise lit up by the physical sun, so that they themselves become in soul and spirit radiant enough to irradiate their surroundings with light, then indeed conscious Imagination arises. And it was this conscious Imagination, which can be evoked fully consciously in the way we have learnt to do on the path of knowledge, that was the source of what Jakob Böhme, being a sun person, has recorded—to a certain extent unconsciously and with a certain reduced level of mastery over the world of ideas—in his writings.

And just as Intuition is connected with the hidden forces of the moon in a human being—that is, when they are taken hold of and not expressed in sleepwalking—

the mirror image conjured up by the hidden sun forces out of spiritual darkness are changed into conscious Imagination.

While the sleepwalking type lives in the forces of the moon, and the Jakob Böhme type in those of the sun, a third type lives in the conditions of warmth and cold always present in the space around the earth and its further surroundings. In normal life people grow accustomed to the prevailing temperature. There is, however, a certain delicate, very tender sensitivity that becomes more independent of the external warmth and cold but relatively very receptive and sensitive to the hidden workings of heat and cold in surrounding space. A faculty of this kind for perceiving these hidden workings was acquired at a certain time in his life by Swedenborg. Anyone really wanting to make a study of the mysterious side of Swedenborg's life will gradually see quite clearly that this sensitivity appeared in him at a certain age, and that up to that time he had been a distinguished representative of the official science of his day. His writings in this field are very numerous. They were by no means all published at the time, and there is even a society of Swedish scholars who are preparing an edition of his scientific works²⁴ in many volumes. Swedenborg will certainly give these scholars some hard nuts to crack! They are obliged to admit that these inspired works prove him to have been one of the greatest geniuses of his age. But at a certain moment of his life he became clairvoyant, which in the opinion of those editing his officially recognized works is another word for half-witted.

Now we must turn our attention rather to this higher vision that unfolded in Swedenborg after he had made himself familiar with all the rest of the knowledge recognized in his day. We must examine more closely the reasons for his thus becoming 'half-witted' in the eyes of official learning.

On looking deeply into Swedenborg's personality we find that he 'lost his senses' because in his fortieth year he developed an overwhelming love for all that he had learnt up to that time. There can hardly be anyone who has loved pure knowledge as much as Swedenborg came to love it. It was this love for knowledge that enabled him at a certain point in his life to look in his own way into the spiritual world and to become susceptible to the hidden effects of warmth and cold in cosmic space. These hidden effects of warmth and cold come neither from the moon nor the sun but chiefly from a star that sends very unassuming rays into interplanetary space—from Saturn. These modest rays are the ones that send the hidden forces from which, at a certain time of his life, particularly permeated Swedenborg. And because of these he developed a

capacity for perceiving not the fullness by which we are surrounded in the world of the senses but a state of emptiness. One day he became sensitive to this. He made no effort to become so, it arose instinctively. Nor did he undergo any training such as I have described in *How to Know Higher Worlds*; it just dawned in him like a delicate higher kind of instinct. And so he became able to look into that world—not a physical world—which is perceptible only when we have penetrated into the conditions of warmth and cold that stream as rays from Saturn through interplanetary space. Thus he acquired a very individual form of vision.

If you read what Swedenborg has recorded as a result of this vision it really seems almost like refined, etherealized earthly experiences. The spiritual beings he sees, angels, archangels, and so on certainly move about free of the ponderable element, but almost in the manner of earthly beings. We may ask whether the world he saw was real or whether he was simply projecting into the void what he drew from his own fullness. It was neither of these things, but something quite different. Besides the world into which we look with our physical senses, and besides the second world we can experience, the etheric world, we are surrounded by a purely spiritual world. In this spiritual world there are spiritual beings who have never descended to earth, and who live, move and are active there. These beings, however, have to send their influence into earthly life, and for this to happen they have to impart to the etheric element of the earth what it is that they do in the purely spiritual world. We can describe it this way. The earth is surrounded and permeated by its etheric element, and outside—actually outside space—there is the world of these active spiritual beings which enter into the earthly realm. The earth is what it is only through the activity of these beings.

This activity rays into the earthly realm but rays back and is reflected in the ether of the earth; and these forces of the ether are actually the etheric realizations of the spiritual above them. When we study the earth's etheric that is around us we find it permeated by the activity of these spiritual beings in the form of etheric pictures. The actual activity takes place above it or within it. What directly surrounds us on the earth is the activity that was first projected into the earth and is projected back from the earth into the earth's ether. It is just as if the reflections were not to remain mere images, but as if they began to develop an activity of their own. Spiritual activity is actually being rayed back from the earth into the ether, and this activity is a real projection of spiritual activity. Just as Jakob Böhme saw in a mirror what was going on in the human body or in

nature, as I have described, for Swedenborg the earth became a mirror which reflected back for him in the ether the pictures of the spiritual activity in the spiritual world. We can just as well say, therefore, that what Swedenborg saw was not the spiritual world, as we can say that it was. It is just the realization of an image, an image of the earth mirror. It is a true image, but true only as a true reflection of the reality outside.

That is what Swedenborg perceived. In the earth's ether he saw super-earthly beings engendering forces in the earth's ether—forces that play a definite part both in human life and in earthly life in general. These etheric forces, which are not the angels nor the archangels themselves but forces vibrating in the ether, certainly play a part in both earth life and human life. Today it is abnormal for anyone to see into these hidden etheric forces, which do in fact project an etheric image of the higher spiritual archetypes into the surrounding ether. In an earlier epoch of Earth evolution, however, this was perfectly normal; this was in the time preceding the Sun evolution, and can therefore be called the Saturn age. It recalls to consciousness that we shall some day be able to experience the Venus age and, when this has run its course, the Vulcan age will occur. In Swedenborg there arose this special kind of vision—the mode of existence once passed through by the earth, how the earth manifested to the humanity of that time, and how it will manifest in the future.

When people acquire the capacity to penetrate with their consciousness the images Swedenborg beheld in the ether, when they can confront the emptiness of cosmic space with their own fullness—then, where their clairvoyance is concerned, the beings who were reflected etherically for Swedenborg vanish at that moment for etheric vision and begin to be audible to spiritual hearing, to the spiritual ear. When they are so to speak effaced as visionary pictures they begin to be Inspiration, sounding into consciousness from out of the spiritual world. So that we can say: That which in Swedenborg's case, coming as it did in the form of etheric images, was unconscious Imagination will—if one pays careful heed to the warnings of the Guardian of the Threshold which Swedenborg was unable to do—go through a metamorphosis and reappear as fully conscious astral Inspiration.

This description also brings out how the more subconscious state of the somnambulistic type, also the Jakob Böhme type and the Swedenborg type, relates to what can be striven for consciously in Intuition, Imagination and Inspiration. These have had to be put in a different order today because I have

been giving a cosmic picture. If this is done in accordance not with names but with the things themselves then, if descriptions are given from various different points of view, the sequence has to be changed—just as things may sometimes appear in a different order when the perspective is altered. For instance, say I am between two people with one of them behind me and the other in front. If I move in front of the first one then I can turn round and face them both. So too, in cosmic space, things change in accordance with our point of view.

This is why in my lecture cycles you will find things appearing in a different order according to the various standpoints from which they have to be described. When this is not fully appreciated and people persist in an abstract approach they will say: ‘This does not tally.’ But the only people who can afford to satisfy the pure intellectualist in this matter are those whose descriptions derive from mere assumptions. Anyone who is describing realities must allow them to appear contradictory, as from different points of view they often can.

Lecture 8

Human Experiences During Sleep as Premonitions of Experiences After Death

26 August 1923

From what has been said about the relation of sleeping and waking in human beings and also about the membering of their organism it can be seen that in sleep they experience a profound separation in their earthly being. We know from what has been presented over the past days that a distinction has to be made between the part of human beings that is physically perceptible to the senses, the physical body, and the part that can be seen only through Imagination, the etheric body or formative forces body. This body of formative forces contains the living forces which enable people to grow, and which underlie their nutritive processes and generally build them up. As we have seen, however, this body of formative forces also contains the whole system of human thoughts. Integrated into this formative forces body and the physical body are two higher members of the human being which can be called—but do not be put off by terminology—the astral body and the actual ego organization.

In the course of our daily lives these four members of our being are in an active inner relationship with one another. But when we pass over into the sleeping state our physical and etheric bodies separate from the astral body and ego and—if I may put it this way—they remain in bed, while our astral and ego organization enter a purely spiritual world. So that from falling asleep until we wake our being is split in two: on the one side there are our physical organization and our etheric organization that keeps hold of our thought world, and on the

other the ego and the astral organizations.

I believe someone in the course of the past days has voiced the misgiving: 'If in sleep people's whole thought world remains in the etheric organization then they must be unable to carry effectively into the sleeping state the thoughts which they can grasp only when they are awake.' This shows a certain anxiety lest wishes for our fellow human beings, for example, or thoughts relating to someone who happens to be asleep, should lose all power because they cannot be taken over into the life of sleep. I should like to reply with a picture.

You will never have heard of anyone who, wanting to shoot at a target, has to do so by throwing his gun at it. He lets the charge do the work, but holds onto the gun. You cannot say, though, that because the gun remains in the man's hand nothing reaches the target. The effects of our thinking life when we are awake do not cease during sleep because the thoughts themselves stay back in the physical and etheric bodies and are not sent across into sleep life. It is particularly important in these matters—which are of course subtle ones—that we should be precise in our thinking, precise to a degree unnecessary in the physical world, where the things themselves immediately put us straight. From what has been said in these last few days, however, you will see that a much more intimate relation exists between the physical body and the etheric body than between the etheric body and the astral organization. For throughout earthly life the physical and the etheric body remain together, never separating even when, in sleep, the etheric body and the astral body have to part company.

Again, there is a close connection between the ego and the astral organization, for they also never part from one another during earthly life. However, the connection between the astral and etheric bodies is looser, and so it is there that the split can occur. This has quite particular consequences for the earthly life of human beings and also for their life beyond the earth. In our waking state we quicken our senses with our ego, and our nervous system with our astral body, and what is brought about in this way we send down into the etheric and physical bodies, for if we are to live in the physical world we have to send down into the etheric body and physical body everything we experience in the ego and the astral body. This is why, just because everything has to be imprinted into the physical body in order to become manifest in life from birth or conception until death, a materialist supposes that the physical body can make up the whole of a person's being.

But this work of incorporating the experiences of earthly existence into the etheric and the physical bodies does not proceed without meeting obstacles and hindrances. We are never able to send down straight away into the organs of these bodies our sense experiences and the thoughts embodied in our nervous system, for anything we absorb from the external physical world is at first in a form resembling external existence. If, for example, we perceive something angular, an experience of this angular quality is formed in our ego and astral body. This cannot be taken up directly into the etheric body, for the etheric body resists to start with the absorbing of anything experienced in the external world of the senses. Imaginative knowledge alone is able to throw light on this situation. No ordinary sense observation, no experiment on the human being, or intellectual reflection will help us to view this necessary re-forming, reshaping of what we perceive with our senses, so as to fit it for continuing its life in the etheric and physical body in such a way that we can separate from it in sleep. It is only when we are able to observe the actual relation between waking and sleeping in earthly human beings that we come to realize the continuous conflict that goes on in life. So, in the case of the crude example already mentioned, if I have to take my experience of an angular object into my etheric and physical bodies I must first round off its angles and give the object a form suited to those bodies. It has to be thoroughly transformed.

This transforming of anything having as volatile a life as that of the ego and astral bodies themselves, and giving it a pliant form capable of living in the etheric body and of combining its existence as pliable movement in the physical body—this transformation creates an inner struggle, which is of course not perceived by ordinary consciousness today. But anyone who has imaginative knowledge can perceive this inner struggle, which generally lasts two to three days. We have to sleep on an experience for two, sometimes three nights, until it combines with the other experiences already imprinted in the etheric and physical bodies. Our dream world is an actual expression, but only an external one, of this struggle. As I have already explained, while we are dreaming our ego and astral body push their way into our etheric and physical bodies and come to a sudden stop. This check is an expression of the struggle I am describing, and which continues for two to three days. Until the experience has been slept on more than once it has not sunk down sufficiently into the etheric body. So that where the connection is loose, as it is between astral and etheric body, a continuous interweaving is to be seen.

[In connection with a rough sketch not preserved] If we have here the etheric

body, and the astral body is there, asleep, then on the verge of waking up or of going to sleep a continuous struggle takes place, animated movement, expressed outwardly in the dream, but signifying inwardly this weaving of experiences into the etheric and physical bodies. And it is only when a person has slept on some experience two or three times, sometimes even longer, that the experience will have combined with what had already been memory in the etheric and physical body. For this is what it is all about, that the experience becomes transformed into memory which is then also left behind in bed when we are asleep; for a memory is essentially the expression, in thought form, of the physical and etheric bodies.

For imaginative cognition, perceiving this is an extraordinarily interesting experience. The very form of its expression is significant. We give our ordinary earthly experiences definite outlines in conformity with natural laws. These laws, however, dissolve when the experiences merge with the etheric element. Everything that was firmly outlined becomes soft and pliant. Whatever was static is caught up in movement; anything angular becomes rounded. Intellectual experience passes over into the experience of an artist.

This is the deeper reason why in olden times, when people still had an instinctive vision, art was rooted in life in quite a different way from today. Even as late as the Renaissance, and its falling back on earlier art, in Raphael and other artists there was still at least a tradition of that conversion of the intellectual into the artistic. For directly we rise to the supersensible the intellectual loses its form and is immediately lost and takes on the nature of art. The fact that in art today people are so strongly inclined to naturalism, wanting models for all their work, shows that they no longer realize its true nature. Humanity must feel its way again into the actual realm of art.

Human life as I have described it is thus made up in such a way that it is always possible to say: 'The experiences that I have take three days to flow into my etheric body.' On the following day what is now experienced flows in a day later. And a person's etheric body will not have finished absorbing each experience until two, three or four days have elapsed.

When a person then passes through the gate of death the etheric body detaches itself from the physical body, something that never happens during earthly life. And now, as the etheric body is becoming released from the physical, all that has been woven into it through two, three or four days disperses, this process lasting

for about as long as the interweaving of it did. Imagination, which can judge rightly of these matters, shows us that it is the physical body that holds together, through its resistance, the experiences that have gradually moved over to the etheric body. When the physical body is laid aside at death, it can be seen how in the first few days afterwards that which had been woven into the etheric body passes out into the universal cosmic ether and dissolves once more. And so, for two, three or four days after death people experience this dissolving of their accumulated store of memories. This may be called the laying aside of the etheric body, but it involves an ever-increasing expansion of the memories which lose the third dimension and become two-dimensional like a picture. And the tableau of a person's entire life can be seen taking its course in vivid pictures for two, three or four days after passing through the gate of death, the time varying with each individual.

But just as someone who has studied botany will look at a seed to assess what will develop from it, those people with imaginative cognition do not see this passing of the etheric, of the whole memory system over to the cosmos only at death, for they see it while it is still there in picture form, for as a picture it is always there in human beings. Those people who can grasp the whole significance of what goes on in the course of about three days in the way of interweaving, see in this incorporating of experiences into the etheric body an advance picture of the inner experience people have during the two, three or four days after death. Whereas in earthly existence, before acquiring imaginative cognition, people experience more or less unconsciously this inwardizing of their experiences into the memories held together by the physical body, they experience immediately after death the reverse process, the unwinding as it were, the passing out of their memories into the cosmos. The store of thoughts we leave behind whenever we fall asleep unites directly after our death with the cosmos, passing out into the whole universe. This is what in dying we have to yield up to cosmic existence.

These things must not be grasped only intellectually but also with heart and soul. For a process of this kind makes people feel that they are not in a position that permits them to take life egoistically. For although they have the status of beings who can think, their thoughts are not only something they can keep for themselves, for after their death these will pass over into the whole cosmos where they will go on working as active forces. If we think good thoughts we have good thoughts to give the cosmos after our death. If we think bad thoughts this is what we have to give. For human beings are not part of earthly existence

solely to develop themselves as free beings. This they certainly should do, and they can do it precisely if they take something else into consideration. They are here also as beings on whom the gods themselves may work to bring the cosmos on from epoch to epoch. I would like to say that the thoughts the gods need to weave into the cosmos have to be prepared in the form of what human beings can think and ponder on in their individual lives. Here is the nurturing place where the gods have to tend the thoughts they need for the continuing evolution of the world—so that they can incorporate them into their cosmos as the actual driving forces.

During sleep human beings live with their ego and astral organization, as you know, outside their physical and etheric bodies. While in this state as beings of soul and spirit, as ego and astral body, they are interwoven with the spiritual forces pervading the whole cosmos. They are in the world that is, figuratively speaking, outside their skin—the world of which, when awake, they receive only sense impressions. During sleep, therefore, they enter right into the things that in waking life show them only their outer side. But it is only what is experienced by the astral organization when outside the physical and etheric bodies that can be brought back into the thoughts of the etheric body, and not what is experienced out there by the ego. So during the whole of earth life the experiences of the ego in sleep remain subconscious for ordinary consciousness and even for imaginative consciousness. They are revealed only to inspired consciousness, as I have been describing.

So this may be said: In sleep human beings gather up sufficient strength to imprint on the etheric body those experiences that can be put into thoughts. But during their life on earth they lack the power to deal with the wishes and desires which during sleep are experienced by the ego in connection with earthly affairs—for they also go through these during sleep. In our epoch, therefore, only the part of sleep-life that can be transformed into thoughts, imprinted in thoughts, passes over into the conscious waking life of people on earth, while the sleep-experiences of the ego remain hidden behind the veil of existence.

Imaginative and inspired consciousness bring to light here things that can be perfectly well understood by any impartial person with sound common sense, but in our present civilization they encounter tremendous prejudice. Even the fact that when anything three-dimensional in the physical world (and in the physical world basically everything is experienced three-dimensionally) is imprinted in the etheric body, it changes from a sculptural to a picture form,

from three to two dimensions—even to grasp this fact calls for great impartiality. For the moment we rise to Imagination we are no longer dealing with three dimensions or even four dimensions as a misguided science believes, but with only two. The difficulty of picturing what is then experienced comes from our being accustomed in our earthly experience to reckon with three dimensions and to form our concepts accordingly. And so, when we should be finding our way over to two dimensions we say: ‘Yes, but two dimensions are included in the three; the two dimensions of a plane can lie in such a way that there might still be a third.’

That, however, is not the point. As soon as we enter the imaginative world, it does not matter at all which way the plane lies, for the third dimension ceases to have any meaning directly we enter the etheric/imaginative world. Hence—and I add this for mathematicians—all equations for the ether must be transformed so as to correspond with the two-dimensional world.

Now if we would pass on to the world accessible to Inspiration, in which we are as ego beings between going to sleep and waking, this world becomes one-dimensional. A one-dimensional world is what we now have to deal with. This transition to a one-dimensional world, taken for granted by the faculty of Inspiration, that faculty, that is, of actually perceiving the spiritual in which we live between going to sleep and waking, this understanding of a world with only one dimension has always been part of initiation knowledge.

I have already told you that the hidden forces of the sun—not the forces of the external physical sunlight—are revealed to people of the Jakob Böhme type. These hidden forces are not spread out three-dimensionally but are perceived in one dimension only. An older, more instinctive initiation knowledge could, and did, come to perceive this through Inspiration, but without a clearly conscious knowledge of what it was. And much that is still handed down in the ancient records of long past epochs of humankind is to be understood only when one knows that this refers to the one-dimensional world reached by Inspiration, and as regards our earthly life it refers to the hidden forces of the sun and the stars. Between going to sleep and waking, however, we do not live in the sun forces that are outwardly displayed but in those that are hidden.

These hidden forces of the sun can, for example, pass through certain kinds of stone which are impenetrable to physically perceptible forces, and in passing through them they become one-dimensional. If people have acquired

inspirational vision, then, although they may not see the physical light, they can see the hidden sun forces penetrating the otherwise opaque stone; thus these stones become permeable for the sun's hidden forces and also for the forces of Inspiration.

In very ancient periods of human evolution such expedients were not needed. But when the old instinctive clairvoyance, which in those days was the basis of initiation knowledge, was on the wane, these aids were adopted as a short-cut, we might say, to the perception of things no longer perceptible through instinctive inspiration. For example, people had recourse to such methods in the following way. Imagine a number of stones²⁵ set up beside one another, with other stones set across the tops of them. If this is arranged so that on certain occasions the penetrating rays of the sun fall on the covering stone, then the physical rays of the sun will be held up by the stone and the hidden rays will pass through.

When those trained to it place themselves so that they can look into this structure from the side they will see the spiritual, one-dimensional rays of the sun shining through and vanishing into the earth. If when this was no longer perceived through instinctive clairvoyant powers a short-cut of that kind was taken, it enabled those looking from the side into the shadow zone to perceive the world of spiritual sun rays, which we are in every night when we sleep, meaning that they beheld the world we live in between going to sleep and waking. So with contrivances such as the ones to be met with in this very district we can see by what means, during a long transitional period, certain wise leaders of humankind endeavoured to penetrate to the hidden forces of the sun, which a person such as Jakob Böhme could do instinctively through simply beholding earthly things.

Although such placements of stones can be seen today in appropriate places their real significance can be brought out only through what spiritual science reveals. Otherwise people are left with a superficial explanation which misses the real point. Such stones can of course also be arranged in a circle so as to show how the spiritual rays of the sun differ according to the individual constellations of the zodiac.

I have been trying to make clear to you the world in which our ego lives during sleep. This world is not held together by the inherent forces of the physical and the etheric bodies. These bodies, however, are alone responsible for the clear consciousness of earthly human beings; they are the source of the judgements we

form in accordance with our feelings and our will, our own actions and our inner experiences and thoughts. Therefore when we are awake we judge our external life according to the thoughts we have been able to imprint in our physical and etheric bodies. But it is not only human beings themselves who have something to say about their experiences and actions, for the whole spiritual cosmos has too. The cosmos passes judgement. It declares whether an action, a thought or feeling is good or evil. Between waking and sleeping we are left to form our own opinions about ourselves. As I have sufficiently shown during these lectures the spiritual content of the cosmos takes morality to be its natural law, and what the cosmos has to say about our true nature and our actions is experienced by the ego during sleep. Inspired cognition shows that people's ego, even during the shortest sleep, experiences over again everything the individual has gone through from their last moment of being awake until their present sleep—however long or short the period may be. So in the successive states of waking, sleeping, waking, sleeping, people experience again in sleep whatever they went through during their last waking time, especially where their own activities were concerned.

As far as this is an experience of the ego it remains outside ordinary consciousness, but Inspiration can call it up. Then the particular nature of the experience is brought to light, and we find that it is gone through in the reverse order to our daytime experience. Whereas by day you go through your experiences—leaving short sleeps aside—from morning to evening, during the night, in sleep, you live through these experiences backwards, from evening to morning. And we go through them in such a manner that we experience whatever the spiritual cosmos has to say about the way we have lived through the day.

During earthly life, however, present-day human beings cannot call this up into consciousness at all. Yet they must become conscious of it, otherwise human existence would fall away from cosmic existence. However, inspired cognition shows us, too, that as soon as human beings, after death, have surveyed their life tableau which, as I have said, lasts from two to four days, and as soon as their memories have dissolved into the cosmos, spreading themselves out thereafter this experience, often referred to as the freeing of the etheric body—a time begins when human beings are able to look back on their earthly life, but in a different way.

If we call to mind the two to four days after death we have the mighty life

tableau which, however, only contains the daytime experiences. Yet in reality human beings go through not only their waking experiences but also those they had during sleep. When in earthly life you look back on your ordinary memories you always leave out your periods of sleep, as if your only experiences had been those lived through by day. And so it goes on right back to the time after birth when your memories cease. In fact it is like this with the panorama that appears during those two or three days after death. Then comes a period when soul and spirit have gained sufficient strength to experience in the spiritual world all that could manifest only unconsciously in picture form while we were asleep at night. It now comes before us as an experience. And human beings pass through a period—lasting about one third of their life on earth, approximately the time normally spent in sleep—when they experience their nights again, but in a backward direction. So they live through their last night first, then the night before, and so on, right back to the time of their birth and conception.

I have described this going back through a quite different world after death from other points of view in my book *Theosophy*,²⁶ when I was speaking of the human being as a being of soul and spirit passing through the soul world.

Now, when after death human beings have in this way gone through the soul world, taking about seven years for it if they have lived for 21 years, or, if they have lived to 60, roughly 20 years—always the length of time they have slept in earthly life—they have then to experience the total effects they have had upon earth existence, on existence created by the gods in order to take the world, with the help of the human race, a little further on in its progress. By the time they have reached the end of this backward survey of their nights human beings have acquired knowledge of what they have themselves become, and what their significance is for the cosmos. Now they have to experience how the earth itself has been affected by their life. This lasts a long time—half of the time between earthly death and a new earthly life. Tomorrow we shall speak about this in greater detail.

At the end of our backward journey through our nights we arrive first of all at our birth and, having arrived there after this backward journey through the soul world, we have to find the way back to our previous earthly life. This enables human beings to bring over with them this previous life for the shaping of their next life on earth. So human beings have to go back after death not only to their birth but as far as their previous life.

Here we enter a realm of the old initiation science (which must be renewed today in a way suited to present-day human faculties), a realm in which initiation science led over to religious experience. For initiation science is always real knowledge, but of a kind that leads from the world of the senses into the spiritual, so that the human will is stirred to take a religious form. At the stage of initiation which leads to the intuitive knowledge already described it has always been recognized as of the utmost importance that when human beings go back to their previous life on earth they should meet on the way a being who can become their guide after death.

In a certain region of the earth people told themselves: 'I must absorb in my earthly life the teaching of the last Bodhisattva to appear on earth.' These people may have lived let us say three hundred years after the appearance of this Bodhisattva. But when after death they went back to their previous lives on earth—for this return journey, this life between death and the new birth lasts a long time—they arrived at the time when the last Bodhisattva was living on earth. And in the old initiation science this meeting with the last Bodhisattva was required to enable human beings to make a real contact with their own previous earth life, which means finding the strength to have eternal life, for this can be found only when real contact with the previous life has been attained.

This possibility of meeting with the Bodhisattvas, who descended to earth from particular spiritual regions, ceased at a definite time in human and world evolution. And today's human beings would have been in the situation that when after death they had gone back to their last birth or conception and had then tried to go further back in search of their previous incarnation they would have been unable to make contact.

You see, human beings could indeed re-establish this contact during the first millennia of earthly evolution before the Mystery of Golgotha, by coming to the time of the last Bodhisattva. However, they will find the way today only if they journey under the guidance of the Being who united himself with the earth through the Mystery of Golgotha—if, in other words, the kind of relationship comes about between human beings and the Mystery of Golgotha so that the Christ can become their guide. For the Christ is the epitome of all those powers of leadership for the life between death and a new birth that used to come from the several Bodhisattvas who appeared on earth.

So the occurrence of the Mystery of Golgotha is, particularly with regard to our

experiences between death and a new birth, one of the most important factors in the whole of earth evolution. Therefore if people want to understand the part the spiritual evolution of the earth plays in the spiritual evolution of the cosmos, and further, understand what human beings undergo with regard to this spiritual evolution of earth and cosmos between death and a new birth, they must give the Mystery of Golgotha its rightful place in the whole evolution of the world. So where present-day human beings are concerned, a way must be found that will lead attention over from the evolution of man to the evolution of the world, and this way has to include seeing the Mystery of Golgotha in its whole fundamental significance for the course of events both in earth evolution and in human evolution on earth.

These matters, in as far as modern initiation science can disclose them—matters relating to the further experiences of human beings after death, when they have gone back in memory through their night experiences—we will deal with further tomorrow, together with the evolution of the world.

Lecture 9

Experiences Between Death and Rebirth

27 August 1923

I began my lecture yesterday with a brief outline of what human beings experience in sleep, and of how in a certain way this presages what they experience after death. These sleep experiences lie altogether beyond the so-called threshold which, during our days here, has often been mentioned. The experiences I am now going to describe are actually gone through by all human beings when asleep, though they do not rise up into ordinary consciousness, but are accessible only to Imagination, Inspiration and Intuition. Because they do not enter consciousness we should not believe they do not exist; they do exist, and we go through them. If I may use a simile—it is as though people were led through a room blindfold. They do not see anything, but they have to exert themselves to walk, and they can experience a number of things in the room, although they cannot see them. So what I am going to describe concerning the time between going to sleep and waking is plunged as it were in darkness, since the consciousness is blind to it. But, as I said, it is definitely lived through by human beings, and the effects of all we experience in sleep certainly enter our waking life. And we understand properly what people go through in their waking day only when we look upon it as a combination of the after-effect of their last sleep with whatever they do through their physical and etheric bodies during the day.

Now when people go to sleep there comes over them at first a vague feeling of anxiety. In our ordinary earthly life this anxiety does not rise into consciousness, nor is it thought about, but it is there as a process in people's astral body and

ego, and they definitely carry over its results into their waking life. If this anxiety were not carried over, were not effective in waking life as a force in their physical and etheric bodies, they would be unable to hold together their physical constitution so that, for example, it secreted salts and similar substances in the right way. This secretion, which is essential for the organism, is absolutely an effect of subconscious anxiety during sleep life. So the first thing we do on going to sleep is enter a sphere of anxiety.

Then a condition arises in the soul like a continuous swinging to and fro from a state of inner tranquillity to one of uneasiness—such a movement to and fro that if people were conscious of it they would believe that at any moment they were going to faint and then come to again. The anxiety is filled with a constant alternation between being in control and faintness.

Thirdly there is a feeling of standing on the brink of an abyss, of having no ground under one's feet, so that at any moment one could founder.

So you see that the very moment people fall asleep conditions in the cosmos are already beginning to lift away from the physical and become immersed in the moral element. For the second state we enter on going to sleep can be properly judged only when we recognize that in the cosmos moral laws have the validity natural laws have on earth, and we accept their reality with the same certainty we feel in speaking of a stone falling to the ground or of an engine driven by its steam. Nevertheless, in their present earthly lives, because people's strength is still limited, they are protected at present by the kindly guidance of the world from experiencing consciously all that they actually go through every night unconsciously.

The ordering of the cosmos is such that even the things that radiate the greatest beauty, that have the most sublime appearance, must have their roots in sorrow, pain and renunciation. Behind everything that appears beautiful are pain and self-denial. This is just as necessary a part of the world as that the angles of a triangle should add up to 180 degrees. It is mere foolishness to ask why the gods have not so organized the cosmos that it gives human beings only pleasure. Reality produces necessities. This was indeed divined in the Egyptian Mystery teachings, for example they called the conscious perception of what occurs in sleep-anxiety, the swinging to and fro between keeping hold of oneself and becoming faint, and standing on the brink of an abyss—the world of the three iron necessities. The Egyptian mystery teachings, which still told of such things

out of the art of instinctive clairvoyance, proclaimed: If human beings were to enter consciously the world they enter unconsciously every night in sleep they would have to become immersed in the three iron necessities.

These experiences during sleep produce in human beings, again unconsciously, a profound yearning for the divine which they then feel to be filling, penetrating, permeating the whole cosmos. For them the cosmos then opens up into a kind of hovering, weaving, ever-moving cloud formation which they are living in, and in which they could at any moment feel either alive or as though they could just as well disappear in this whole weaving life. Human beings are aware of how interwoven they are with the divine that weaves and surges through the world. And the sort of pantheistic feeling for God occurring in every human being during waking life is the after-effect, the consequence of this pantheistic feeling for God experienced unconsciously during sleep. And people do in fact feel this after-effect as something that fills their souls with an unconscious conviction, born one might say out of anxiety and powerlessness, but filled at the same time with something that gives them, instead of the external centre of gravity affecting physical things, an inner centre of gravity.

The Rosicrucian mystery teachings gave expression to what comes over human beings when they become immersed in the realm of the three iron necessities. The pupils were given an interpretation of what they would experience on going to sleep. What they were made aware of was this: 'Your daytime experiences disappear into moving cloud formations which, however, reveal themselves to be beings. You yourselves become interwoven with these cloud formations, hovering over an abyss in anxiety and powerlessness. You have, however, already discovered in three words what you should now bring to your consciousness, words which should fill your whole soul: *Ex Deo nascimur*.'

This *Ex Deo nascimur*, so vague for ordinary consciousness, but raised up into consciousness in the pupils of the new mysteries, is what human beings first experience on passing from the waking state into sleep.

In the further course of these lectures we shall see that this *Ex Deo nascimur* also plays a historic part in the world evolution of humankind. The role that I am now describing, however, is the personal, individual one it plays here on earth in the life of every single human being.

If people then continue to sleep, the next stage is that the ordinary view of the

cosmos as seen from the earth ceases. Whereas at night while standing on the physical earth people see the stars shining down and the moon, and by day the sun is there, affecting their senses, they see at a certain moment during sleep how this whole starry world vanishes. The stars cease to be physical entities, but at the place where they appeared physically to our senses there come forth as it were from their rays—the rays themselves disappear—the genii, the spirits, the gods of the stars. And the cosmos changes into a form perceptible to conscious Inspiration, a speaking universe, declaring itself through the music of the spheres and the cosmic Word. The cosmos is then made up of spiritually alive beings in place of the sense-perceptible cosmos that can be seen from the viewpoint of the earth.

This is experienced in such a way that if human beings became conscious of it they would feel as if the world, from all directions of spiritual existence, was pronouncing judgement on all they have made of themselves as human beings through all their deeds both good and bad. They would also feel that in their human worth they were bound up with the cosmos.

What comes to them first of all, however—and if they could experience it consciously, as Inspiration does, they would notice this—is bewildering, and they need a guide. In the present period of human evolution this guide appears if, during their last incarnation, people have connected heart and soul with the Mystery of Golgotha, if they have created a bond with the Christ who, as Jesus, went through the Mystery of Golgotha. And the feeling that takes hold of human beings in this particular moment in history—we shall speak tomorrow of how people felt in other epochs—is that, in the sphere they are now entering, their bewildered souls would surely disintegrate if the very being of Christ, who has taken up residence in their thoughts, feelings and deepest impulses of their hearts, were not to be their guide.

And this approach of the Christ as Guide—who we realize to be just as connected in this sphere with the life of the sun as human beings themselves are with the life of the earth—is felt in the same way as a medieval mystery school presented it to the souls of their pupils in conscious wakefulness: In Christo morimur. For the feeling is that the soul would expire if it were not to die in Christ, thereby dying into cosmic life.

This is how human beings live their way into and pass through the experience of sleep. Then after having perceived the stars of the cosmos in their essential

being, they now, because they cannot awaken to consciousness in this sphere that is still unfamiliar to them, feel a longing coming over them to return to the sphere of consciousness. This is why we wake. This is what gives us the strength to wake up. And we have the feeling, though it does not come to consciousness, that through what we have absorbed from the stars—from the actual being of the stars, the gods of the stars—we shall not be empty of spirit when we wake, but bring down with us into daytime bodily existence the spirit that dwells in the soul.

And this feeling, the third of the night-time experiences in the personal life of human beings on earth, was also brought to the consciousness of the pupils of a medieval mystery school in a third saying: *Per spiritum sanctum reviviscimus*. This threefold experience in the spiritual world beyond the Guardian of the Threshold—who is ignored only by human beings of the present epoch—is thus perceptible in three stages, which also imprint on the human soul what can truly be called the Trinity—the Trinity which brings movement and life into our spiritual life and fills it with its essence.

What I have been describing here is experienced by human beings every night in picture form, and into this picture are woven their daytime experiences, going backwards in time. Just as our earthly experiences are interwoven with those of natural processes during our waking life, during the night we experience this backward repetition interwoven with memories of the starry world. But all this is for the time being a picture.

This can only become real after human beings have gone through the gate of death. Here on earth it is experienced in reverse as a picture. It will become real only when, after three or four days we have completed the panoramic survey of our memories described yesterday, and we enter the spiritual world no longer in terms of pictures, as we do every night, but in reality.

To have a real soul understanding of the experiences that are undergone consciously after the gate of death has been passed, the following must be borne in mind. The gods, the spiritual beings we meet coming from the transformed stars, live in a quite different cosmic direction from us earthly beings in our earth existence. Here we touch on a very important truth about the spiritual worlds, though it is not generally recognized when the spiritual world is spoken of theoretically and not perceptively. When we are conscious as earthly beings we have a physical and an etheric body, and these are so organized that we

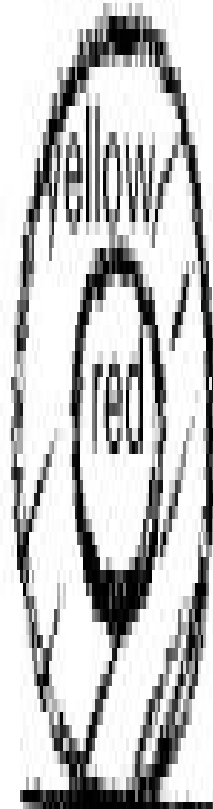
experience later events following on after earlier ones, for we exist in a particular stream of time.

diagram a)



(stream of time)

diagram b)



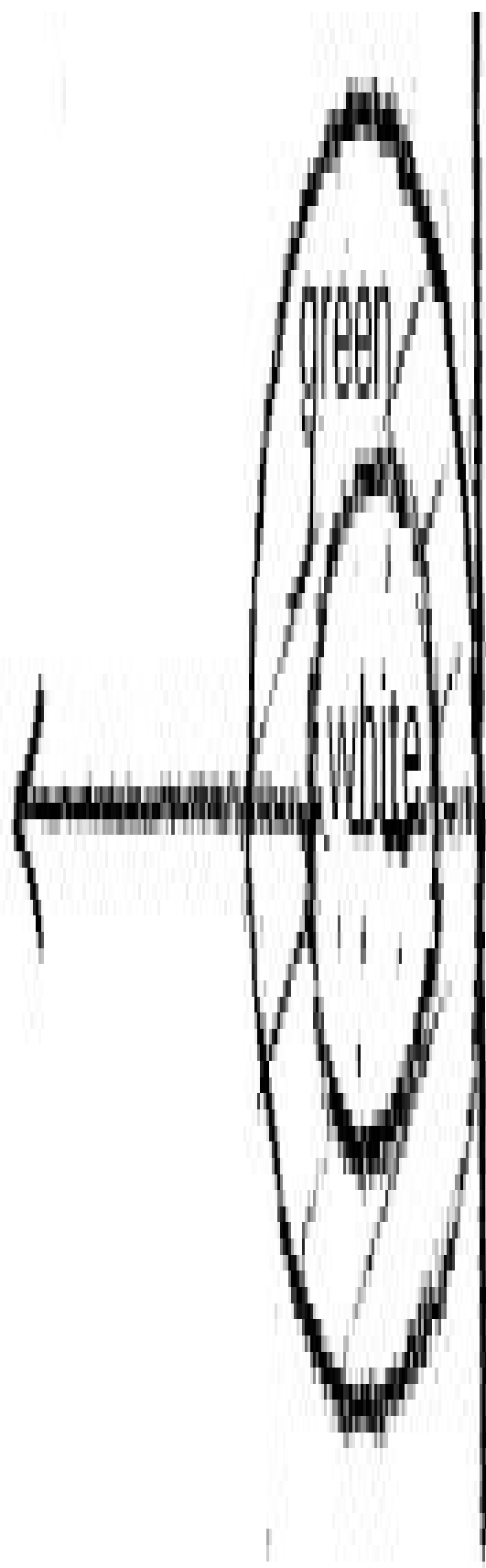
red = physical body

yellow = etheric body

It is characteristic of our physical and etheric bodies to take this direction in the cosmos [red arrow from left to right]. In so far as we are human beings living in the world we experience everything in this sequence.

Those beings we meet when we move up to existence between death and rebirth—when we discover the reality behind the picture of our sleep existence—move in the opposite direction and constantly come towards us. So that, compared with what we call time in earthly life, we must say: The gods have spiritual bodies—one could equally well say bodies of light—with which, however, they move from the most distant future towards the past.

diagram c)



white = Life Spirit

green = Spirit Man

And when we enter the period of time we spend between death and a new birth, just as here on earth we acquire a physical body of physical substances, over there we acquire bodies similar to those of the gods. We clad ourselves in divine bodies, which are what I have called in my book Theosophy Spirit Man [green] and Life Spirit [white]; and in doing so our direction in the cosmos is reversed, and we begin by living our life backwards until we reach our birth and conception.

If we think of a circle, then during earth existence we complete the top half, and when that existence is over we return through the lower half of the circle to our conception and birth.

birth

death



Just as if we were to set out from home on an excursion to a particular place and then return home, completing as it were a circle in space, we now do a journey out and back again in time—for space no longer exists here, but time exists still. Between birth and death there is the outward journey, and then, having had that experience, we take the return journey through the experience of our nights, as spiritual realities, until we return to the point of time at which we started. We have then completed the first of the encirclings we have to complete after death.

You know, in this materialistically minded age little is said about such circlings in life, in the whole span of life, and we have to go back in human evolution if we are to find words to express the real process. If we turn to oriental wisdom, with its less conscious insight than we are now capable of, but its more dreamy state of clairvoyance, we find a wonderful expression, evidently derived from an insight we can recover if we cross the threshold with real understanding, and pass the Guardian consciously when entering the spiritual world.

When the spiritual world is described in theories that come half from the intellect it is not far removed from a materialistic picture of the cosmos. It shows human beings as beginning their lives at birth, then becoming a child and later on a teenage boy or girl, then growing older and approaching death—and then on and on in a straight line which we naturally never come to the end of. For anyone with knowledge of initiation knows that it is nonsense to talk of there being an end. This road has no ending—it turns back on itself. And the wonderful expression used by the oriental initiates to describe the fact is ‘the wheel of births’.

There is much talk of this ‘wheel of births’, but little of it nowadays points to the truth. We have in fact completed the first revolution of this wheel at the end of our journey around the stars, which takes about one third of our whole earthly incarnation, the time, that is, we spend in sleep on earth. We have then completed the first wheel of births and can now await in the life between death and rebirth the further revolutions of the wheel of births.

This is how it is when, with knowledge awakened by Imagination, Inspiration and Intuition, we make our way into the worlds lying behind the veil of the sense world. These are worlds that once, in a remote period of evolution, were open to humankind as a heritage from a past age, when human beings associated with

divine/spiritual beings in the way described. It is only when some insight into the spiritual worlds takes us back to ancient times when people knew about these worlds that it becomes possible to understand what has come down to us from the old wisdom. And then we are filled with wonder at this primeval wisdom of humankind. So anyone who has received initiation at the present time can do no other than look up to those ancient days of man's earthly existence with admiration, with reverence.

Something else can be seen from this too. You see that only through the spiritual science of today can we arrive again at the true form of these ancient perceptions. People who want to exclude modern spiritual science have therefore no means of understanding the language spoken by those who possessed the primeval wisdom of humankind, and they are fundamentally unable to describe things historically. Those who know nothing of the spiritual world are often quite naive in the way they expound on and interpret the old records of primeval peoples. So, in documents which perhaps contain primeval wisdom now obscured, we find ringing out such wonderful expressions as 'the wheel of births'. These expressions must be understood by rediscovering the reality to which they allude. If we want to give a picture of the true story of humankind on earth we must therefore not shrink from first familiarizing ourselves with the language used in those far-off days.

I might very well have begun by describing the historical evolution of humankind in the terms used in the ancient records. But then you would have had nothing but words, like we often have nowadays when the old records are spoken about. Therefore if we are really to give a true picture of that fragment of the world of reality that human beings have lived through in the historical period we have to start by describing their relation to the spiritual worlds. For only in this way are we enabled to find our way about in the language used, and in all that was done in those ancient times to maintain a connection with the spiritual worlds. Yesterday I described how the Druid priests set up stones and screened them in such a way that by gazing into the shadows thrown within the structure and looking through the stones they could gain information concerning the will of the spiritual worlds which impressed itself into the physical realm. But something else was also connected with this. In the spiritual world there is not only a going forth, but everything has a return journey. Just as there are time processes which carry us forward through physical existence and after death take us back again, there are not only forces in these structures set up by the Druids which descend from above, but also forces ascending from below. In these

structures the Druid priests observed both a downward and an upward flow. When their structures were set up on appropriate sites the priests could perceive not only the will of divine spirits coming down from the cosmos but—because, in so far as the stones stood in the right place, a state of one-dimensionality prevailed in the returning stream—they could also perceive the morality or immorality of the members of their community conveying itself to the cosmos. Therefore these stones also served as an observatory for the Druid priests to look into the inner soul life of those belonging to their community and see how they related to the cosmos.²⁷

All these secrets, all these mysteries are connected with things that have remained from ancient times and exist now in such a decadent form. They can be understood only when, through the power of individual Imagination, Inspiration and Intuition, the world of the spirit is raised once more out of its hidden existence and brought to human consciousness.

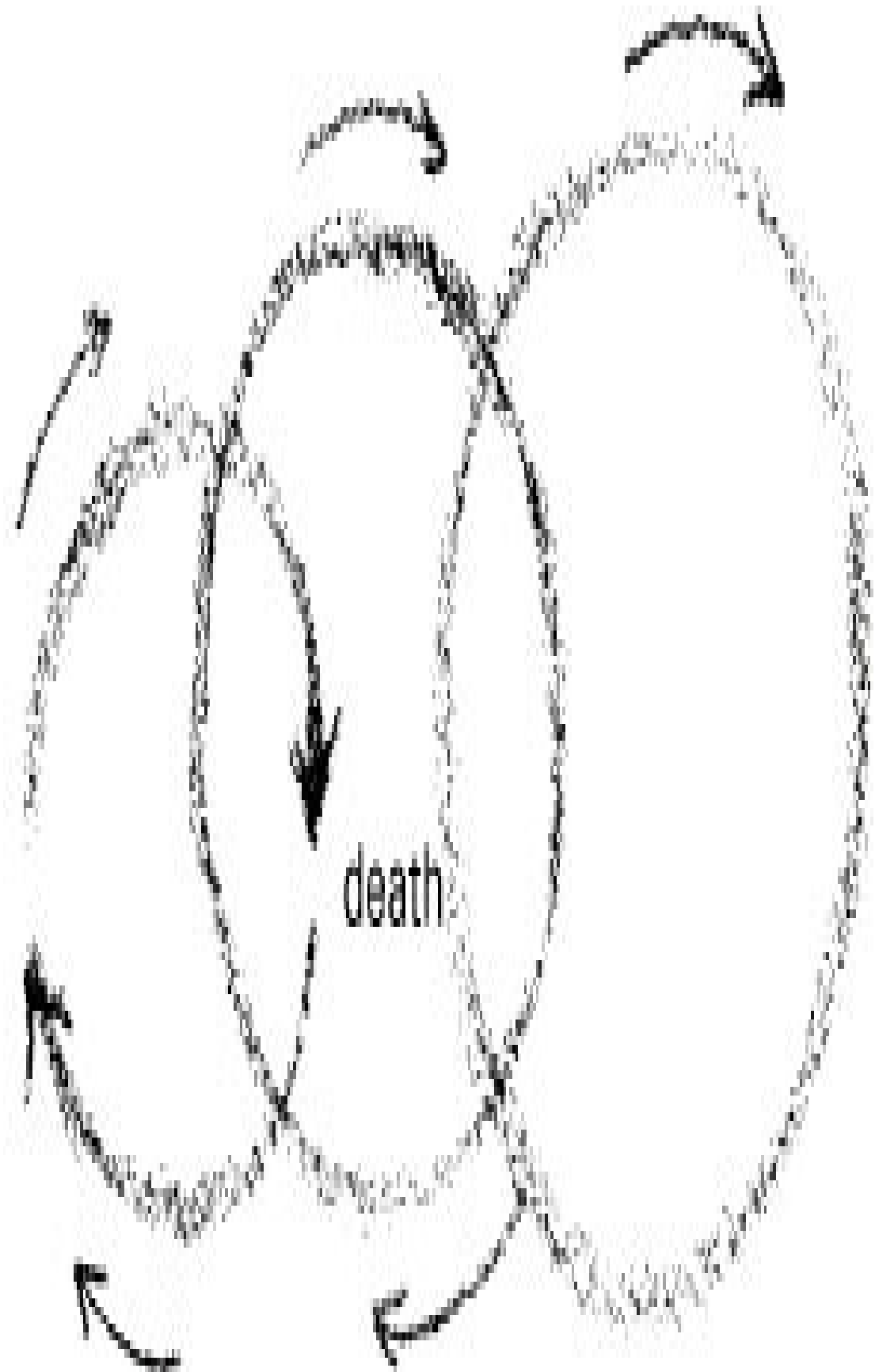
These circular movements—which are of course meant metaphorically, for the movement is taking place in a one-dimensional realm—are gone through repeatedly in the course of a human being's life between death and a new birth. And just as with this particular revolution—going forwards from birth to death and going backwards from death to rebirth—others take their course, going forth and returning again throughout the whole of existence between death and rebirth, but in such a way that there is always a change of level between the experiences of going forth and returning again. In the case of this first wheel of birth there is of course the distinction that we experience the outgoing half up to our physical death, and the return half in the period of time immediately after death. Then the first round has been completed. Others follow, and we go on making such rounds until we come to a quite definite place from which we can journey back in the way I shall be describing tomorrow. We go on completing these revolutions until we reach the point, in the course of our cosmic life as a whole, which indicates the last death we experienced, the one at the end of our previous earth incarnation.

In revolutions such as these—though our first experience after death is a looking and living backwards—we live through what we underwent between our last death and last birth into earth existence out of which we have just died. And each of these revolutions corresponds in its outgoing journey to a cosmic sleep. If I were to continue drawing these further revolutions, the outwards journey would always correspond to a life after death, in that human beings go out with their

whole being more into the cosmos and are conscious of living in it and becoming one with it.

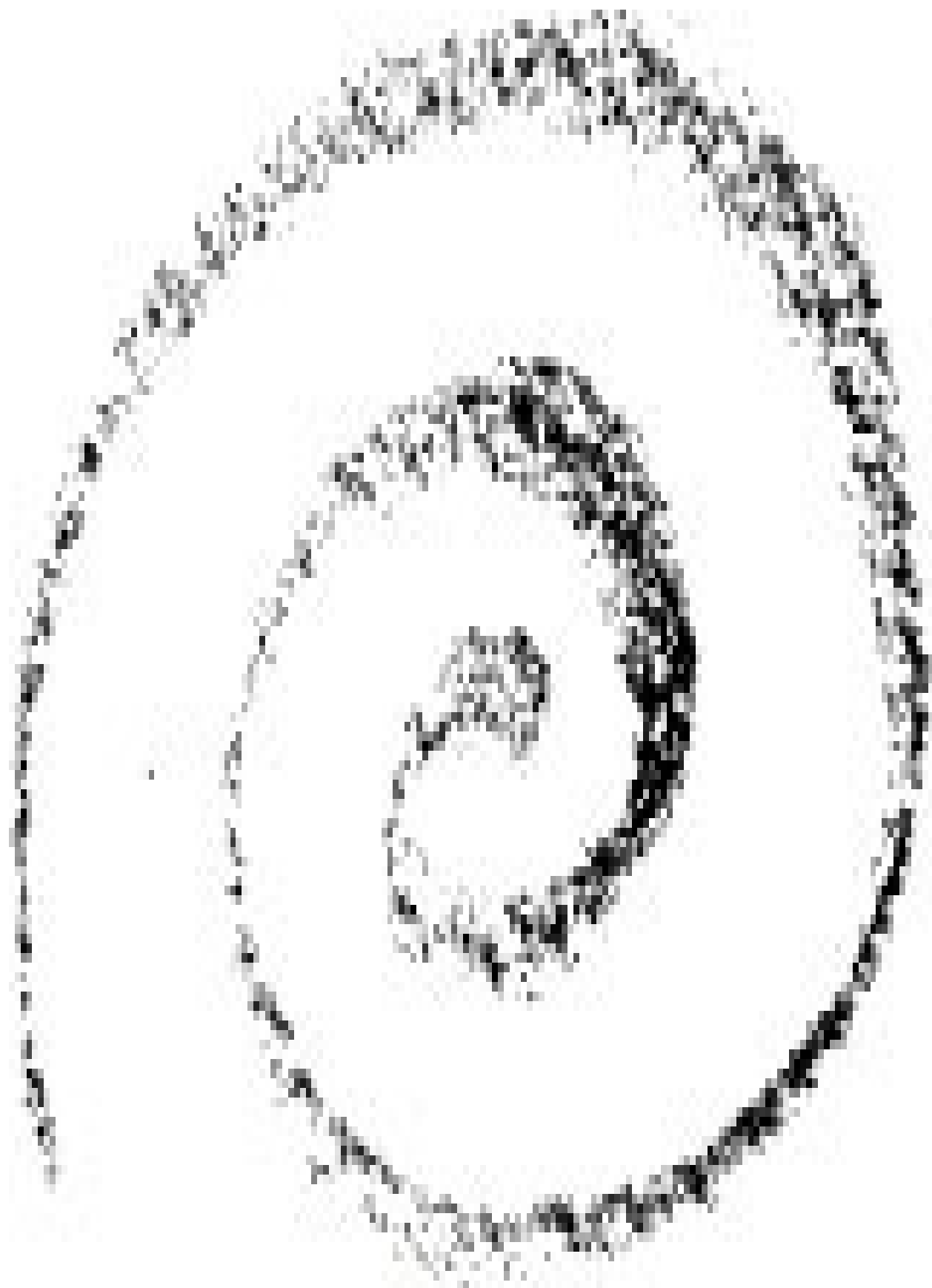
birth

death



The return journey always corresponds to human beings coming back into themselves from the cosmic world, when they digest what they have experienced there and feel it as part of themselves. Just as here, in order to have a healthy life on earth, we have to alternate between sleeping and being awake, between death and rebirth we have to experience again and again a flowing out into the cosmos, when we feel ourselves to be as big as the cosmos itself and, perceiving the structures and deeds of the cosmos as our own, we identify ourselves with the whole universe so entirely that we say: 'What you beheld with physical eyes as an earth dweller, what looked back on you in its physical reflection as the cosmos of physical, visible stars, you are now living within.' But now it is not physical stars but divine/spiritual beings that are uniting their existence with yours. You have, as it were, dissolved into the life of the cosmos; the divine/spiritual beings of the cosmos are living in you, and you have to identify yourself with them. This is one part of the experiences we pass through between death and a new birth—whether you call it cosmic night or cosmic day, the terms used on earth are naturally a matter of indifference to the gods living in the spiritual world. In order to bring home to ourselves what we experience out there we have to use earthly forms of speech, but these must be such as will correspond with the reality.

The times in which we grow together with the cosmos, identifying ourselves with the whole cosmos, are followed by other times when we draw back into a single point within ourselves, when everything that we experienced before, when we were poured out over the cosmos, is now experienced as a cosmic memory united with our inner self. We feel the wheel of births as though perpetually turning; what we experience together with the cosmos we experience as though it were outside, then we withdraw into ourselves and experience in ourselves the smaller third. Then out it goes again, followed once more by a contraction into a spiral. The wheel of births can indeed be described as a spiral movement perpetually turning in on itself.



In this way, between death and rebirth, we progress through an alternation of experiencing ourselves and of self-surrender. To say this, however, is just as if we were to describe what the human experience of the passage from death to rebirth means for the spiritual world by describing events on earth in the course of every 24 hours as merely consisting of the fact that human beings sleep and wake. The surrender and drawing in again of the self in the spiritual world is indeed similar to sleeping and waking in earthly life. And just as in the earthly life of human beings first the events are dealt with that we experience in life, so in the completion of these wheels of births and deaths those spiritual events are dealt with that human beings experience between death and rebirth. And in order to grasp these events we must form a sound conception of how matters really stand for human beings in earthly life.

Strictly speaking human beings are awake only in the thought realm and in a closely connected part of their realm of feeling. What happens when people form the intention of doing something, if only it is picking up a piece of chalk? The intention, which lives to start with as a concept, shoots down into the will, which makes a demand on the muscles, and then people get a sight of their hand holding the chalk, which is again a thought form. Thus the act of will, the expression of one's desires, remains shrouded in darkness for earthly consciousness, just the same as sleep life is, even in the daytime. Only in our concepts and in part of our feeling life are we awake for our normal consciousness. In the other part of our feeling, the part that leans towards the will, approving or disapproving of what we want to do, and in the will itself, we are asleep.

Now we do not take our thoughts with us after death. We take them into our life after death just as little as we take them with us at night. In the life between death and rebirth we have to form our own thoughts in keeping with that world. We do, however, take with us that which lives in our subconscious—our will and the part of our feelings connected with it. It is precisely with everything of which we are unconscious in earthly life, with all that lives in our impulses and desires, with the sense-orientated part of our will nature, and with all that lives spiritually in our will—it is with all this that we go through the time between death and rebirth, forming conscious cosmic thoughts about what we experience so unconsciously here.

If, for instance, it is particularly the period immediately after death that we want to understand we must realize that the experiences which come to the soul with regard to the physical body take on another aspect directly we no longer possess a physical body. Our physical body, with its chemical substances, does not experience hunger and thirst; these are soul experiences. But it is through the physical body that all such cravings are satisfied here on earth. Hunger lives in the soul, and in earthly life hunger is satisfied through the body. It is similar with thirst. When you have passed through the gate of death you no longer have a physical body, but you still have hunger and thirst. You take them through the gate of death and for a third of the length of your life on earth, while you are going backwards through your nights, you have to use this time for curing yourself of hunger and thirst and all the other desires that can only be satisfied through the body. This is the inner experience you have after death, during a third of your lifetime, with regard to earthly life. Everything that can be gratified only through the body—or at any rate in earthly life—is purged from the soul, and the soul is freed from the desires which have to live in it but which can only be satisfied through the body and earthly circumstances. We shall see later what lies further on.

I have now given you a description of part of human experience on first passing through the gate of death—a description based on what we have gone into today. Tomorrow we will look further into the life between death and rebirth and its connection with the whole earthly evolution of humankind. We must, however, be clear about the scope of the events which enter into earthly life. The kind of thing that can again be reached by Imagination, Inspiration and Intuition was at one time open to people through a kind of instinctive vision. The night was not such a closed book for them. Their waking life took a more dreamlike course and in its dream pictures revealed more of the spiritual world.

I should like to draw attention to something today already, although my reason for bringing it will only become clear in the next few days. It is this. We are living in an age when human beings are exposed in the highest degree to the danger of losing all connection with the spiritual world. And perhaps, as we are so close here to centres reminiscent of the ancient European Druids, this is the place to mention certain symptoms which, though not the worst, show us not only what is taking place physically in earthly existence but what is happening spiritually behind the scenes so to speak.

Now consider medieval man, including the shadow side— what today we call

the Dark Ages—and compare that with present-day humanity. I will pick out just two symptoms today that can alert us to the way we should be looking at the world from a spiritual point of view.

Look at a medieval book. Every single letter is a work of art. We seem to see how the eye dwelt on those characters. The writer's whole mood of soul, as it rested on the written letter, was more attuned to feeling at home in revelations coming to it from the spiritual world. And look at a lot of today's handwriting. It is hardly legible! Those are not the kind of letters anyone could have artistic pleasure in; they are thrown onto the paper with a mechanical hand movement. The word 'Penmaenmawr' was written very sloppily on the blackboard—what you often see on paper often looks almost as bad as that! And the time is here when we are turning from writing by hand to typewriting, when we shall no longer experience any connection with the words on the paper. This, and the motor car, are the two chief symptoms that can show us what is going on behind the scenes of existence, and that human beings are being cast out more and more from the spiritual world.

Do not imagine I want to appear as a typical reactionary who would like to ban cars and typewriters or even this horrible handwriting. Anyone who understands the course the world is taking knows very well that such things have to be, and are justified. It is definitely not a matter of eliminating them but of the best way of caring for them. These things have to come and have to be accepted in the same way that we accept night and day, although enthusiasm for them may be found chiefly among people who are strongly inclined to materialism. However, all these dreadful tendencies, the illegible handwriting, the horrible clatter of the typewriters and the dreadful speed of the cars—all this has to be counterbalanced, if people are to stay healthy, by the strong determination to practise bringing spirit into our thinking, feeling and willing.

There is no question of fighting against the material realm but of coming to grips with it and getting to know it in its reality, and in our need for it; and also of becoming aware how essential it is that a strong spirituality should be brought to bear against the crushing weight of physical existence. If human development and progress is to continue in a healthy way instead of deteriorating, then there will have to be a balance, a pendulum swing between cars and computers on the one side and the spiritual insights and imaginations arrived at through spiritual-scientific activities on the other.

This can be said particularly in Penmaenmawr, for here we become aware on the one hand how the imaginations, as a heritage of the ancient days of the Druids, remain around for longer, while on the other hand we experience how forcibly these imaginations are totally destroyed by the way the cars race through the atmosphere.

Lecture 10

Human Spiritual/Cosmic Existence After Death

28 August 1923

If we want to bring home to us the actual nature of our experiences between death and rebirth we must above all grasp the enormous difference existing between these experiences and those of earthly life. Here on earth we carry out whatever we do in such a way that, once done, it so to speak separates from us—it no longer belongs to us. For example we produce all sorts of things, and they become detached from us. Most people dispose of them along the common social route of selling them. So whatever people produce in the earthly world as the outcome of their will, this goes out into the world in such a way that people feel relatively—I say expressly relatively—little connection with it. And the thoughts out of which they produce these things slip back into them, where they either remain merely as passive thoughts or become memories, habits, aptitudes. It is different between death and a new birth. There, everything people produce comes back to them in a certain sense.

Now we have to consider the following. Here on earth we carry out our will impulses on things belonging to the kingdoms of nature—the mineral, plant and animal realms. We mould and form them. And we get them moving, even doing this in the case of other people who share this earth with us. In the spiritual world between death and rebirth we are of course among purely spiritual beings, partly with those whose whole existence is in the spiritual world and who never incorporate in earthly substance. Among such beings belong the higher hierarchies—the angels, the exusiai, the seraphim and cherubim. One could choose other names for them, but here, too, there is no need to reject them.

These particular names are old and venerable, and they may well be used again for what we are rediscovering in spiritual realms. So human beings, between death and rebirth, dwell partly among beings such as these and partly among human souls who have cast off their earthly bodies and taken on spiritual ones, i.e. among those with whom they were together on earth or with those souls who are awaiting their coming descent to earth. This coexistence, it is true, depends somewhat on whether we are karmically connected, whether we have formed bonds with them here on earth. For those persons with whom we were less close on earth have less connection with us in the spiritual world. There is more to be said about this. Then too, human beings have connections with the kind of beings who have never been so directly incorporated in earthly existence as they themselves have, for they are at a lower stage and not able to take a human form. These are elemental beings who live in the various kingdoms of nature—in the plant kingdom, in the kingdom of the rocks or minerals, as well as in that of the animals. Thus between death and rebirth human beings grow together with this whole world of spirits. I must add that these beings are perceptible to inspired, intuitive and imaginative consciousness, for with these forms of consciousness we can see into the world we live our way through between death and rebirth.

Because human beings now live in this quite different way their whole mood, their whole state is different. When here on earth, for example—I am going to come back to this important matter—when we make a machine, the handling and fitting together of the parts flow from our will and our thoughts. But it detaches itself from us. In the spiritual world between death and rebirth we are constantly being active and doing something, and in response to our action there shines forth from what we have done what we recognize to be thoughts that are alive with light. Whereas here on earth a thought stays with us on the earth, over there the thought does not remain in the human being but shines, as a shining being out of all we do. So that in the spiritual world we can never do anything without a thought springing from it. And a thought is not like a thought we have on earth, which can sometimes, even if it is an ill-fated thought, be concealed in a person's inner being, for human thoughts are individual, even personal. But a thought which springs forth from things in the life between death and rebirth is a cosmic thought, and it expresses the response of the beings of the whole spiritual cosmic world to what we do.

Now picture this to yourself vividly. In the life between death and rebirth human beings are active, and arising from this activity the soul's every action, every touch even, is immediately changed into a cosmic thought, so that with

everything we do we imprint it into the spiritual world. And from all sides the cosmos answers back, from out of our deeds there flashes back to us the cosmic response, and the cosmic verdict is final. But that is not the only thing, for in this flashing up of the cosmic world of thought something else shimmers—thoughts intrude of which we cannot say that they originate in the cosmos. So that the brilliantly flashing cosmic thoughts are interspersed by all sorts of dark thoughts shimmering out of the things we have done.

While the brightly gleaming thoughts from the cosmos fill us with a profound feeling of contentment, these shimmering ones—very often, though not always—have something extraordinarily disquieting about them, for they are thoughts carrying the after-effects of our life on earth. If we have acquired good thoughts about things in our lifetime then these good thoughts will gleam forth after death from the radiant cosmic environment. But if we have acquired bad thoughts, harboured evil thoughts, then evil thoughts gleam out towards us from among the shining thoughts of the cosmic judgement. So we behold both what the cosmos is saying to us and what we ourselves have brought with us into the cosmos. This is not a world that detaches itself from us; it remains intimately bound up with us. After death we carry within us our cosmic existence, and, as a memory, our last existence on earth. And our next task is clearly to lay aside this earthly life and drop our old habits, so that we may become real cosmic beings. As long as we are in that region of spiritual experience which in my book *Theosophy* I called the soul world, we are still preoccupied with the aftermath of glimmering earthly thoughts, earthly ways of life, earthly aptitudes. Because of this we make what we feel could be beautiful cosmic structures into grotesque ones, so that we wander on our passage through the soul world being both uncomfortably led and judged by these grotesquely distorted cosmic structures until we are liberated from everything binding us to the earth. Then we can find the transition to the realm I have called spirit land in my book *Theosophy*, for we have left behind the state of soul habitual to us in physical life on earth and are able to act in the only way possible in order to comply with the instructions of those spiritual beings whose realm we have to enter.

You will see that for the time being human beings do not take with them into the world after death what lives in their physical and etheric bodies. That is thrown off, as we know, and sinks into the cosmos. They take with them only what as ego and astral body they have experienced in their physical and etheric bodies. However, something of outstanding significance and importance follows from this. While human beings are going about on earth they regard their physical

body and etheric body—of which they know little, although they are aware of living in the forces of growth—as their own body. But they have no right to do so. For only what is in their ego and astral body is theirs. Everything that is part of their physical and etheric bodies, even when they are on earth, is the property of the divine/spiritual beings. It is these beings who enter with their life and activity into us while we live on earth, and continue their work even when we are absent in sleep. We would fare very badly if we had to care for our own etheric and physical bodies in constant wakefulness between birth and death. Time and time again we are obliged to hand over our physical and etheric bodies to the gods, especially during childhood—for a child's sleep is the most important of all. Later in life sleep works only as a corrective; the sleep a child has during its earliest years is a real, productive sleep.

In past ages of human evolution this was so clearly perceived that they called the body a temple of the gods for the way in which its wonderful structure was experienced. And in their architectural constructions in many parts of the world—this can best be seen in oriental buildings, but also in those of Egypt and Greece—they imitated the laws of the physical and etheric body. In the way the cherubim are set on the temples of the East, in the way the sphinxes stand, or in the placing of pillars, the activity of divine/spiritual beings in the human physical and etheric body has been made to live again. In the course of our evolution, consciousness of this has been lost. Therefore, with no notion of how unjustified this is, we nowadays refer to the physical body as our body, whereas as an earthly creation it belongs in reality to the gods. So when people today speak of 'my body', when they describe the healthy functioning of their body as due to themselves, it is just an instance of the prodigious arrogance of modern man—a subconscious pride, certainly expressed with no awareness of it, but nonetheless deplorable. It shows how in speaking of their bodies as their own people are really laying claim to the property of the gods, and this pride is embodied in their very way of saying things.

To all these things attention must be drawn anew by spiritual science; it must draw people's awareness to the fact that a moral element is already intruding into our ordinary naturalistic life; in fact, as we have seen in the case just referred to, it can take a by no means healthy form. These matters show how, through genuine spiritual knowledge, our whole feeling life can be so transformed that if spiritual science has been really understood even ways of speaking can become different from the way in which people like to talk under the influence of purely materialistic thinking.

In order to understand the further experiences we have between death and a rebirth we must be able to recall what was said yesterday—that as we live our way into the spiritual world the physical aspect of the stars disappears, and in its stead we become at home in the spiritual counterpart of the brilliance of their rays, which meet the eye physically. Every single star is the dwelling place of particular spiritual beings, just as the earth is the dwelling place of human beings who, as earth citizens, are actually spiritual beings with ego and astral body. And during their spiritual existence human beings are connected with elemental beings dwelling in the kingdoms of the minerals, plants and animals, and so on. They are also connected through their external bodily life with other human souls. And now, between death and a new birth, they come into a connection with the inhabitants of other stars. This part of their life is actually spent in experiencing the world of the stars, and this happens through their association with the spirit of the starry world, with the other divine/ spiritual beings living there.

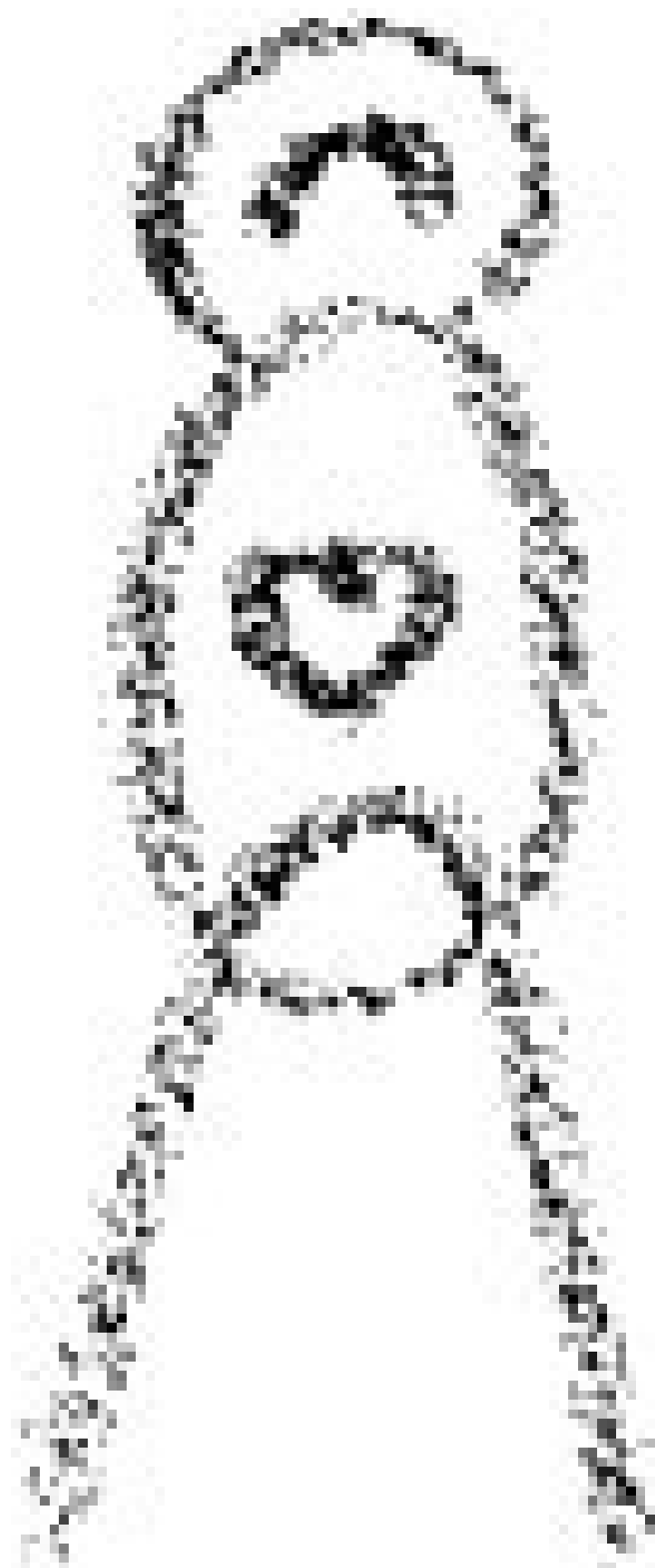
We have already seen how immediately after earth life we pass through existence in the soul world, how it is essentially a living backwards through all that we have slept through in unconscious imagery during our nights on earth. One third of the duration of our earthly life is thus spent in weaning ourselves from that which these glimmering thoughts carry into the thoughts of the cosmos. Those who have lived to the age of 60, say, on earth, will therefore go through the soul world in 20 years, while they are working their way out of everything connecting them with physical existence.

Inwardly, we experience coming into relation with the world of the stars. And during this period of time after death, while we are in the soul world, we feel especially connected with moon existence. When yesterday I spoke of human beings describing a circle as it were, completing the first half between birth and death and the returning half in a third of that time, they had the feeling that this circling takes place round the realm of the moon, round the spirits of moon existence. And as I pointed out yesterday, they do not have the feeling of returning to their birth, so their movement is not an actual circle but a spiral. Human beings are actually progressing, so I have to draw it as a spiral.

The reason why we do not simply circle round the moon but move on to approach another state of existence is partly due to the onward-driving forces of the Mercury beings and partly due to the reflecting force of the Venus beings. The Mercury beings are rather stronger than the Venus beings. Existence is urged

further by the Mercury beings, then blocked by the Venus beings, is so to say given substance, so that the essential course of the passage of human beings through the soul world is such that they feel taken up into the activity of moon, Mercury and Venus.

We must envisage a really clear picture of this form of existence. Here on earth we say,²⁸ 'I, a human being, have a head,' and this is activated chiefly by what might be called the middle brain, the pineal gland. This is the chief organ in the head. In the middle of the human body is the heart. 'I, a human being, have in my middle part a heart, and I, a human being, have in my metabolic/movement organism what belongs to my whole kidney system.'



When we are in the soul world after death we cannot talk like this. We do not say: 'I, a human being, consist of head, chest, heart and limbs together with the metabolic organs.' All this would have no meaning, for we have laid it all aside. After death we say: 'I, a human being, consist of what comes from the moon spirits.' And this corresponds to saying on earth: 'I have a head.' Whereas on earth we say, 'I have a heart in my chest,'—which covers the whole breathing and circulatory system—in the soul world we say, 'I bear within me the forces of Venus.' And again, whereas on earth we say, 'I have a metabolic/limb system with all its organs,' of which the chief is the kidney system, after death we have to say, 'The forces coming from the Mercury beings live in me.' Therefore on earth we must say, 'As human being I am head, chest, abdomen and limbs,' and after death, 'As human being I am moon, Venus, Mercury.'

This corresponds entirely with the real inner state of our lives. For our whole physical existence here on earth depends on how our head, heart and digestive system work together— everything turns on that. The slightest movement of the hand involves the action of head, heart and digestive system, where continuous changes in the relevant substances come into play. Our whole earthly existence takes its course in head, heart and limbs—to put it in a very concise way. In the soul world the activity of the moon, Mercury and Venus forces in us fills our whole existence. And through this we are in fact carried back to a time when human beings were experiencing natural existence in long past epochs of human evolution—epochs to which I have often alluded during these lectures.

In those days people had a kind of instinctive vision, and I have spoken here of certain types of this which can still be found. Even on earth human beings then had a presentiment of this connection in life beyond the earth with moon, Mercury and Venus. Why has a consciousness of this disappeared today? When anyone speaks of these deeply significant things lying behind the veil of the physical world that can be spoken of only from the realm beyond the threshold, one naturally stirs up ill-feeling or, to put it more genteelly, one arouses the criticism of the contemporary world. For today it is particularly difficult to put into words the truths of initiation. Either it must be done in such abstract concepts that people today will not realize what is meant or terms that really belong to such truths must be used—and this makes many people downright angry. One can understand this anger, for they are being told about a world they want to be rid of, a world they fear and hate. But this cannot hinder us from

making a start with speaking honestly of these matters in civilized circles. If one were to show great consideration towards the people who hate initiation knowledge—of course I do not mean any of those sitting here but those in the world outside—one would have to say, even if it did not help much: As human beings grow accustomed to life in the soul world they find themselves in conditions resembling an earlier condition on earth when they had instinctive spiritual knowledge of the truth, and in this knowledge lived the forces of the moon. In that way one might perhaps have gone halfway, quite respectably, towards the materialistic concepts of today, but it would have been put far too abstractly. If one is not afraid of the criticisms that will of course come from materialistic thinkers one has to speak differently and say: When people were going through a far-off prehistoric epoch in earthly evolution—of which more is to be said later—even on earth they were in the company of spiritual beings who were in direct connection with the cosmos rather than with the earth itself. We can say that divine teachers not earthly ones directed the mysteries and instructed the human beings living on earth.

These teachers of the most ancient times did not take on physical bodies of flesh but were active among human beings by means of their etheric bodies. The greatest mystery teachers of those times, of whom physically incarnated human beings were only the servants, were etheric and godlike. We are indeed saying something very real when we say that once, in a long past period of human evolution, divine/spiritual beings dwelt on earth among human beings, though it was on specific occasions that they showed themselves—not when a person was out walking, for instance, but when the person was led to them in the appropriate manner by the servants in the mysteries. This happened only in the mysteries, but here they indeed made themselves manifest, and it was through the mysteries that they associated with human beings on earth. Since then these beings have withdrawn from the earth and made their way to the moon, where they now live in a kind of cosmic fortress, imperceptible to people on earth, inside the moon. So if we think about what is inside the moon we have to look upon it as a gathering place of those beings who once upon a time, working etherically, were the great teachers of people on earth. And we should really never look up at the moon without saying: ‘Our one-time teachers on earth are now assembled there.’ For what comes to people on earth from the moon is not what lives within it but only what it reflects back from the rest of the cosmos. For just as it reflects the light it also reflects all cosmic activity. Thus when we look up at the moon and see first and foremost its light, it is of course not the only thing, and it is the least part of it; in fact we are seeing a mirror of cosmic activities and not what lives in

the moon.

Within the moon dwell those beings who once dwelt on earth. And it is only during human beings' existence in the soul world directly after death that we come once more under their influence. It is these beings who, with the judgement of former ages, work correctively after our death on what human beings have done on earth. So that after our death, therefore, human beings actually do, in our present epoch, come once more into relation with these beings who formerly, as divine/spiritual beings, educated and instructed us as part of humanity's evolution.

When human beings have gone through what belongs in a certain way to moon existence it is then their appointed task in the cosmos to enter sun existence. Whereas the first encircling, the first spiral movement has as its focal point the moon existence, this new spiralling has to go further out in its development and pass from the moon to the sun realm.

Any spatial diagram illustrating the process can be no more than illusory, for it all takes its course in the one-dimensional, supersensible realm. However, as we must use earthly words we can say: When human beings have completed the first revolution in the realm of the moon they enter the realm of the sun, and the sun, the spiritual sun, now acquires the same relation to them as the moon had previously. Human beings have now to become the kind of beings who—on entering what in my book *Theosophy* I called spirit land, the spiritual realm of the sun—have to transform their previous moon, Venus, Mercury existence. They must in actual fact become quite different beings. In earthly life they said: 'I am a being of head, heart and chest; and a being of metabolism and limbs.' Directly after death they say: 'I am a being of moon, Mercury, Venus.' But they can say this no longer, for it would mean their having come to a standstill in the spiritual world between the soul world and the actual spirit world. They have now to go through an important metamorphosis where their whole soul/spirit being is concerned, and become what I may describe as follows. The sun must become their skin. The sun must fill their whole surroundings. As here on earth our physical body is wrapped in skin, now, on entering a life of the spirit, we have to be clothed in a skin consisting entirely of spiritual sun forces.

It is not easy to picture this because, seen from the earth, we imagine the sun being in a particular place and shining down from there, the sun in the centre shedding light all round. On entering the realm of the spiritual sun we find the

sun to be no longer in a definite place, but everywhere. We are within the sun, and the sun shines in upon us from the periphery, and is in truth the spiritual skin of the kind of human being we have become. And within the realm of the spiritual sun we have now what must be described as organs. In the same way as in earthly life we have head, heart, limbs, and immediately after death moon, Mercury and Venus, so, after that, we have organs which we must address as Mars, Jupiter, Saturn. These are our inner organs, just as heart, pineal gland and kidneys are on earth. All this has gone through a metamorphosis into the spiritual, and these new organs, not fully formed when first we leave the soul world and enter the world of the spirit, now have to be gradually developed. For this purpose we do not describe one circle only in the sun existence as we did in the moon existence, but three. In the first circle the spiritual Mars organ is developed, in the second the Jupiter organ, and in the last circle the Saturn organ. If we compare this timewise with earthly time we find that these three circles are traversed much more slowly, about twelve times more slowly than the moon circle. And during this whole journey, while human beings are living in the world of spiritual spheres and participating in its forces, they are continually active. Just as we are active here together with nature forces, there we are active together with the forces of the higher hierarchies, whose physical manifestation in the surrounding starry heavens is only an outer reflection together with the sun and moon.

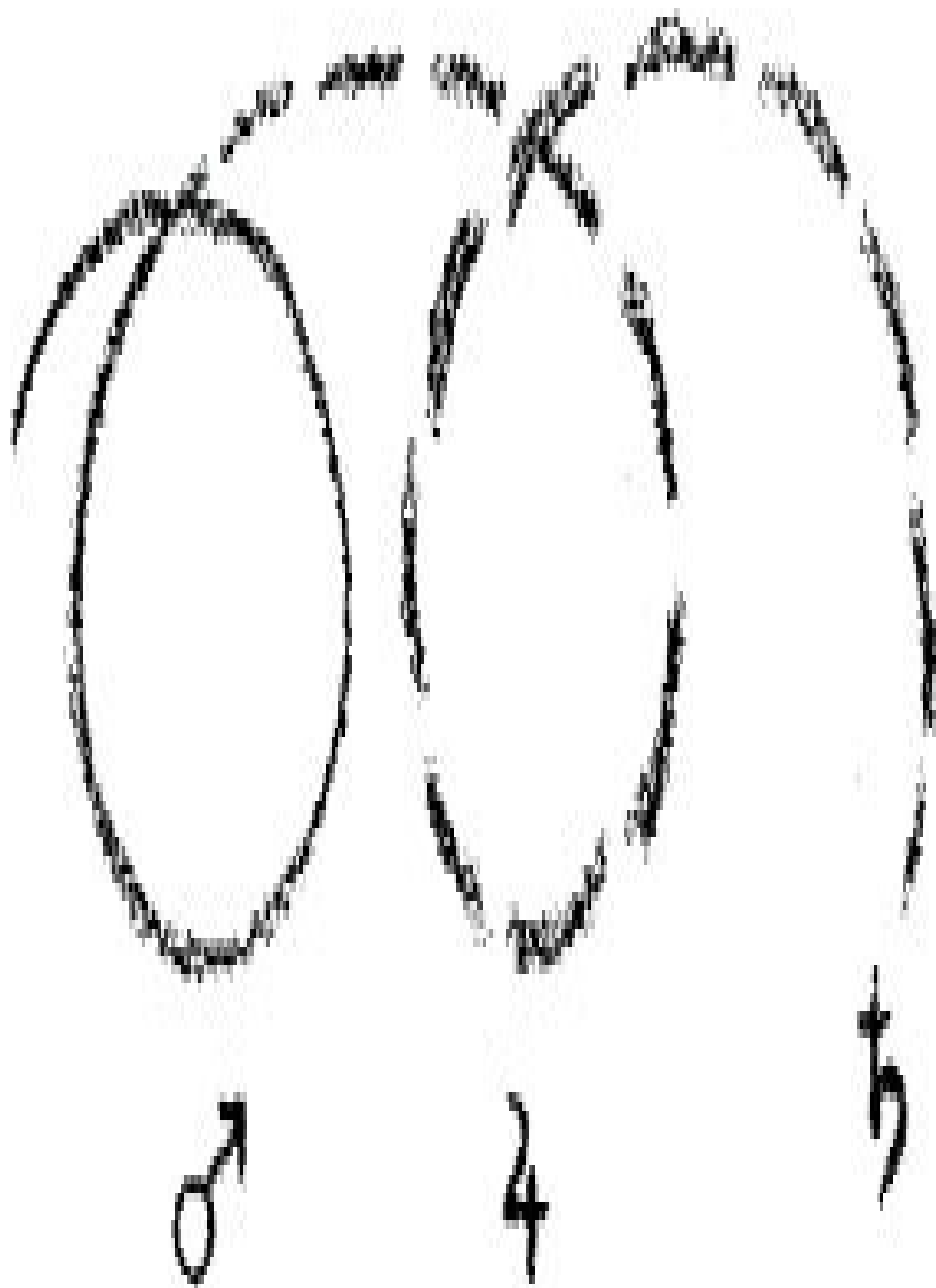
However, in order to find their way from the moon realm to that of the sun human beings have to have a leader, as I have already indicated. We have already seen that in the most ancient of epochs beings lived on earth who have since withdrawn and taken shelter in the cosmic moon fortress. These are the kind of beings with whom we do not relate again until after our death. But successors of these beings have remained, and they have appeared on earth from time to time since those very ancient times. In the Orient these beings were called Bodhisattvas, and although they incarnated in human bodies they were nevertheless the successors of the beings that then entrenched themselves on the moon. In fact the Bodhisattvas associated in life with these beings, and these were the springs of their strength, the sources of their thoughts. And it was these Bodhisattvas who then, through what they taught human beings on earth, became their guides and enabled them to have the strength, on coming to the end of their journey through the moon sphere, to pass on into the sphere of the sun.

In the coming lectures we shall see how, in the course of our earthly evolution, this has become impossible, and how the Christ Being had to come down from

the very being of the sun itself to accomplish the Mystery of Golgotha so that human beings, through the Christ teaching about the Mystery of Golgotha, should be given the powerful strength to achieve the transition from the soul world into spirit land, from the moon sphere into the sun sphere.

In the ancient days of Earth evolution the moon element that was closely connected with the earth actually took care of its spiritual nature. Then, after the first third of the fourth post-Atlantean epoch had run its course, through the participation, direct or indirect of the Bodhisattvas, when ‘the fullness of time was come’,²⁹ the force of the Mystery of Golgotha, the activity of the Christ, entered in. This Christ activity was surrounded by the twelvefold activity of the Bodhisattvas, indicated—though indeed it was a reality—by the twelve apostles. So that the Christ, incarnate in the body of Jesus, is the power who having come from the realm of the spiritual sun has now united himself with the earth.

If we look up at the moon with the desire to understand it rather than merely to gaze at it with our soul and spirit clouded by materialism, and see it as a gathering of beings pointing to the past evolution of the Earth, then we must likewise look up at the sun as a gathering of those beings who point to the future, and now also to the present, and whose great ambassador is the Christ who went through the Mystery of Golgotha. And through what human beings receive through their relationship with the Mystery of Golgotha on earth they will be enabled to enter spiritland and become capable of taking into their inner being in the Mars sphere the Mars organs, in the Jupiter sphere the Jupiter organs, and in the Saturn sphere the Saturn organs in a threefold circle, which takes its course far more slowly than circling round the moon. Yet this again is subject to world evolution. And the complete fulfilment of what I have just been describing—the development of a Mars human being, a Jupiter human being and a Saturn human being—will actually not come about until future time. During our present epoch the activity of world forces enables us solely to complete the Mars circle, after which we can only touch on the Jupiter sphere but not enter it completely. Further experience will have to have come about between death and rebirth until human beings will be able to enter fully into the Jupiter sphere and later still the sphere of Saturn.



In order that human beings, though not yet able to enter the Jupiter sphere, may receive, between death and rebirth, something of the forces of Jupiter and also of Saturn, the many planetoids have been scattered between Mars and Jupiter, and these, according to their outer aspect, are still being added to by astronomers. Human beings pass through the spiritual aspect of the region of the planetoids after death because they cannot yet go to Jupiter. These have the characteristic of being, as it were, with regard to the nature of their spiritual inhabitants, colonies of Jupiter and Saturn. Some of the beings of Jupiter and Saturn have gone back to the planetoids. And before human beings are ready for existence on earth they can find in the region of the planetoids a kind of substitute for entering Jupiter and Saturn. At present, therefore, by the time human beings have gone through death and rebirth they have undergone the Mars organization and absorbed those Jupiter and Saturn forces to be acquired in the region of the planetoids. And with the after-effects of this—that we shall be hearing more about—human beings embark on a further earthly life.

How this life between death and a new birth, which I have now described in relation to the world of the stars, can be further characterized we shall hear tomorrow.

Lecture 11

Experiencing the World's Past

29 August 1923

If we look back on the descriptions given yesterday we can become aware that human beings living through the successive times after death—and we have to use the word ‘time’ in relation to physical conditions—come first of all to the realm of the moon beings and then have to pass on from this realm to that of the sun beings. The moon beings still belong from a certain aspect to earthly existence, and the experiences human beings go through under the influence of the moon beings in the soul world are indeed cosmic memories of earthly existence. People experience in a backward direction real experiences of their earthly life, connected though with what I yesterday called the judgements of the cosmos. And these cosmic memories come to them by way of the moon beings. In fact these moon beings bring it about that these judgements flow into us in the same way as minerals, plants and animals bring it about that those judgements we receive on earth flow into us. So we can say: On entering spiritual/cosmic existence after death the first beings we receive impressions of are beings once connected with the earth. They are in fact those beings I have already told you about who were the teachers of humanity in the most ancient of days and who afterwards took refuge in the cosmic fortress of the moon, so that human beings could experience today on their journey through the soul world what they had once experienced directly on earth. We can really speak of them in this way if sufficient consideration is given to what was said in my last lecture. These inhabitants of the moon, under the leadership of the one-time teachers of humankind, judge quite differently from the way things are judged by people on

earth. For people on earth, in their life between birth and death, are only now approaching a stage completed by the moon dwellers in long past ages.

Reckoning by earthly years we must say that the inhabitants of the moon, when on earth, accomplished well over 15,000 years ago what human beings still have to go through. And more than 15,000 years ago the moon population acquired the power of making judgements in which the naturalistic realm and the moral realm come together. We on earth keep our naturalistic judgements separate, and when we give an opinion about the mineral or the animal world we leave morality out of it. We say: 'Nature follows only an amoral necessity.' But this is not true of the world as a whole. Even though we cannot consider animals, plants and minerals as requiring to be judged from a moral point of view, especially if we consider them in their separate forms of existence, yet the very fact of their creation, of their being in the world at all, is entirely the result of cosmic/moral judgement. These moon dwellers already judge in terms of cosmic/ moral judgements. Therefore when we have passed through the gate of death and are in their company we have to hear what the cosmos has to say about what we thought, wished for, felt, willed and did on earth. It is as though our whole earthly life was exposed to the light of cosmic judgement, and we discover the value our deeds have for the whole universe.

Through these experiences we are stimulated to carry further, or correct, or in some way set right during our next life on earth whatever we have done either to help or to hinder the evolution of the world. And so, while we are under the influence of the moon beings, we take up the influence for our future destiny, for our karma, as oriental wisdom has always called it.

The particular spiritual beings of the higher world in whose neighbourhood human beings live while under the influence of the moon dwellers are those grouped together in my Occult Science as the hierarchy of the angels, archangels and archai. Of the ranks of beings whose realm human beings enter after death they are the first who do not have to go through a phase of earthly embodiment. In the other direction they are in close connection with the beings of the higher hierarchies. But it is with this hierarchy of angels, archangels and archai that human beings are essentially concerned during their moon sojourn after death, while the higher hierarchies are still beyond their ken.

The judgements of the angels are especially important where the deeds of individual human beings are concerned, and it is from the angels that we learn

the value of our deeds in the cosmos as a whole. From the archangels we learn more about the value of our actions in so far as we speak this or that language and belong to this or that nation, and from this source also come impulses which work into our further destiny, our karma. And from the archai we learn what value the actions we have performed during a given period on earth will have for the period when we have to descend once more from spiritual heights into earthly existence.

By means of all that human beings can acquire in this way—and I beg you to bear the following in mind—if they have properly prepared themselves for life after death through the impulses they are able to take up on earth, and particularly (as we shall see later) through their attitude towards the great spiritual leaders of humankind, they can then find the way over from the sphere of the moon population to the sphere of the sun population.

The moon population we already know of as those beings who once dwelt on earth and had a connection with it. However, in a very, very much earlier age the sun population too was still connected with the earth, and participated in earthly affairs.

On coming into the realm of the moon population it is quite apparent to human beings that they have come among beings who once dwelt with them on earth. If they then enter the realm of the sun beings, something like a powerful cosmic memory of a primeval age comes over them—an age which in Occult Science you will find described from another point of view. They are taken possession of by something like a memory of an infinitely ancient time when the sun, with its inhabitants, was still one with the earth. After death, therefore, we make our way through the spiritual cosmos by, as it were, growing our way into two spiritual/cosmic lands, where we meet those beings with whom, once upon a time, when we were still quite different earthly beings, we were connected here on earth.

So by going through these experiences between death and rebirth we look back in the present epoch of evolution in huge and mighty memories on the evolution of the Earth in the cosmos. And, whilst here on earth, human beings are essentially going through only a part of human evolution; between death and rebirth they go through part of the whole evolution of the cosmos. Essentially then, the beings who inhabit the sun are such that in much older times they already ascended above the kind of experiences possible for earthly human

beings, and even above those possible for the beings of the moon.

On reaching the realm of the sun beings human beings enter a sphere of the greatest wisdom, where they can live only if on earth they have prepared themselves sufficiently for it.

Now I said yesterday that on passing from the soul world into spirit land or, as we must express it today, from the sphere of the moon beings to the sphere of the sun beings, human beings essentially journey at a slower pace. Whereas the circling of the moon takes about a third of their earthly life, the next revolutions, the Mars, Jupiter and Saturn circles—I mentioned yesterday that this is not carried out entirely—are taken more slowly, twelve times slower than the circling of the moon.

If we now calculate the actual timing, we arrive at the following result. We should actually start from the original plan decreed for human beings by the cosmos. So we can reckon that human beings go through the moon period in a third of the time they have spent on earth. Allowing for the fact that at the beginning of life more time is spent asleep and add this to the time given to sleep in later life, we find that human beings take about 30 years on average to accomplish the first cycle—that of the moon. Each of the following cycles takes twelve times as long, or 360 years for each cycle. If we pursue the path of the human journey further through the cosmos we find that human beings pass through three cycles. They do not reach Saturn, but they should go through these cycles according to the original designation. They then have to go backwards through the three again. Thus they were destined to complete three cycles in an outward direction, one on returning towards their next earthly life, and another three backwards, making six in all. We then have the time it was originally planned that they would take to do this. I shall still have to speak of how different things are for human beings today; but according to the original cosmic decree, the time was 2160 years.

What do these 2160 years signify? You have only to recall that the position of the sun at the vernal equinox shifts a little forward each year in the particular sign of the zodiac it is in. The sun's vernal point is moving on, and in recent centuries it has advanced from the Ram to the Fishes, and in approximately 25,920 years—or close on 26,000 years—the sun will complete the whole circle of the zodiac, and the twelfth part of this is 2160 years. In 2160 years the sun progresses from one sign of the zodiac to the next. It was actually originally

decreed that human beings should return to earth when the sun had moved from one sign of the zodiac to another.

When we consider the inner reasons for this number and compare it with what I said from quite a different point of view in Occult Science,³⁰ those who have read the book will remember that the time taken by the sun to pass from one sign of the zodiac to the next was given there as the original length of the interval between a human being's incarnations. If we look at it from these two sides—in Occult Science I looked at it more from the cosmic point of view, from outside inwards, whereas today we have looked at it more from the point of view of man's inner life—the two numbers are identical. Such things should be noticed, that whereas in spiritual science a correct judgement is made from one point of view and the other correct judgement from quite a different point of view, the two judgements inwardly agree.

Anyone judging spiritual science from the ordinary standpoint of today will quite possibly ask: 'What is there to support this spiritual science of yours? Our natural science rests upon observation and experiment; that is the firm ground from which we start.' But one might just as well say: 'As a human being, when I stand on the earth I am standing on firm ground, and a rock too has solid ground beneath it, like everything else on earth. As for you astronomers—it is really fantastic for you to tell us that the earth is floating freely in celestial space. If you want to be reasonable you should be telling us that the earth, in some way similar to a rock, is resting on firm ground.' That is virtually the same as accusing anthroposophy of having no firm ground to stand on. Naturally people feel silly about saying that the earth ought to rest on firm ground, but they do not see how foolish it is not to realize that spiritual science, which is carried by its own inner resources just as the heavenly bodies move by their own impulses, cannot rest on the ground of experiment and explanation. Were they only to be consistent in their judgements, they would see that in the kind of spiritual science intended here every step is taken with the utmost exactitude, and full accountability is taken for every statement concerning the world and the beings of the world.

Thus after death human beings enter a world which they at first experience in common with souls who, like themselves, have passed through an earthly life and entered the spiritual world through the gate of death. Human beings thus grow familiar with the sphere of disembodied souls and continue with them the kind of relationships they shared with them on earth, now in the form of their

spiritual night-time experiences. But we have also seen how human beings enter into the company of the spiritual beings, the inhabitants of the moon, who dwelt at one time with them on earth, and how afterwards they ascend to the inhabitants of the sun who also, though in times far more remote, inhabited the earth together with human beings. Here, human beings meet first with the beings who constitute the second hierarchy, described in my Occult Science as exusiai, dynamis and kyriotetes. These are the beings with whom they have to work in order that they may be able to manifest, in their next earthly life, the cosmically elaborated karma derived from their earlier lives on earth.

Having passed through the realm of the moon dwellers human beings know—not with earthly thoughts but with cosmic ones—what in a cosmic sense they have done wrong. They realize the worth, for cosmic evolution as a whole, of all they have done, thought and felt. But they cannot prepare their new earthly lives if they only know all this with cosmic thoughts. Therefore in the moon sphere they come to know what they are destined to be in their next earthly incarnation, though the actual preparations for it cannot be made at this stage. For this they have to rise to the sphere of the sun, where live the beings who have no longer to concern themselves with earthly existence but are occupied with the affairs of our whole planetary system.

So a human being's experience of the cosmos embraces two spiritual regions together with the spiritual beings dwelling in them. It embraces the soul world of the moon dwellers and the more comprehensive population of spirit land, of the sun region. Whereas the moon dwellers, because they were connected with the earth comparatively—that is, from a cosmic point of view comparatively—not so long ago, have had interests in common with earthly human beings, and while the moon in a sense is only a cosmic colony that is there to devote itself to earth affairs, the sun sphere, whose inhabitants live under the leadership of the exusiai, dynamis and kyriotetes, is a cosmic whole that is concerned with the affairs of the entire planetary system (Mars, Saturn and Jupiter as well as Venus and so on, together with the earth and the moon).

On coming into the whole region of the sun, where our interests are substantially extended, we are able to work with the exusiai, dynamis and kyriotetes on preparing the spirit germ of a physical body that can then be born for us by human parents. Never could parents ever produce a physical body suitable for us were it not prepared during long periods through work carried out in cooperation with the greatest, most sublime spiritual beings in the spiritual cosmos. Our

essential work there—an achievement far greater and more comprehensive than anything achieved during our little life on earth—is to concern ourselves, together with beings of a higher degree, with all that takes place among these beings as spiritual events (just as here there are natural events), with all that takes place in them as art of the spirit (just as here we have the art of nature). All this finally enables us to bring together what has thus been worked upon into a great spiritual, archetypal picture, which is the spirit-germ, as it were the foreshadowing, of what will later be born on earth as our physical body.

When human beings, having completed the three cycles, start on the return journey, their interest in earthly affairs revives. Then—still many years before birth—they look down on the successive generations in earthly evolution at the end of which will come their father and their mother. As soon as they make this complete change of direction in the cosmos they begin to focus their attention upon the earth. They see many preceding generations of their ancestry, one after another, until centuries later their parents are born. To them they can send down the potent, richly endowed spirit-germ, diminished in size, of their future physical body, so that this spirit-germ can be united with the physical embryo in the body of the mother.

This spirit-germ is at first as huge and majestic as the cosmos itself and, watching the generations through which their parents descend, and while from the spiritual world they are actively concerned with this sequence of generations, the germ becomes smaller and smaller, until at last it arrives back in the Mars sphere, the actual sphere of the sun, and then, passing quickly through the moon sphere, it descends to the next life on earth.

Some time before human beings descend as beings of soul they send down in advance the spirit-germ, so that what they have prepared for their physical body enters the physical world before they do. Having so to speak completed their work for the new earthly life they are able to enter into a different relation to the cosmos, and are now able to relate to the whole cosmic ether. And, as the final act in their descent, they draw from the spiritual world, out of the whole world ether, the forces from which they form their etheric body.

After human beings have already sent down the spirit-germ for their physical body—that is, when the spirit-germ has at last been sent down to the parents at the end of its long journey from the spiritual world—they themselves still stay a while in the spiritual world gathering ether around themselves, so that for a short

time they become beings of ego, astral body and ether, the ether having been drawn together from the world ether. It is not until after conception, during the third or fourth week of the embryonic period, that human beings unite themselves with the organism that has been formed by the combination of spirit-germ with the physical germ, and endow it with the ether body. The human being then becomes a being composed of the spirit-germ of the physical body, an etheric body drawn together in the last moments of cosmic existence, and the astral body and ego, which have gone through the life between death and rebirth. This is how human beings, after their many purely spiritual experiences, descend to a new existence in the physical world.

From what has been said, it will occur to you that while living our way through the world we are in between death and a new birth our experiences are a memory of past ages of Earth evolution, of what we could call evolution of the world all. These world memories human beings live their way through, though memories also become their deeds—for they do something with their memories in cooperation with the higher beings of whom I have already spoken and will speak further. What they carry out, actively remembering and remembering through being active, gives a significant perspective into the past of the earth and of the world all. The experiences they go through while in connection with the inhabitants of the moon conjure up in their souls a time during which they passed through earlier lives on earth in a similar relation to them as now. They survey a series of earthly lives resembling those they are experiencing at present. They then look further back to a time when, on the earth itself, they were more closely connected with the present moon dwellers, to a time from which they are separated by what geologists call the Ice Age. They look back to a form of earth evolution you will find described in my books³¹ as the Atlantean Age. And they see even further back to what you will find described as the Lemurian Age, when they related quite differently to the earth. They were not yet so closely bound to the earth that they trod it with their feet; they lived more as etheric beings in the earth's surroundings, in its atmosphere. They could do this because at that time the atmosphere consisted mainly of water that has by now been deposited as seas and continents; and there were other substances in it, too, which have today become solid earth. This Lemurian Age, in which human beings lived more in the earth's circumference, corresponds to what natural scientists call the oldest period of the earth.

Then, however, we look back to an age when human beings were still united with the sun beings before in the course of cosmic evolution the sun separated

from the earth. This does not mean looking back to an age when, as described in Occult Science, the earth itself went through its Sun period, but to the recapitulation in earthly existence of that cosmic age. But this knowledge, when supplemented by what human beings are able to experience between death and a new birth, becomes, in a way, cosmological knowledge. Past stages of Earth evolution reappear, in conjunction with the results of repeated stages of earth existence, in the form of human deeds they have achieved together with higher beings. The earth's past, in its relation to the whole planetary system—the sun, moon and all the planets dependent on them—reappear in human deeds. And out of this, human beings form the part of the future for which they are responsible—their next earthly life. At the same time, however, they are involved in the preparation of the whole area of the future being prepared for the world: the Jupiter, Venus and Vulcan evolutions towards which earth evolution is progressing.

If we look deeply into such matters we can understand what a portion of the cosmic evolution of the earth was like in ancient times. We actually look back into an age when the moon dwellers of today provided the teachers of humankind. Then, together with these latest great teachers they withdrew into the cosmic stronghold of the moon.

Over and over again, however, human beings were born on earth with the capacity in their whole karmic life to remain in close connection with the experiences of the moon dwellers. Born again and again in the course of world evolution they appeared as ambassadors of the great community of the moon dwellers to those human beings who peopled the earth in the first, second and third post-Atlantean cultural periods, and they founded in the Orient a lofty civilization. These ambassadors from the moon were called Bodhisattvas. They were earthly human beings, but in them lived on the spiritual teaching that came directly from the moon teachers.

Now again and again there come times in the cosmos when, because they are more closely connected with the sun dwellers than with earth dwellers, the moon dwellers develop a particularly close relation with these sun dwellers, so that indirectly, through the moon ambassadors—called in the East Bodhisattvas—the wisdom of the sun was able to reach human beings on earth at the time of the more ancient oriental civilizations. Then, however, because of the progress made in earthly evolution it then became no longer possible for earthly civilization to be as it were nourished any longer solely by the beings of the moon. The whole

evolution of the earth would have had to take a course different from the one prescribed by cosmic wisdom if only the moon ambassadors had continued to figure in it. For this reason there came about the great, momentous event we call the Mystery of Golgotha. Whereas in more ancient times it was the moon ambassadors who, in a certain way, brought the sun wisdom to earth, it was the leading Sun Being, the foremost one in the ranks of the sun spirits, who came down to earth through the Mystery of Golgotha and became embodied in the man Jesus. This brought about quite different conditions for earth evolution. Christ Jesus, as an impulse into earth evolution itself, brought what had been sun wisdom. And the further course of earth evolution has now to proceed under the influence of Christ Jesus.

At the time of the Mystery of Golgotha there was still so much moon wisdom spread over the earth that in the form of gnosis, Pistis Sophia,³² which is of course the old moon wisdom, people would understand the significance of the Christ. Gnosis was essentially an endeavour to grasp the Christ in his whole spiritual nature. But gnosis was entirely exterminated. In the phase of evolution that led to a temporary lack of understanding of the Mystery of Golgotha, the first act was the extermination of gnosis—down almost to the very writings of its opponents.

Now imagine that nothing was left of our present anthroposophy except what its opponents have written about it, and this will give you some idea of what people know of gnosis from external sources. Their knowledge is limited to the opinion of its opponents, and perhaps to some acquaintance with the Pistis Sophia and so on, which they don't understand. That is all they know of the gnosis that actually was a gift of the moon from the past to the people of the first centuries of Christianity, particularly of the first four centuries, for after that it was no longer understood. It was in fact what could be said out of the old moon wisdom, out of the moon logos to the sun logos, who has come to earth—to the Christ. Anyone aware of this can really understand the gnosis, which has been so greatly misjudged, and of which such strange things are said today.

It is not possible, however, for matters to stay like this, for earth evolution must go on. We have to progress from the old moon wisdom to a new sun wisdom, and we have to learn about it directly. Tomorrow I shall be telling you about how the moon wisdom—after it had virtually come to a kind of conclusion—still spoke to human beings through a form of yoga breathing, by their making a change in their breathing process, by means of which they could reach the old

moon wisdom. However, this yoga cult is no longer suitable for western people; they must attain directly to Imagination. And this is the next step for civilization in general, to work towards Imagination.

But there are various obstacles to this. And this means that the evolution of human civilization can only continue in an upward direction if humankind once more takes on board a spiritual impulse. This depends on personal destinies. On all the occasions when Bodhisattvas made their appearance they never, on the whole, found human beings hostile. These ancient times may often appear to us outwardly as gruesome and terrible, but it was always possible to meet with good will when impulses were brought from the spiritual world. The Bodhisattvas all the same found human beings ready to receive the old moon logos—the reflection of the sun logos. But it will never again be possible to speak to humankind in the old way.

The old moon wisdom, the old moon logos, however, cannot cease—like everything else it has to progress. Only it will have to be taken up by the language of the sun which, having lost its last legacy in the cosmos, must be rediscovered. But it will be impossible to speak to people in the actual language of the sun until they bring good will to meet it. Until they do so they will wait in vain for the coming of a successor to the Bodhisattvas of old, for this depends on whether human beings welcome him with understanding or not.

Today there is a deep rift between the peoples of the East and the West. And those who do not go deeply enough into these matters cannot see how East and West are divided, and that the peoples of the East are waiting for a new Bodhisattva to bring them in his own way something of which the peoples of the West have only the vaguest idea. The naturalistic struggles of today have not yet been sufficiently overcome throughout the world by the universal consciousness that must come essentially from the Christ impulse. But human beings will never discover how to rise to this common humanity, this genuinely Christian impulse, and therefore never be able to understand what a possible Bodhisattva would be able to tell them until they have developed enough spiritual longing in them, enough to create a bridge for a worldwide understanding between East and West.

I am touching here on a theme we must go further into tomorrow—a theme that will show that today it is not as though people were waiting expectantly for the coming of the Bodhisattva, but that the Bodhisattva has to wait until humankind is ready to understand the words he will use, for human beings have now entered

the epoch of freedom.

This entry into the epoch of freedom in relation to our present theme will be our subject for tomorrow. But all that humankind has to go through really to rise to finding the inner impulse to enter the spiritual world is linked to various apparently insignificant systems and symptoms belonging to the culture of our present civilization.

Forgive me for combining important matters, such as I have just been discussing, with trivial concerns, but trivial symptoms can throw light on the big things. A few days ago I said that in this region, where imaginations take so firm a hold on the spirit, we get the disturbance of motor cars. I am not speaking against cars, for in anthroposophy we cannot express reactionary views. I am passionately fond of travelling by car when necessary, for we must not try to turn the clock back. What we have to do is to balance what is one-sided by introducing the opposite. There is no harm in motoring provided we take it, and everything of its kind, with a heart attuned to the spiritual world. Then, even when other things follow motor cars, we shall be able to press on through our own strength and freedom, for freedom has to come, and it must lead us back to the Bodhisattva.

Where the kind of things are concerned that do us good service mechanically human beings will find the means to stand up to them. And we can be assured that human beings will find a way to cope with everything that appears in the nature of cars, typewriters, and so on.

With gramophones, however, it is different—and please forgive me for concluding on such an apparently trivial note. With their gramophones human beings are forcing art down to the level of mechanics. If people were to develop a passion for such things, which is really a mechanizing of what comes down to us as a reflection of the spiritual, if they were to become enthusiastic over the kind of thing represented by gramophones, then they would not be able to find the strength to stand up to it by themselves. In that case the gods would have to help them.

Now the gods are merciful, and today we certainly have the hope with regard to the way human civilization is heading that the merciful gods themselves will continue to come to our rescue where errors of taste such as the gramophone are concerned.

Lecture 12

Evolution of the World in Connection with Human Evolution

30 August 1923

In the course of our observations about the world and about the human being we have seen how human beings bear within them—even if only in picture form—the world's past, and that it is possible for them, through gradual training, to raise these pictures up into consciousness. In our ordinary daytime consciousness there is nothing of all this but only memories of our experiences during earthly life. When, however, human beings apply their ordinary consciousness to following the path I have indicated, then, as their spiritual consciousness grows clearer and clearer, more and more of the past evolution of worlds arises within them. And we have found that the world past has to be experienced again between death and a new birth.

We can therefore say: When things that are not perceptible to the senses become so for Imagination human beings look back beyond the memories of this current life. They look back on everything that has gone to shape them, on the forces of growth and nourishment that have formed them from within—all of which proceed from the spirit.

And further, in Inspiration, human beings look into pre-earthly existence, but not only into their own. We have already seen human beings reaching out beyond the cosmic island of the earth to the great cosmic ocean in which the stars are embedded, and they find that the stars then become for them the dwelling places

of spiritual beings.

And then, when Intuition arises, human beings gaze back into past lives of theirs on earth. At the same time as this happens, however, the whole past life of the world comes into the range of their vision. They are, in actual fact, born out of the whole world, and this whole world lives in their physical, etheric and astral bodies, and—during earth existence—least of all as yet in their ego. But all this is contained in human beings, working actively within them. As human beings we bear within us the whole past evolution of the world upon which countless generations of divine spirits have worked. We bear the divine work in the construction of our organs, and in the forces working actively upon them; we bear it within us when these forces show themselves as emotions and thoughts. We bear within us the workings of the whole of world evolution, in so far as this belongs to the past.

Then after we have, at least in thought, sharpened our vision for the past, we look out into the world surrounding us here on earth. We see with ordinary consciousness only as much as our senses offer and our intellect can make of our sense observations. But this is basically the very least of it. Behind the realm of the senses there is of course the vast realm of the spirit—the very spirit that is active in all the colours in nature, in all nature's sounds, in everything we experience as warmth and cold, in every aspect of natural phenomena that can affect us as human beings.

Besides natural existence, which we can see with our physical senses, this natural existence has a hidden spiritual existence, and this particular environment, of which we so to speak see merely the surface with our sense perception, carries even now in its womb the future evolution of humankind. Just as we bear within us in mighty pictures the entire past, and are ourselves the outcome of these pictures, so in the hidden part of nature there is actively at work that which, in its further unfolding as world evolution, will bring us our future. We can, then, set before us these profound statements: Man bears within him the world's past, and the outer world is the bearer of man's future.

These are the two fundamental principles upon which world evolution and human evolution are founded. And indeed this comes to expression even in individual human life. There is a tremendous difference between all that has to do with our head organization and what has more to do with the rest of our body. To put it rather crudely, one might say: Forces work upwards from the heart

towards the head organization bringing about the particular configuration of the head with its covering of hard skull. This is filled with the most wonderful construction in all the world—the convolutions and involutions of the human brain in which the senses are embedded.

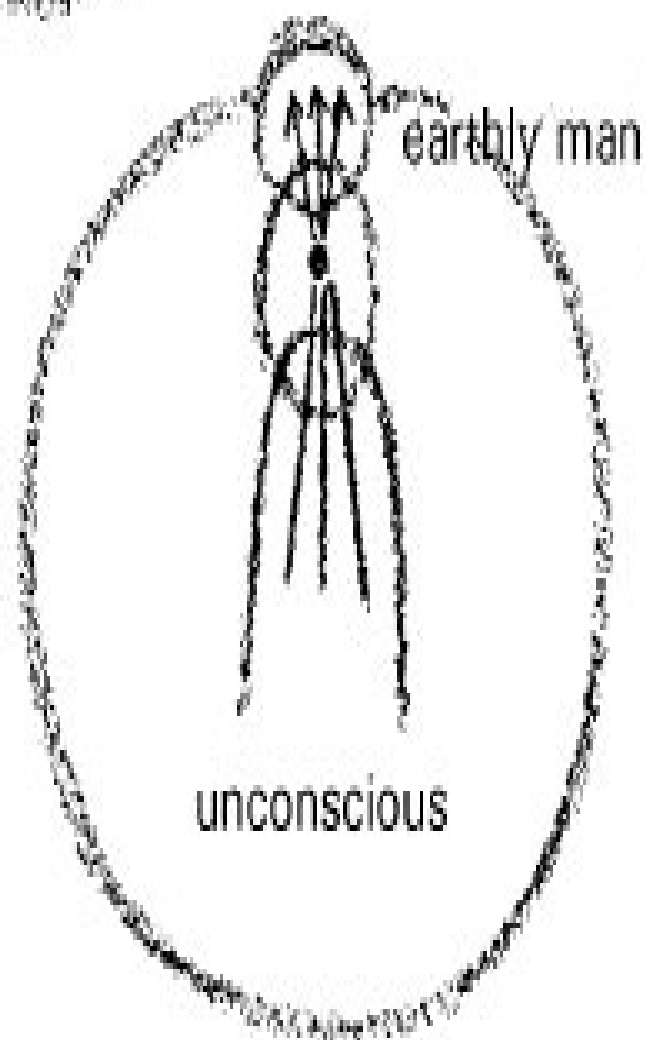
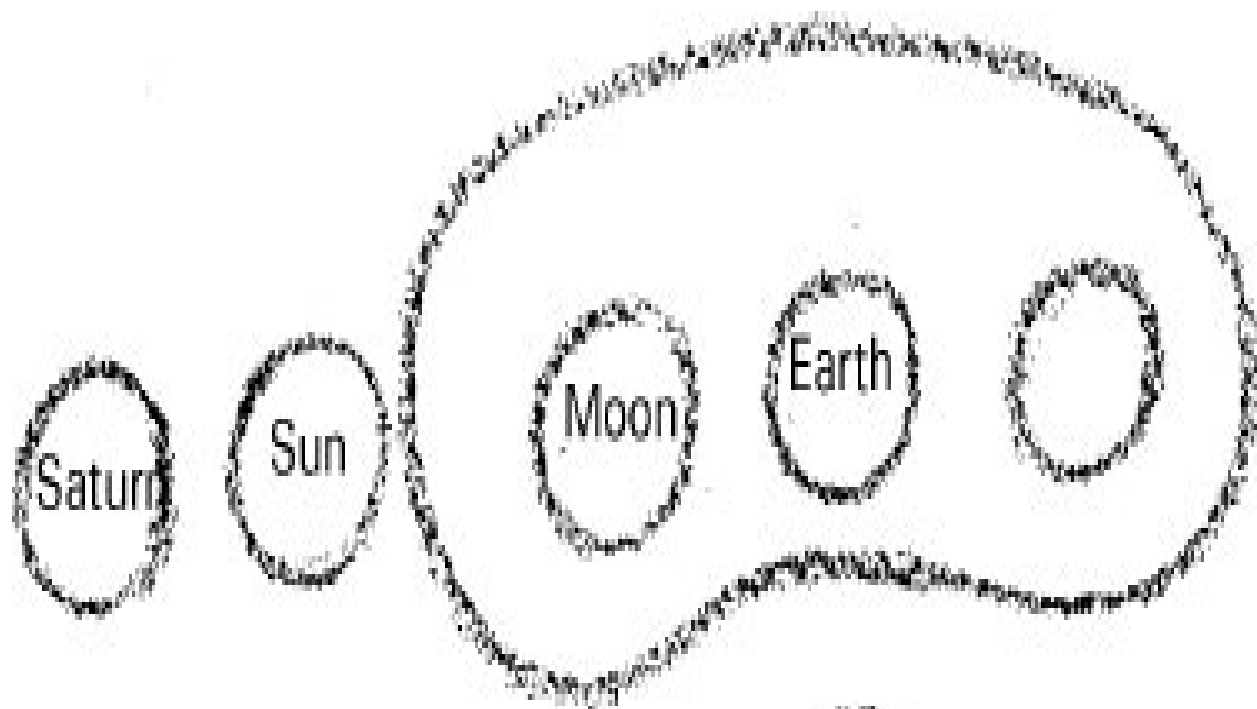
Everything living in these forces, all that rays upwards to the head from the chest and heart is an outcome of the past. This could become what it now is in human beings only because—as we said—innumerable generations of divine spirits have worked upon it throughout the metamorphoses of planetary bodies. In my Occult Science I have pointed to the fact that the Saturn evolution, Sun evolution and Moon evolution preceded the Earth evolution in which we are now living, and which began with a recapitulation of the Saturn, Sun and Moon evolutions. We are now somewhat past the middle of the actual Earth evolution in the evolution of humankind on earth.

All these forces, which throughout long ages have been gradually developing under the influence of generations of divine spirits, live in man's own physical body and ray up from the heart to the head. What you carry all the time in your physical, etheric, astral and ego, and which rays up from the middle part of your being to your head system, has been prepared and worked upon by generations of gods throughout immeasurable periods of time. And the most recent element living in these forces that are raying upwards (though people today are still unconscious of it) is that which expresses itself as their karma—their own ego's past during their life on earth.

We can put it this way. If we penetrate into these forces of cosmic memory, the first thing we come to is karma, then to the various stages of Earth evolution, and after that to the planetary transformations that the Earth went through before becoming the actual earth. For before the Earth could arise there had to be the kind of cosmic body that Saturn was, consisting only of tenuous warmth. Saturn then had to die so as to arise again in a new existence as Sun, of which the sun that we see outside in cosmic space is the residue. The Sun was a cosmic body consisting solely of air, and this again had to die so that a cosmic body consisting of a more watery substance—the Moon—could arise. This in turn had to die so that the firm mineral substance of the earth could arise and we could begin to develop as the kind of earthly beings we are today.

But just as we have these upward-striving forces, we also have in us forces that strive downwards, which have a certain central point in the heart through which

the blood circulation carries both these forces into the movements of our limbs.



These forces are active in every movement of our hands, when we take hold of anything or carry out any ordinary earthly activity; and they live in every step we take, when we go about our daily business. Now these forces belong to the hidden environment. These do not belong to the past now, but to the hidden environment. These will only be taken up into the womb of the past—which will become the past only in the future—when human beings go through the gate of death and exchange their earthly existence for life among the stars. These are the forces in which our human future is being prepared. And this future comes about through the interplay of these forces with the forces concealed in external nature. Thus the world bears man's future within its own evolution.

There is a sharp distinction in us between the upper forces and the lower ones. The knowledge that can be acquired after passing the Guardian of the Threshold brings out this distinction strongly.

For ordinary consciousness everything below the heart remains unconscious. This does not mean that it is any less fully imbued with consciousness, but that this is a consciousness beyond our normal reach today. Therefore what people experience inwardly differs from the content of their consciousness. They are conscious only of what is on the surface, rising like an island out of their other experiences.

If we are able to see further, we can see that human beings today are still endowed with these subconscious forces. We can then see people doing one or another deed, which at that particular moment causes them pleasure, satisfaction. They are satisfied in their heads. They may for some reason have done a thoroughly bad thing, but their heads are satisfied, and the implications of their action evade their ordinary consciousness. But although their heads may be extremely satisfied, the hands that carry out the action are subconsciously affected by it—and the subconscious is another form of consciousness—and their hands tremble. Even if this trembling may be outwardly imperceptible, in the etheric and astral bodies it becomes an actual shaking. So we can see inwardly that people may be satisfied in their heads with a deed they have done, but that this satisfaction becomes subconsciously a trembling either in the astral/etheric organs connected with their arms or in those connected with their legs. The consciousness that brings satisfaction to the head dies away, so to speak, but another consciousness arises in the lower part of the human being, in

the organs that tremble at the deed.

In this trembling future karma is being prepared. For this trembling is in face of the forces concealed in nature, forces of the hidden world. This trembling presages the judgement that will be passed upon human beings by the beings of the stars when, from this little island of the earth they go out into the great starry ocean.

To sum up: Within human beings both the world's past and the world's future are living, but in different ways. Both of these live even in the outer form of our physical body. People's heads, which are the most wonderful, most perfect product of world evolution, break up for the most part, even with regard to their soul/spiritual content, when they pass through the gate of death. On the other hand their lower organization, even when looked at merely physically, is seen to be a physical picture of that which lives as soul and spirit in people's arms, hands, and in their whole limb and metabolic system. Through this whole system, through all you can see as flesh and blood, forces are flowing, and behind many of these bodily members such as you can see as flesh and blood shaped into arms and hands of a physical nature, spiritual forces are living. These spiritual forces are streaming right now through your arms and through your legs. In a future earth life they will flow through the organs that bring about the movement in the extension to the rear of the upper and lower jaws. The bones of the head in their flexible construction will then be the transformed bones of arms and legs—naturally I mean the spiritual part of these, for the physical part falls away. What are now your arms and legs will become in your next incarnation—where their forces, their dynamics are concerned—the configuration of your head. So that even the physical organization presents an image of how a person has gone through earthly life. Anyone who studies in the right way the artistic structuring of people's heads in their present life can see in the very form of their heads the shaping power they have acquired through the use of their arms and hands in their dealings with other people and the earthly world during their previous incarnation. For what you do with your arms and legs in one earthly life comes to life in the formation of the head in the next life. Ordinary phrenology is being unprofessional when it gives intellectual interpretations of the forming of the head. For behind this is a deep occult phrenology which is individual in each case, and therefore cannot be learnt in the form of general rules—a phrenology that is able to discern from intuitions how the formation of people's heads has been prepared as the outcome of where they have taken themselves to and what they have done in a previous incarnation.

This is how past and future are connected in world and in human evolution.

This is the way we see present-day human beings, and how they see themselves, and in what they have become we are seeing the work of generations of divine/spiritual beings who have been active over infinite periods of time.

Naturally we can only give indications of how the images people give of themselves show all that the generations of gods have done for them through the metamorphoses of Earth evolution—Saturn, Sun and Moon—with regard to their form and their whole life.

Let us first pick out three particularly significant impulses in the earthly life of human beings. If we look only with our ordinary consciousness at the wonders revealed in the progressive development of human beings from the first days of their life then, if we have an eye for it, we can at least acquire some idea, some feeling for the tremendous depths out of which the soul and spirit struggle during those first days and weeks in order to give an increasingly defined form to much that in the infant is still formless and then gradually to bring under control the chaotic movements of arms and legs. We come to feel that we are being shown how a spiritual activity present in the endless depths of the hidden life of nature is expressing itself in the human body. We can say that there is nothing so wonderful on earth to watch as the unfolding of the inner human being within the outer, during the development of a child in the very first years of its life. If we know how to watch this with true artistic/religious insight, then all that can be seen there, and the humility we can feel in face of this manifestation of the spiritual, surpass all other artistic, scientific or religious impressions that can be received from the outer world.

Now let us single out three things in the development of a child. In ordinary life we say that children learn to walk. This is indeed something wonderful. In this learning to walk an extraordinary amount of movement is involved. All the limbs are called into play when, in order to stand erect, children raise themselves out of the position where their spine is parallel with the earth's surface. We take this for granted as something obvious, but it marks the moment in a child's life when it is learning to give all its forces a different orientation on earth, and with the help of the symmetry of those forces and its own inner balance it is learning to establish itself within the cosmos as a whole. At the same time we are really watching a human being growing beyond the animal world. For this is a moment that an animal can never experience. It remains essentially with its spine parallel to the earth; for if it pulls itself upright, as the ape does, this is contrary to its

natural organization.

If we are to form a true conception of a human being, we must be able to see in the right light this learning to walk. Scientists have compared the bones of human beings with those of an animal and have found that human bones are transformed animal bones, and human muscles are transformed animal muscles, and the same with all the other organs. This may be so, but it is still not the way to find the difference between man and animal. The difference can be seen only when we grasp what is happening when human beings raise themselves above the animal nature that clung to them at the beginning of life and find their balance within the whole world's state of equilibrium. Human beings would never have been able to do this had the ability not been prepared in the remotest times; this was already potentially there in the Saturn evolution. [During the following explanations a diagram was put on the board.] Divine spirits laid down during Saturn the seed of the skill that comes to light when the child learns, as we say, to walk. There were no animals then, for they came later, during the Sun evolution. So human beings, according to the plan laid down for them, are older than the animals. Everything contained in these invisible forces that enables human beings to walk points back to what they bring with them from Saturn.

The second thing that happens in children is that the forces to do with their orientation in space press inwards and appear in a different way. When I pick up a piece of chalk a force goes outwards, but a counter-force goes inwards, discharging itself in the inner organs. This inward-directed force, coming through the limbs from the orientation in movement, manifests in children's development when they learn to speak. This is the second thing the child learns: speaking. Firstly, the forces take an outward direction and the child finds its bearings in space, then the same forces move inwards and the child learns to speak.

Natural science knows only a small part of this. It knows that right-handed people have their speech centre in the left half of their brain, and left-handed people have it in the right half. Everything in the brain that has to do with the development of speech, however, is first worked into it by the limbs when children learn to walk, reach out, move about, and turn their attention to objects. These are the forces that stream inwards and which then pass from the brain into the organs of speech. Here again, divine/spiritual beings have been preparing the human organization through countless ages so that it can lead to speech. That human beings can learn to speak is because the divine/spiritual beings that have

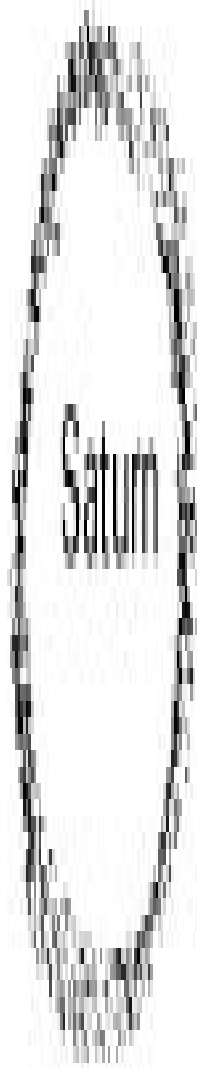
been preparing human beings since the Saturn evolution to be able to walk then worked during the Sun evolution to create in them the ability to speak.

And the third capacity, which the child now develops out of speech, and which humankind too developed out of speech—for in Earth evolution itself humankind first learnt to speak and then to think—was the capacity to have thoughts. The divine/spiritual beings have been preparing the ability for thought since the Moon evolution. This is how human evolution took its course in past ages; generations of divine spirits have been preparing human beings for walking, speaking and thinking, through Saturn evolution, Sun evolution and Moon evolution.

The animals appeared in world evolution during the Sun age, but of course in a form different from that of today. They now have to feed on plants, which at that time they had no need to do, for then they were creatures of the air and consisted of airy substance. It was during the Moon evolution that the plants were added.

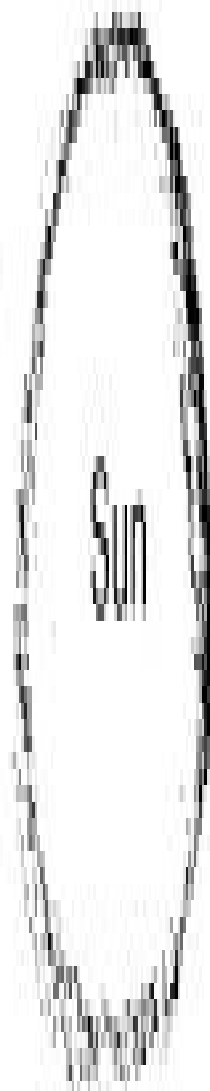
Then evolution passed over to Earth existence, when human beings first developed a bodily form in which the forces of walking, speaking and thinking could visibly dwell. Together with the human gestalt the mineral kingdom made its appearance and became integrated into human beings. This characterizes man's past.

movement



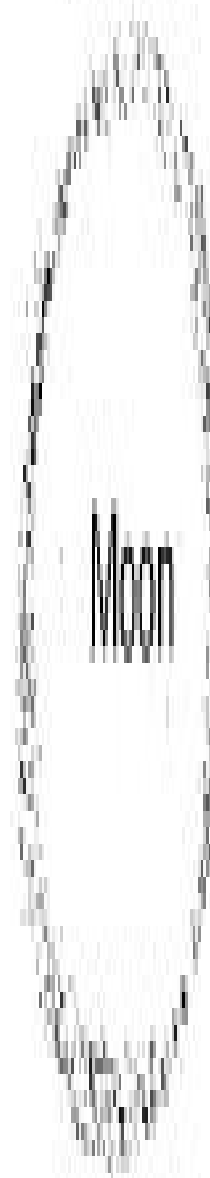
human being

speech



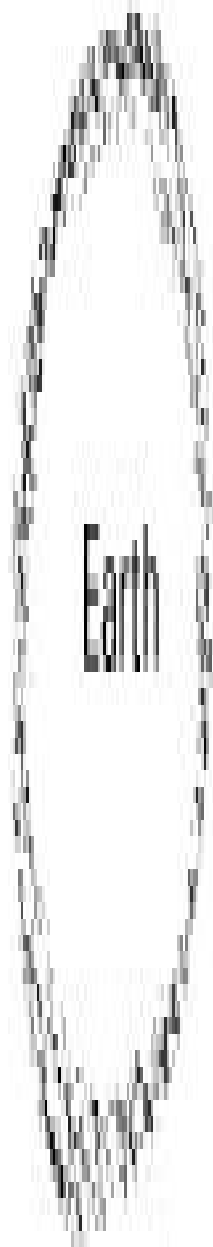
animal

thought



plant

form

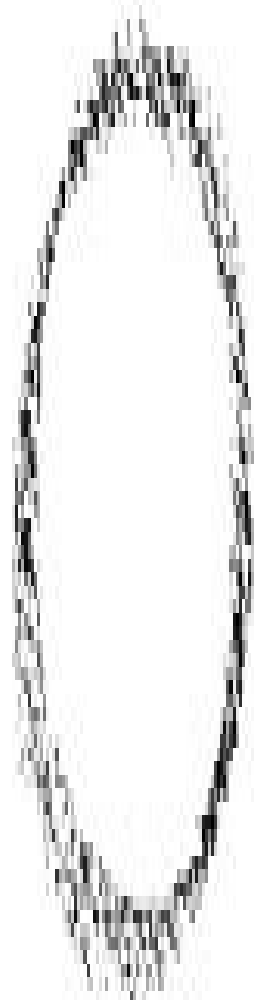


mineral

If we want to look at the future of man then, in the light of present-day earthly conditions, we must start from old age, which means describing something that is not at all apparent today in the ageing process. When a child begins to walk, speak and think, all this is clearly visible because it is expressed outwardly, but how the spiritual part of a person is intensified in old age is far from evident to anyone without spiritual vision. I spoke of the most wonderful experience of watching the gradual manifestation of soul and spirit in the growing body of a young child, and of how, if we look at it in the right way, we can be overwhelmed by the deepest religious feeling in face of this profoundest of arts. But it is also wonderful to see how all that human beings have experienced in their whole being during their lifetime through their walking, speaking and thinking gradually disappears into the spiritual again in order to go through the gate of death, how their thoughts, their words, and everything they have worked and struggled for with their hands disappears into the spiritual as they take the spiritual forces that they received from thinking, speaking and walking back again into spiritual life through the gate of death. And just as that which comes to expression in the child's walking, speaking and thinking points us back to previous stages in the Earth's evolution, to the evolution of Moon, of Sun and of Saturn, so does all that human beings have experienced in their thoughts point us first of all to their next earthly incarnation, and from there to the great stretches of future evolution.

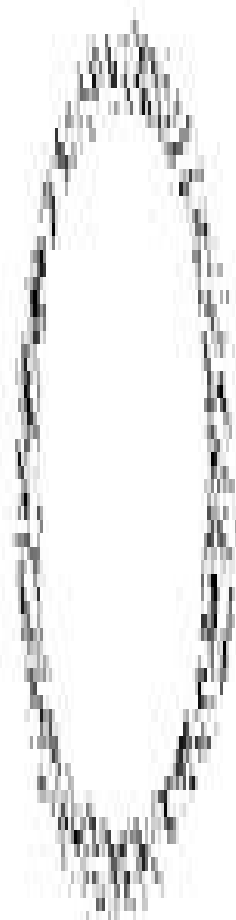
So it is that the thoughts of human beings point towards the Jupiter stage in the evolution of the world and of man—a stage that can be reached only when the earth has died and arisen again to a new planetary existence. Thoughts will not then live in us in their present fluctuating way but will have a form themselves. And formed thoughts will appear in the very form of man.

Jupiter



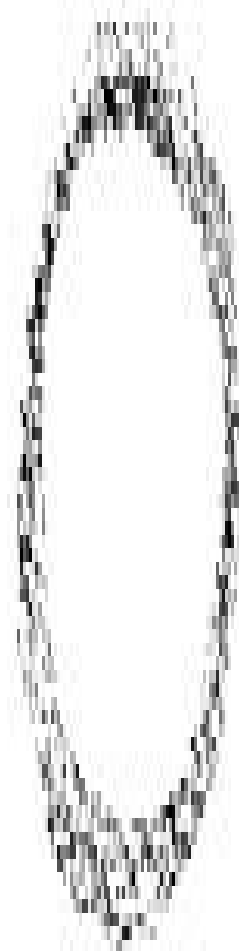
formed
thought

Venus



creative
speech

Vulcan



realized
human activity

Today we are able to keep our thoughts to ourselves, and our faces can possibly look perfectly innocent, although we are guilty inside. We shall not be able to do this during Jupiter existence. People's thoughts will engender the expression on their faces. For the human form will have lost its mineralized solidity and will be mobile in itself, consisting of a quite soft substance. An untrue thought rising up in us will instantly show itself to other people through a change in our expression. Everything of the nature of thought will at once take shape, and people's long-lasting thoughts, their temperament, will show in their usual appearance. It will be immediately recognizable during the Jupiter existence if people are villains, or if their instincts are solely animal-like. This is the first stage of man's future.

The second stage will exemplify the creative power of speech. Today's speech is something that, arising inside, is sent out solely through the medium of air. In the future it will become creative; the spoken word will not fade away in the air but will continue to exist, and with it human beings will create actual forms. Whereas from the Jupiter age onwards human beings will be given their form by their thoughts, in the Venus existence they will give form to the world around them. If during the Venus age—when all substance will be as fine as air—they utter an evil word, a kind of repulsive plant form will come into being. Human beings will now be surrounded by the creations of their own speech. During the Venus existence creative feelings will arise, creative speech, and the feelings that create through the word.

During the last metamorphosis of the earth, the Vulcan existence, the forces expressed in our walking and the movements of our arms will develop further. Today we take ourselves to our place of work and use our arms to carry out actions, but nothing of that is lasting. I go to some place, and I have something or other to do. It may of course be something quite complicated—possibly even the waging of war. Then we go away again, and in the outer world none of our actions remain. During the Vulcan existence everything will remain. Human beings will not simply go about and perform actions, but everything they do will leave its imprint in the Vulcan existence. Their deeds will be actualized, will become realities.

You see what a radical incision Earth existence makes between past and future in the evolution of the world and of man. Everything up to the time of Earth was

brought about by generations of divine/spiritual beings; that which is to follow will be brought about by human beings themselves. This is how freedom enters our lives within the cosmos. We are placed into the world by the gods and given our independent existence. From the gods we have acquired the capacity to walk, speak and think, and they have even given us our form. But for the future evolution of the world we shall have to bring into this walking, speaking and thinking what we ourselves are. And now we are about to live our way out of the past into the future. Part of the past, it is true, lies in our karma, and part of the future lies in what we shall want to do for our own karma in the future. At present we are so to speak going through an apprenticeship between past and future.

This means that things cannot work out in exact conformity with the originally intended plan I referred to yesterday. I spoke of 2160 years having to pass between two incarnations. But during their earthly lives human beings are far from absorbing all that they could absorb; therefore for many people today the interval between death and a new birth has in reality completely changed and it is no longer 2160 years for anybody, but considerably shorter.

People who abandon themselves entirely to earthly life, those with certain criminal tendencies, are very poorly equipped for sailing out into the ocean of starry existence, and after a short time between death and rebirth they very soon return to earthly life. Others need a longer time in which to polish and perfect the soul/spiritual qualities they have acquired during earth life. So one can say that those with animal tendencies, who easily succumb to their instincts and passions, soon come back to earth, while those who go through a normal spiritual development take longer to return. But there may also be human beings who, through a deeper insight during earthly life into the way things are going at the present time, are able to arouse in themselves a self-sacrificing wish to return as soon as possible in order to contribute to the future course of earthly affairs. For human beings who have filled their spirit with love during their lives can make the three to six transits through Mars, Jupiter and Saturn more quickly. When people with lower instincts pass through death they recoil at the revolutions and do not complete them; they are particularly repelled by the region of the planetoids. Tomorrow I shall be speaking of how human beings today, by submitting themselves to certain influences in the world, are enabled to enter into all kinds of circles—in their personal life, in national life, and so on. Those who enter in the right way the region of the planetoids will, today, spend seven or eight hundred years between one earthly life and the next. That is normal for

people who are not of an actually degraded nature. But through a deeper insight into things and through love of the spiritual world, life between death and a new birth can be consciously shortened. So particularly those kinds of people who gain a great deal from life on earth can return comparatively quickly, so that they can make their best contribution to the transforming of earthly civilization and culture.

I have had to take you in thought away from the earthly world into the world of the stars and their inhabitants so that, in a way suited to the present, your attention may be directed away from the world in which human beings are generally engrossed to a world they have to enter by way of deeper knowledge, if they want to experience their future properly. Today, people in general are little inclined to detach themselves from the claims of the material world and to begin already to seek the spiritual in the physical world of our immediate surroundings. We have no time now to look at the obstacles met with when, for example, in psychoanalysis—to which I shall be referring tomorrow—attempts are made to investigate at least the spiritual part of human beings. It is, however, precisely from direct observation of the sense-perceptible that those who want to work entirely within the field of present-day science will find the right way, if they really endeavour to discover the spiritual dimension there. This can be done. And definite proof of this is to be found in the booklet just issued by our Institute of Physiology and Biology in Stuttgart. Here, Frau Dr Kolisko³³ tells us the results of a fine piece of research entitled ‘Physiological and Physical Proof of the Efficacy of the smallest Entities’.³⁴ You know that homoeopathy works with highly diluted substances. By this means, by bringing physical substance into a highly diluted form and working with the efficacy of high potencies, they find access to the spiritual dimension. Frau Dr Kolisko has now succeeded in proving, exactly, that the smallest entities, the highest dilutions, are effective. She has been working most conscientiously for a long time on the lines I have indicated, and she has now succeeded in producing dilutions in the proportion of 1:1 trillion.

If any substance is completely dissolved in a glass of water half of which is then thrown out and replaced by water, we get a dilution of 1:2. When half this is again thrown out and replaced by water we get 1:4, and so on. Now in our Biological Institute in Stuttgart a way has been found by means of exact scientific methods to produce precise solutions of 1:1 trillion—thus arriving at the so-called higher potencies. And results can be seen in the case of, let us say, antimony, about which I also spoke in the medical lecture given during our days

here.³⁵ We find that plant growth, for example the growth of a wheat grain, is reduced to its slowest rate at about the twenty-first potency, and brought to its fastest rate at about the twenty-ninth or thirtieth potency. So, you see, if a substance has been diluted in fluid to a high potency we find that the lower potencies have a different effect upon plant growth, while the highest potencies accelerate growth, meaning that they give the greatest stimulus to the life force. By doing this, success was had in breaking down the purely material substance so that the astral/spiritual activity could appear. For if you split material substance into atoms as atomic scientists do, but in a way that brings out the activity of its functions, its forces, you are showing the good will, I would say, to permeate matter itself with spirit in order to cross over to where spirit is active.

You can well imagine what this means with regard to observing accurately how remedies work on the human organism, for the effects can actually be seen. You prepare the dilution, you have it in a laboratory flask, and you drop into the one potency a grain of wheat; into the potency in the next flask you drop another grain, and so on—grains and grains of wheat. And in the course of this exact research whole rooms are filled with these germinating grains showing the effect of each potency on the soil out of which the grains sprout. This is the sort of thing that must be done in science today, in order to push material knowledge into the realm of the spirit. You know what contention there has been between homoeopaths and allopaths concerning the effectiveness of the smallest entities in the higher potencies. The whole affair up to now has been more a question of credibility—the allopaths holding to one view, the homoeopaths to another. Here, however, it is not a case of siding with homoeopaths but of establishing the actual facts. In future it will naturally be known when remedies should be applied in the direct allopathic way and when homoeopathically and in what dilution, so that they may have the desired effect on people, particularly on their etheric body, which consists of life forces. We shall know exactly where to draw the line—here you give an allopathic treatment, there a homoeopathic one. For just as other scientific experiments are carried out with the utmost exactitude, in this case too Frau Dr Kolisko has shown in her booklet, with the same exactitude, how the smallest entities really work. What has been up to now mere credence has been raised to becoming an important scientific matter. Something else comes to light too.

Just look in this booklet at the accurately worked out curves which show how the forces of growth rise and fall. Notice how the curves have to be drawn according to whether the potency is strong or weak, how with certain dilutions there is a

minimum of growth, and in more dilute solutions—high potencies—a maximum, then a return to the minimum, back again to the maximum, and so on. Thus in the remarkably conscientious tracing of the curves one gains direct insight into a rhythm working in everything material, a rhythm that is in fact the expression of the spiritual. In the case of human beings we proceed from the metabolic system to the rhythmic system. In nature, too, it is possible to find in a quite exact scientific way its rhythmical system. This is precisely what is to be seen in this work, which I believe may prove to be an important landmark, not only in the controversy between homoeopathy and allopathy but in all matters concerning our insight into nature. If the results of this research are properly recognized, natural laws will in future no longer be looked for only in the present atomistic way, by measuring and weighing, but people will realize that there is a rhythm in all material things, and that therefore in the rhythm of natural happenings the rhythm of the cosmos is being expressed.

I wanted to draw your attention to this because it is a path that has to be pursued along the lines of exact science. Tomorrow I will go on to show that in psychoanalysis, for example, there is a kind of theoretical aversion to really setting out on the path leading from the physical/natural realm to the spiritual realm. But if humanity wants civilization to go forward and not back they will have to come to a spiritual approach.

Lecture 13

Entry of Human Beings into the Era of Freedom

31 August 1923

From the description given yesterday you will have gathered that human beings have gradually to acquire freedom in the present period of world and human evolution. On looking back into the past evolution of the world we find that in respect of their most important activities, their walking, speaking and thinking, human beings have been prepared for this by divine/spiritual beings above them. We see how, in order to ensure that what these divine beings have accomplished in human beings during our earth existence shall take effect—if only unconsciously—they are again and again brought between death and rebirth into association with these beings.

You will remember that I spoke of human beings being led, through the forces of sun and moon, and then, in the realm of the sun, through Mars, Jupiter and Saturn, into the world of the stars or, more exactly, into the spiritual forces of the starry world. To this I would add that when human beings in the life between death and rebirth have, so to say, to retrace their steps after, as at present, progressing in the region of the planetoids to a perception of the Saturn impulses, on this return journey they come into relation with the divine/spiritual beings who are at present the most sublime beings of the higher hierarchies—the thrones, cherubim and seraphim. These are spiritual beings whose impulses extend over both spiritual and natural existence. While entering into the laws of nature and infusing them with life and with spirit, their purpose is to bring about enduring harmony between these laws of nature and the moral life of the whole cosmos. Although these beings have never appeared in any physical form yet, in

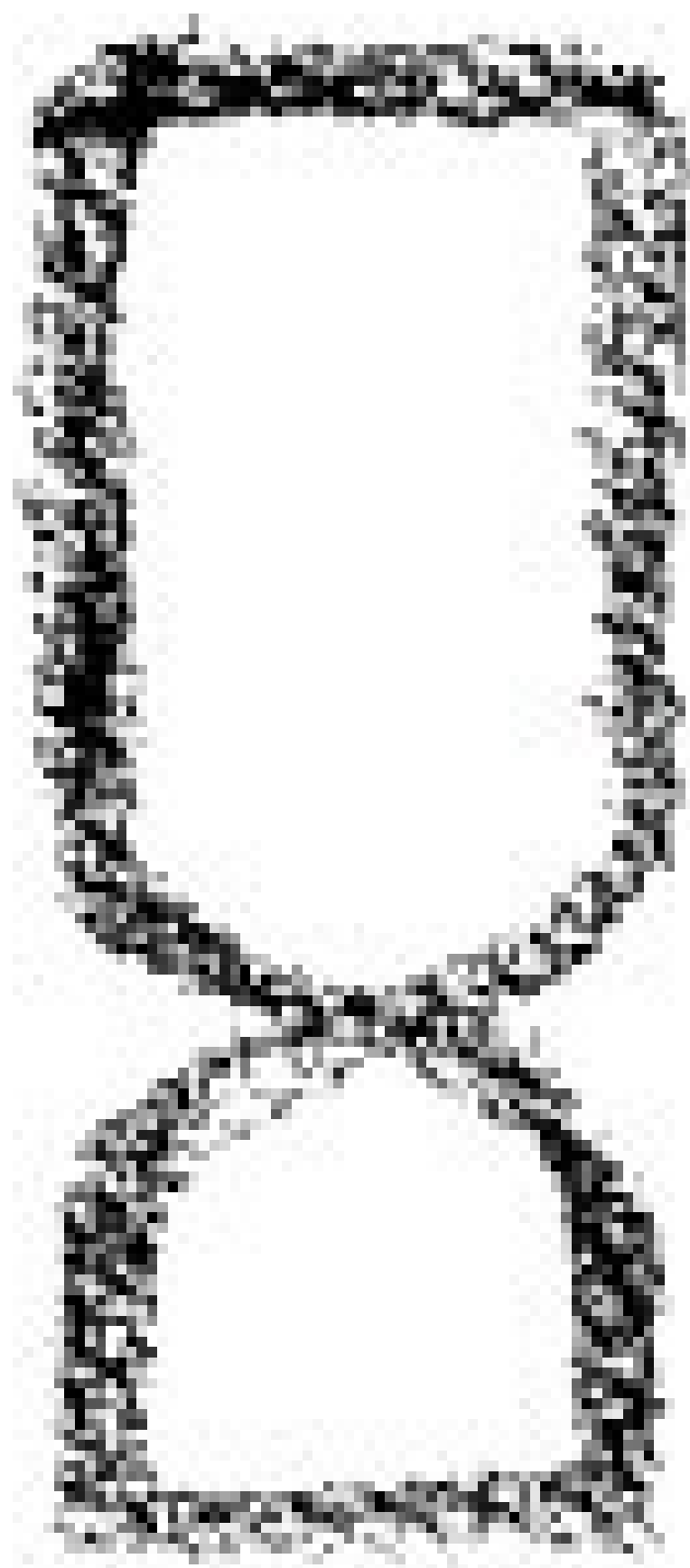
the spiritual world they exercise a power scarcely conceivable on earth, one that makes it possible for moral law to be brought into continuous harmony with natural law. And so, because human beings during their extraterrestrial existence are able constantly to give new life to impulses of the past, they reach a point in their evolution when they can work in accordance with these extraterrestrial impulses.

In the present epoch of the evolution of the world and of humankind, however, we are involved in the task of taking under our own free control everything that in the past was more or less a matter of compulsion, determined for all human beings by higher powers.

When we survey this evolution of the world and of man we find that at a certain definite time humanity came to an unavoidable crossing point which had to be successfully passed through on their way from being led exclusively by divine/spiritual beings to the conscious effort of working their way to knowledge of these beings and so to the gaining of human freedom. This point of time, which in a certain sense signifies the greatest crisis in the whole evolution of man, came approximately 333 years after the Mystery of Golgotha. Such dates are only approximate, owing to time being reckoned in various ways. According to our present reckoning it was 333 years after the Mystery of Golgotha that this great crisis came about.

If we look back at this critical moment we can describe it more or less in the following way. If the evolution of humankind and that of the earth itself had continued as they were doing, if human beings had remained under the guidance of the divine/spiritual beings who had been leading them up to that time, then, since it was intended by those beings that humanity should acquire freedom, they would have become free—but with what result? If it had happened at that particular time it would have meant upsetting the balance between the two parts of the human astral body.

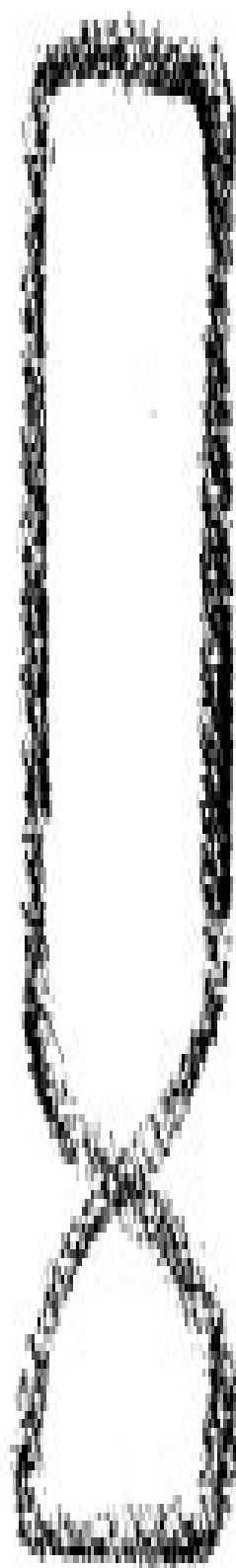
Think of the connection between the physical and the etheric body; I will not sketch the two of them at the moment, but just sketch the astral body which, before the year 333, was essentially like this:



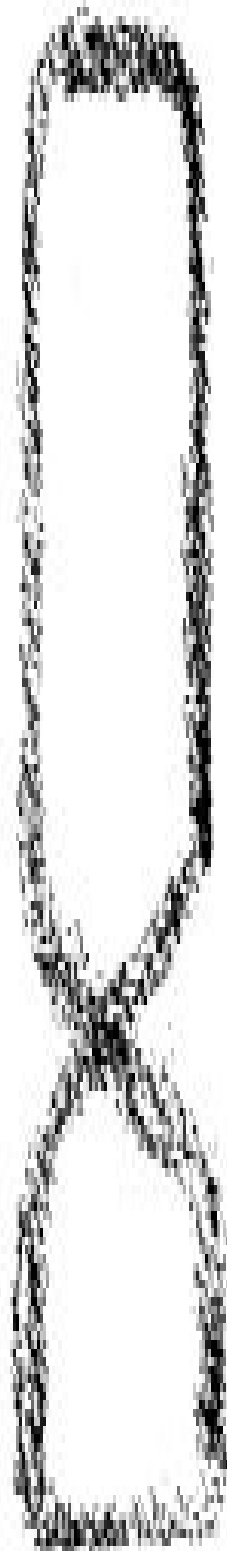
The greater part of the astral body, the more active part of it, was in the upper man, the less active part in the lower man, the middle man being between the two. And because in those olden times the upper part of the astral body was the more powerful, it was through this that the divine/spiritual beings were able to have such a strong influence on human beings. However, according to the plan covering the whole evolution of humankind, evolution should have proceeded in the following way:

upper
man

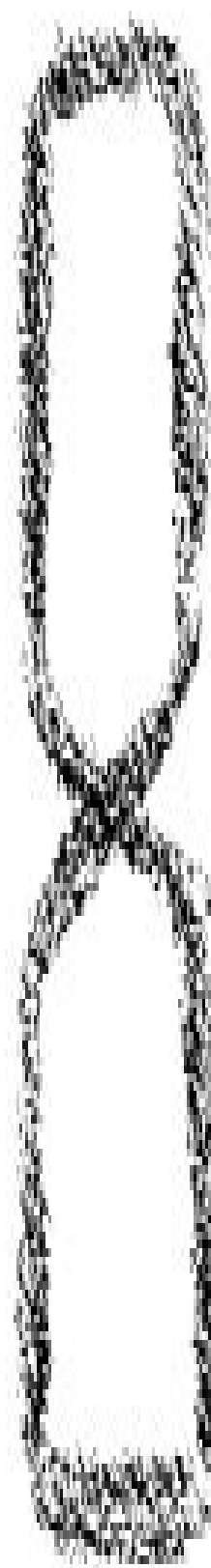
lower
man



3000 BC



1000 BC



AD 333

If the first sketch shows the condition of the human astral body, let us say, for the year 3000 BC, the middle sketch is its condition 1000 years BC, meaning that the lower part of the astral body was becoming larger and larger, the upper part relatively smaller. And in the year 333 it came about that the two parts became equal. This was the critical situation 333 years after the coming of the Christ, and since then the upper part of the human astral body has been continuously decreasing. This is the course of our evolution.

It is impossible to follow the evolution of humanity in its reality unless we are able to understand what is happening to the human astral body in the course of earthly evolution. If human beings had not experienced this decrease in the upper part of their astral body their ego would not have been able to gain sufficient influence, and human beings would never have been able to become free. This shrinking of the astral body is therefore happening in order to bring freedom about. I have already said that there is no sense in asking why the gods have not arranged everything to give human beings pleasure. The gods had to create a universe that was inherently possible, and this involves some things that suit them ideally and other things that, if they do not attempt to understand them, are not at all welcome. This decrease in the size of the astral body is connected with something else, for on the size of the astral body in the upper man—not on its size as a whole—depends the strength human beings have in their ego and astral body to control their physical and etheric bodies. So human beings were actually faced with the fact that, as the upper part of their astral body decreased, the health of humankind as a whole would have gradually weakened. We can form a true conception of human evolution if we recognize that freedom has to be paid for by a general state of ill health—not of course in the form of things like cholera or typhus but in the form of a general condition of ill health over the entire earth. Freedom is not to be gained without the whole of humanity falling victim to an aspect of ill health.

If all human forces after the year 333 had remained as they had been before, everyone on earth would have become weaker and weaker, increasingly powerless. And earthly life would have come to an end through this complete decadence of humanity.

At this point there took place what I should like to describe as follows. At a gathering of those divine/spiritual beings I spoke of as belonging to the sun it

was decided to send down to the earth their representative, the Christ, to have the opportunity to go through something that would be the first time that these divine/spiritual beings connected with humankind would experience in that way. It is a fact of life that in this world human beings pass through birth and death, and although birth and death are certainly not what a materialist imagines them to be, they are part of human existence. None of the divine/spiritual beings above humankind—angels, archangels and so on up to the highest—had ever known death but only metamorphosis. They change from one form to another, but they are not born, and do not die. Human beings, too, change form, but at the same time they lay aside their physical and etheric body, thus making birth and death a more radical change than those experienced by any of the other beings of the higher hierarchies. Then the leader of the harmonies and impulses of the sun resolved to send down to earth the Christ, a being who had not yet experienced birth and death, so that he might go through this purely human destiny. The Mystery of Golgotha is therefore not merely the concern of humanity; it is also a concern of the gods, and this can be put into words such as these. The gods of the sun met and held counsel together as to the steps they should take for warding off from humanity the danger of becoming weaker and weaker through the diminishing of the astral body.

And so the Christ was sent down to earth and went through birth and death not as a human being, of course, but as a divine being. And the consequence was that through this event of Golgotha, through the fact of Christ's death, forces came into earth evolution for the healing of those other forces which, in the sense already described, were the cause of sickness. Thus Christ became in very truth the great cosmic and terrestrial healer of humankind. In other words, his forces entered into everything that had to be healed in human beings so that they, having the tendency to decadence on the one hand but on the other the healing by the Christ, can find their way to freedom. Therefore provision was made in world evolution to ensure that 333 years before the great crisis the Mystery of Golgotha should take place.

Human evolution on earth, accordingly, could not have gone forward without the threat of disastrous universal sickness, beginning in the year 333. Then, through the Mystery of Golgotha came the great universal healing. Everything, therefore, that human beings do without self-awareness, everything that derives from those deeper forces in humanity tending to their future downfall can be healed through connecting with the Christ. This is what the Mystery of Golgotha means for earthly and human evolution.

The situation I have just been explaining was known until the fourth century after the coming of the Christ to certain people who still had knowledge of the facts through having absorbed the spiritual life of their time. In all the earlier ages before the Mystery of Golgotha there had been ancient Mysteries in which the pupils were instructed concerning humanity's past earthly evolution as well as of the coming of the Christ and of what was to take place in humanity's future evolution. In great and powerful pictures there was revealed to these pupils the connection between human beings on earth with the spirit essence of the higher worlds. At the time of the Mystery of Golgotha there were still isolated individuals here and there who, though less advanced than the Mystery pupils of old, had preserved some knowledge of these matters, a knowledge later called gnosis. They were scattered throughout western Asia, Africa and southern Europe. Their knowledge, their wisdom, extended to the source of events in the evolution of earth and of humankind, and to the mighty part played by the Mystery of Golgotha for the earth inhabitants. But these people, who still had knowledge of the old mystery secrets, were filled with anxiety. They knew that a crisis was in store for humanity. They knew that in the future human understanding would no longer be able to fathom the depths of earthly and human evolution.

Thus in certain personalities of the first four Christian centuries it is possible to discern anxiety—not about earthly affairs but about the whole course of world evolution: Will human beings really mature sufficiently to receive what the Mystery of Golgotha has brought? This, in the first four centuries after the Mystery of Golgotha, was the great question for those we might call the successors of the old initiates.

From among those who in these first Christian centuries still experienced a Christian initiation there arose, for example, a wonderful poem.³⁶ It told of the coming of the Christ to the earth, but it also gave in impressive dramatic form—although as a whole the poem was epic—powerful pictures of people of the near future who would no longer be able to reach up with their understanding to what they would need to understand for the good of human evolution. And after powerful pictures had presented something of what the gods had decreed from the sun—in the way I mentioned—and the descent of the Christ into the man Jesus of Nazareth had been impressively described, the poem went on to picture, in a third part, how in human evolution there was to be, in a new metamorphosed form, a revival of the Demeter/Isis being of old. It was shown how this being would be sanctified in a special, powerfully depicted human form, coming in the

future as a solemn promise to humankind.

These poet priests, as I might call them, of the first four Christian centuries, or at least the most outstanding among them, described how in further earthly evolution a certain cult was to figure, practised by all who were to attain to learning and a spiritual life. For such people a sacrificial act of some kind would be established. The epic pictured a younger man who was to enter into the whole way in which human evolution was understood at that time. It was shown how he was to pass from youth to maturity by developing a cult of the Virgin. This ritual observance, this consecration, shown to be necessary for all who were on their way to becoming learned and wise, if humanity was to find a connection with what had come to them through the Mystery of Golgotha, was portrayed in vivid colours. A powerful poem, full of colour, came into being in those early Christian centuries. And among those living more or less in the atmosphere of this poem there were also painter priests who, it is true, painted these scenes in the simple way understood by ordinary folk, yet their pictures had power and went straight to the heart. This poem certainly existed but, together with everything else that definitely originated in gnosis, was exterminated by the later Church. We have only to remember how it was merely by so-called chance that later on the writings of Scotus Erigena³⁷ were saved, and it will no longer seem quite absurd when spiritual science claims that the greatest of poems produced by the New Testament was totally destroyed by the later Church, so that no trace of it was left to the following centuries. But this poem certainly existed, and it was eradicated together with all the simple but impressive paintings made of it. Concealed unobtrusively in it was all the anxiety felt at the time by the successors of the old initiates in those first Christian centuries. There rang through this poem the grave tones of an elegy.

Now, among those who did not follow Augustine into a quite different stream there was a number of people who retained the possibility of understanding these things right into the fourth century, even up to the beginning of the fifth. But this understanding could not remain as vivid as it had once been; the spiritual forces of people in Southern Europe were no longer adequate for that. So the fundamentals of understanding became crystallized in the dogmas that have endured,³⁸ though this could not have happened if the dogmas had not been preserved in a language growing ever more lifeless—the Latin language. The maintaining of Latin into the Middle Ages by the men of learning happened purely in order to reduce to a petrified form what had once been a living understanding, so that finally all that was known about the Trinity, about the

Christ becoming man, about the sending of the Spirit, and about the great healing of which I have spoken had rigidified in dogmas. These dogmas were propagated through the Latin tongue, the very words of which had nothing more to do with the true content of the teaching. Thus in the spreading of western scholarship through the medium of Latin there took place a gradual disappearance of the fiery phosphoric element which had been there in that exterminated poem.

Then, as we know, there came all those youthful peoples of the North, inspired more by the East, who received the Christ impulse in a form that was already thoroughly Latinized, and was already becoming rigid.

We must picture this rigidifying Christ impulse coming up from the South, and the peoples spreading over the North accepting an already dried-up Christianity because, with their youthful spiritual forces, they did not yet have the strength to give fresh life to the tremendous forces underlying the rigidified dogmas. The aftermath of all this is still with us today. Today still, in those northern regions, there can apparently be found (for all this is only apparent) forces that seem to have been too late in receiving the Christ impulse, already rigid in dogma, but which nevertheless are destined, out of direct spiritual knowledge, to rediscover all the secrets of the fact of Golgotha and of Christ's entry into the life of the earth—all of which has, however, to be found in complete freedom. For even the fact that after the year 333 Christianity, in its benumbed state, made its way up out of Italy, and young races of people came over whose successors are now spread throughout Russia, Sweden, Norway, Middle Europe and England, and who are still living under that same influence—all this came about so that ultimately human beings should be able to lay hold of the Christ impulse in freedom.

That, then, is the task of those people who, as representatives of their civilization, are the first to whom anthroposophy has to be brought, to accept the whole significance of Christ Jesus, and to recognize that without the Christ impulse humankind would have been mere 'pillars of salt'. We can use such physical terms, for the Christ impulse penetrates right into the physical—right into the healing of the physical body. Christ has become the great Phosphorus, the spiritual Phosphorus working to overcome the salt-forming processes in man. Christus verus Phosphorus—this phrase could be heard on all sides in the first three centuries of Christianity. It was also a leitmotiv throughout the lost poem I have described.

So, between past and future we must take our place in the present, and by the same token be able to look back. Naturally I have no wish to urge upon you dogmatically what I have just been relating about a lost poem and a forgotten scholarliness. This is far from my intention. But the methods that lead to the investigation of man's true spiritual course are just as reliable as those that discover today's natural scientific facts, and far more reliable than those that set up today's scientific hypotheses. Just as nobody can be compelled to interest themselves in matters which, influenced by present-day materialism, they have already rejected, so will no one who is as sure of them as of his own life be deterred from speaking of them to those who, with a sound feeling for the whole course of human evolution, have the insight to perceive the truth of such an impulse within it.

After the fourth century of Christianity the poem referred to no longer existed, but in certain circles details of it were passed on by word of mouth, and lived on in memory. But the members of these circles were prevented by the growing power of the Church from speaking publicly of any such occurrences during the early Christian centuries. One of those who still did have some notion of the poem—though they knew of it only in a much changed and weakened form—and some idea of the mood out of which it arose, was the teacher of Dante.³⁹ It may indeed be said that Dante's, *Commedia*,⁴⁰ though dogmatically inclined, owed some of its inspiration to what had been there in the first few Christian centuries.

I am of course well aware of the objections that can be made to such an interpretation of history—I could make them myself. But recognizing, as we must, the care put into the constructing of history, the kind of history taught both in the most elementary schools and in the highest forms of education, and with all respect for the precision that relies on records and conscientious historical criticism, what is it all worth? It cannot claim to be real, true history, for it takes no account of those records which have been done away with in course of time. Therefore, though documents may be subjected to the most conscientious criticism true history will be acquired only in the way true knowledge of nature and of the heavens is—through spiritual investigation. Humanity must find the courage, therefore, not only to speak about the world of the stars as we have been doing during the last few days, but also to find another kind of courage, the courage to introduce into the usual presentation of history all that is bound to be missing because it was in the interests of certain circles to deprive posterity of the relevant documents. But there still live on in human souls the impulses that

were wiped out, live on in those who have come later and crave for the impulses no longer recorded but once so alive in humankind. Therefore it will not only be necessary for human beings, if they want to reach in their evolution the future intended for them, to transform from a certain aspect many of their concepts; they will also have to transform their attitude to the truth.

The fundamental fact is that we have to find the Christ again. He must come again. And his return presupposes that during the present century there will be the kinds of human beings there who understand in what way he will make his appearance. Otherwise the most terrible disturbances maybe caused by movements arising that are initiated by people who having in the subconscious depths of their being a premonition of this coming of Christ in the spirit will represent it to others in a shockingly superficial way. Clear vision of the path of human evolution in the foreseeable future will come about only if an ever-increasing number of people have the good will to want to look into the way spiritual research functions, and discover that what can be found in this direction is just what humankind needs for the right shaping of its further course. Otherwise we shall become more and more implicated in all that hinders our approach to the spiritual—not so much where ideas and concepts are concerned as in our general attitude.

In the concepts and ideas of today there is much that looks like a movement towards what must be the true goal of knowledge in our time. In fact, however, this serves somewhat to hinder human beings from seeing the findings of natural science in the right light. They are, as it were, left groping for the facts in the dark. Observe how today—with the general spreading of scientific/medical conceptions—we hear of people who in later life begin to suffer from nervous troubles that affect their whole physical constitution and lead to genuine symptoms of illness. Our present-day physicians then realize how powerless they are to get the better of these symptoms in any way, to proceed from pathology to therapy. As an immediate contemporary of the outstanding Viennese physician, the specialist Breuer,⁴¹ I remember his having a patient in whom physical examination could detect no pathological condition. It was decided to have recourse to hypnosis, which was very popular at the time. Under hypnosis the patient was found to have had, at an earlier period in his life, a terrible experience that overwhelmed him with horror. As far as could be made out this experience had been repressed into the realm of the subconscious, the unconscious, creating there a ‘hidden province’ of the soul. Even if a person knows nothing about this, it is there as part of his life, and can even make him

ill. Thus a person can have something in him which, beginning as a soul experience, has disturbing effects, setting up in his soul an isolated region of which he is unaware.

They came to the conclusion that if they reminded the patient of this experience by bringing it up again into his consciousness, this very awareness would lead to a cure. Cases such as this will be found with increasing frequency in life today. But if we are to understand why people are affected by such conditions—and this will happen more and more frequently—spiritual knowledge must teach that the upper part of our astral body is decreasing, while in the lower part there is a tendency to accumulate subconscious provinces in the soul. We shall have to rise from knowledge of the human soul to historical knowledge of the spirit, to cosmic spiritual knowledge, to be able to explain such phenomena at all. I knew Breuer well—he was a man of depth; and because he felt that with our present degree of knowledge no progress was to be made in these matters, he gave up this line of research. This was then taken up by others, Freud⁴² in particular, and those who succeeded him, and out of this grew psychoanalysis, which is based on something true, for the phenomena certainly exist. The origin of physical symptoms must be looked for in the soul. The idea is quite right; but the knowledge needed to master the phenomena is not to be found here, for this would have to be spiritual science.

Thus this psychoanalysis, which is based on the quite natural, historical decrease in the upper part of the human astral body, is in the hands of people who are not only amateurs at investigating soul and spirit but also amateurs in the investigation of the physical body, not knowing how to follow up the working of spirit there. So we have two forms of dilettantism coming together, yet they are really one and the same, for these people know just as little about the real life of the human soul and spirit as they do about physical and etheric life. The two extents to which they are dilettante coincide, and when two similar quantities affect one another they multiply, $a \times a = a^2$ or $d \times d = d^2$, thus dilettantism \times dilettantism = dilettantism squared. So it really comes about that something right, based on true foundations, appears amateurish because of the weakness of present-day research. In all this, however, we can see a striving in the right direction. Things like psychoanalysis should not therefore be treated as an invention of the devil, but as an indication that this age of ours wants something it is unable to achieve. So things like psychoanalysis will only prosper if they lead on to spiritual research, otherwise it will come to us in the strange form to which Jung's⁴³ logic has driven it.

An example of something Jung wrote is: One can say that through the hidden provinces of the soul human beings were at one time disposed to assume the existence of a divine being. Jung then adds (he is, of course, inclined to atheism): It is obvious that such a being cannot exist. Psychoanalysis, however, argues that human beings, having this disposition to believe, must assume the existence of a divine being in order to preserve the balance of the soul. For a conscientious person—and I would never fail to recognize that a man such as Jung is both conscientious and precise—this really means: You are obliged to live with an untruth because you are unable to live with the truth. There is no truth in theism, but you have to live with it. At today's stage of development such things are not taken seriously; they must, however, be taken absolutely seriously.

So on all sides, without people realizing it, these subconscious yearnings arise. Those of you who have heard or read other lecture cycles of mine will know that I have often pointed out, from spiritual perception, that it is not right to say: light streaming from the sun, for example, goes out endlessly into the infinity of cosmic space, always decreasing in intensity with the square of the distance.

I have also told you that spiritual perception gives a different picture. The idea that light from a centre streams out into endless distance is not correct.⁴⁴ Just as a bow-string, when tightened up, can be stretched only to a certain point and will then spring back, light goes only to a certain point and always returns. It does not only expand, it is also elastic, rhythmical. The sun not only radiates out light but is all the while receiving it back; because at the end of its outward course the intensity of the rays alters and the path of the rays can also be reshaped. I want merely to give this a brief mention, for it is really shown to be so by higher knowledge, by a cosmic grasp of the world, a real grasp of spiritual science.

The papers are now reporting that Oliver Lodge⁴⁵ has given an important lecture endeavouring to explain that in accordance with the way rays of light behave, when a ray of light spreads out, then after a certain distance, on reaching the point where matter ceases to exist—which Oliver Lodge assumes it needs as something to strike against—it implodes, with the help of the metamorphosis of the electron, a thought which seems diletante compared with the truth.

Please do not take these remarks as indicating any lack of respect for science on my part. I appreciate science fully; it cannot be sufficiently praised, and one must recognize the high level of intelligence it brings to life today. But

statements like these are amateurish compared to the truth. On the other hand they show how human thinking itself, with its abstract concepts of the dispensing of light rays and the electron, is pushing in the direction of entering in some way into a region where the right solutions lie. It is important that the truth should be reached, if only to bring into all these prevailing ideas, which people do not know how to deal with, the impulse that could raise present-day research into the spiritual realm.

In certain occult circles there is a wrong practice. The student is given various occult teachings, but is never brought to the point of being shown whence they derive. The teachings are given in pictures, and the students are not led on to the realities, which are imaged in the pictures. So their souls are surrounded by a world of pictures, and they never come to see that through the pictures they ought to be learning about the whole cosmos.

For this reason, after my Theosophy had appeared I had to follow it with Occult Science. Here, the pictures given in Theosophy are taken out into the reality of the starry world, into evolution through Saturn, Sun, Moon, and so on. The two books complement one another.

If in any sphere people are given only pictures they hem them in. Those who practise a wrong kind of occultism do this with students they are not sure of, and by this means they bring them into what is called 'occult imprisonment'.⁴⁶ Confusing pictures from which there is no escape, a veritable prison of pictures, then encircles them. Much occult harm has been practised in this way, and is still being practised. There are spiritual beings, too, who drive people, and even parts of them, into such occult imprisonment; this is the same soul phenomenon. These are the kind of spiritual beings who are let loose in nature when nature is not spiritually understood but viewed as though atomic processes were natural laws. The spirit in nature is then denied. And just those particular spirits who are opposed to man—the so-called ahrimanic spirits—then become active in nature, encompassing human beings with pictures of every kind, so that in this case too they become occultly imprisoned.

And a great part of what today is called the scientific outlook—not the facts of science, for they are good, but what is called the scientific outlook—consists of nothing else than pictures of the general occult imprisonment threatening to engulf humankind. The danger lies in the fact of people being surrounded on all sides by pictures of an atomistic and molecular nature. Surrounded by these

pictures set up by occult imprisonment people are prevented from looking out at pictures of the free spirit and the stars; for the atomistic picture of the world is like a wall around the human soul—the spiritual wall of a prison house.

This prospect can show us, in the light of spiritual science, the right thing to strive for today. For the facts of natural science are fruitful in all quarters, and they can lead out into the wide realms of the spirit if they are not approached with the prejudices of the occult imprisonment in which science fundamentally finds itself at present. These things must be a deep inner experience for us if we want to take our place in the evolution of the earth and of humankind in accordance with its past and its future. And this is what I would like to call the summons we constantly hear when, in the full light of spirit and of soul, we become aware of the evidence of human striving in the past.

When we climb the hill and come upon the Druid stones which are monuments to the spiritual aspirations of those ancient times, it can be an exhortation to us to realize that the longings of those people of old who strove for the spirit and looked in their own way for the coming Christ will meet with fulfilment only when we once again have a spiritual knowledge by way of a spiritual vision that is our way of beholding the Christ. Christ has to come again, for he now has to be seen and known in his spiritual form as once, in bodily form, he went through the Mystery of Golgotha.

This is something that can be felt in a particularly living way here, where such noble monuments of the past have been preserved.

Farewell Address

Evening of 31 August 1923

My very dear friends,

Allow me to respond to the moving words that have just been expressed at the close of this Summer School enterprise by saying some warm words of thanks.

I can indeed say that when I look back on this time spent in Penmaenmawr I have to see it as a time of profound happiness. This Summer School has provided a unique opportunity to a much greater extent and over a longer period of time than ever before to be able to establish the existence of anthroposophy in Britain in its own right. And it is this, first and foremost, that gives me such deep satisfaction.

Bearing in mind our anthroposophical foundation we must be careful not to underestimate too greatly the ideas such an undertaking spring from. The idea from which this Summer School sprang, and which Mr Dunlop described to me when I visited him during his illness, was something he had already mentioned to me the last time I was in London. He was on that occasion full of the idea of introducing into the various activities, which had proved to be such admirable achievements on behalf of anthroposophy, something that would stand before the world as an actual central impulse of the anthroposophical movement. And he told me at the time that it was a special idea of his to set before the world in a Summer School of this kind what anthroposophy has to give out of its creative foundations, and what it has already produced in the form of eurythmy. And he expressed even a third idea the realization of which was of course not immediately possible, because it was too much to be achieved at first mention. But we have the satisfaction that something which comes from the core of anthroposophy, which represents the essential quality of anthroposophy, having been nurtured at its very heart—eurythmy—can be performed in this very place and be recognized in its own right.

Not that this means that the establishing of the single branches growing out of anthroposophy are to be underestimated. But, my dear friends, anyone who can see more deeply into the workings of the human soul and particularly into the interplay arising between a movement such as anthroposophy and what it can achieve in the world will be clearly aware that these various branches can only produce their full effect in the world if the central anthroposophical impulse becomes recognized.

Believe me, my dear friends, all areas of the pedagogical movement are very dear to my heart. But possibly just because this is so dear to me I could never give anyone the assurance that it could really be true that this pedagogical movement that has grown out of anthroposophy could be fully understood in its own right, let alone that because a public had been won for the teaching method that has arisen out of anthroposophy that this might in any way lead people to anthroposophy.

The actual truth will have to be the opposite, that it is only through anthroposophy itself and the studying of it at its very core that a real understanding will arise for what has grown out of anthroposophy, namely, the pedagogical movement which has such importance for the world. Therefore what Mr Dunlop said to me at that time was exactly the same as what was in my own heart when he told me that it was essential that anthroposophy itself, which had to be seen as the source of all the things arising out of it, should be placed before the world ahead of the cultivation of the movements dependent on it. Nevertheless what I would like most of all would be for anthroposophy to be given a different name every week, so that the public would not get held up over the name, instead of enquiring after the actual substance. But this would not work because of letterheads, and the difficulties arising for other such arrangements. And when I come to remember that particular conversation, I am bound to say: Anyone who is so firmly rooted in the spiritual-scientific movement as I am can give the world what he is able to give by not forcing it on the world in any way, but is in the fortunate position to be able to give it because it is asked of him, and asked of him in the right way.

It is actually much more a matter of accepting the ruling that real spiritual occult science can be given only if asked for, and in the right way. And on that occasion it was asked for in the right way.

Therefore I may say that it is precisely from this Summer School in

Penmaenmawr that a tremendous fructification can come for the whole anthroposophical movement and its branches in Britain. This is why we can feel such satisfaction regarding the time we were privileged to spend here in Penmaenmawr. And from a deeply moved heart I bring Frau Dr Steiner's and my own thanks to Mr Dunlop and those working with him for making it possible that the central impulse of anthroposophy and the art of eurythmy which has grown out of it could be brought to such a friendly circle of participants. And I am no less grateful—speaking for both Frau Dr Steiner and myself—for the very supportive attention brought to the work by our audience. It is so extremely important that I am able on the one hand to speak about what I endeavour to draw from the sources of spiritual-scientific knowledge, for it is just what should be speaking most deeply to people's hearts and souls at the present time. Yet on the other hand we live at a time in which we can actually see all the symptoms showing us how essential it is that our more recent civilization should receive a spiritual impact, for what has come down from olden times is so little suited to take civilization forward in a progressive way. It would go downhill if it could not acquire a new spiritual impulse. We may even say that when an opportunity arises, when we are speaking about such things, to add a word about what the present moment so sorely needs, it gives me the greatest satisfaction.

For example, this very morning I had to draw attention to the fact that civilization itself is threatened by a sort of occult imprisonment, and the whole of cultural spiritual life is, more than one thinks, actually endangered by this occult imprisonment. We can point to it wherever we look. I referred this morning to the talk Oliver Lodge gave recently in England in a very significant gathering. I mentioned that we can become aware, precisely from this talk, that there are yearnings even in the most abstract of sciences, which, although they remain in the subconscious, if they are rightly understood and come out of the right attitude, can lend—and I say this in all modesty—to what spiritual science is really able to give. And if we really follow up such things we can see wherever we look what spiritual science should be saying in each case.

Just look at what a significant phenomenon that is, that it is precisely out of the attitude and way of thinking that is fully rooted in the most extreme form of modern science that the remarkable book Oliver Lodge has written concerning the soul of his son after death,⁴⁷ entitled *Raymond or Life and Death*, has arisen. I only need mention it, because you will know of it. It was about the fact of Oliver Lodge's son who died in the war being able to make his presence known through a medium and to tell his father things that were deeply moving to him in

his grief.

When this remarkable man's booklet about his son, Raymond, was published it astonished the world; for Oliver Lodge referred in it to the spiritual world in an extremely erudite manner that clearly derived from the most exact and conscientious modern thinking. There was a tremendous amount of material to show how, with the aid of a medium, one can really enter the spiritual life of the world using a method similar to that of modern natural science. The circumstance that especially astonished everyone was that a medium could bring a message about a photograph that had been developed in the French war zone by Raymond Lodge and his comrades. Two shots had been taken one after the other by Raymond Lodge and his pals; and as often happens with a second shot, the face can be at a slightly different angle, held a bit higher or something. The point about these photographs was that the people in England could know nothing about them, for by the time they did hear of them Raymond had already died. Through the medium, so Oliver Lodge tells us, the soul of Raymond Lodge spoke to him and the other members of his family about these photographs that nobody in England had seen; they did not arrive for another three weeks. Then everything was proved true about the slight alteration of the position in which he sat and his posture. What could be more astonishing than that! What could be more impressive than that by way of a medium something could be described to them under the assumption that it comes from the dead son, something not yet known in England, for it did not arrive until later.

And yet a frightful mistake crept in at just this particular point. Anyone experienced in these matters will know that possibilities exist of people having premonitions. What the circle of people gathered round the medium actually saw when they looked at the pictures that did not arrive in England until later was seen as a premonition by the medium without the soul of the dead son coming into it at all—it may certainly have been an extraordinarily tender, lovingly presented premonition, but a premonition it certainly was. One really does not have to be merely a modern scientist if one wants to bring a justified criticism regarding the revelations of the spiritual world. Everything coming from this area, even the excellent, exact and serious work of Oliver Lodge, leads more readily away from a real grasp of the spiritual world than towards it. The habits of thought and of research that arise nowadays out of natural science are such that even when one researches the spiritual one prefers to proceed the way one is used to doing in one's laboratory, that at each step one takes one leans on the material aspect. But this method does not lead into the spiritual realm. One gets

to this only along purely spiritual paths, as have been described here. And the sort of people who believe they can reach the spirit by way of a medium will reach the kind of spirit that functions on the physical plane, in the physical world. For the premonition was of two things that were taking place in the physical world; what was described only appeared to be something that was being projected down from the spiritual world. Certainly the physical world is in all cases filled with spirit, but we delude ourselves about the relation of the earthly world to the super-earthly world if we do not have the possibility of finding the way to real, true spiritual research. So what I have mentioned this morning, this wish to draw things solely out of natural scientific thoughts, as is customary today, and to accept as true only what comes from these thoughts, is what builds the walls of occult imprisonment. But in these occult prisons people attempt to do things which really do go wrong; for instead of presenting something which is true they present the most terrible errors which lead even further away from the truth, especially in such instances when hearts are so strongly involved as in the case of the subject of the book about Raymond Lodge. And just because in the area where spirit begins to speak such a strong echo comes from the heart, because our hearts are so strongly involved, and there can steal into the heart what can so easily become partiality, we must use every resource to exclude any possibility of becoming enclosed in the spiritual walls of occult imprisonment.

I would not speak about these things at all if it were not required by the deeply serious character of the times. And this is really how things stand. For it is indeed true that humankind needs to take a firm step towards spiritual matters.

I have been asked about all kinds of things in the course of this Summer School. Some of the questions could not be fully answered, not because the subject was possibly too difficult, but because the time has not yet fully arrived in human evolution when one is able to speak quite freely where some matters are concerned—especially, for instance, when people ask about the spiritual relations of the different nations. For example, I was asked what the state of affairs is in the spiritual world when one nation conquers another and puts it in a position of dependency.

Oh, where such questions are concerned spiritual science would of course have plenty of substantial things to say. But believe me, my dear friends, it is really and truly not yet the right moment to speak completely openly about these matters. For today people do not yet fully accept in a totally unbiased way the

ultimate consequences of the kind of truths that for instance begin with: You just have to ask yourselves whether the external aspect is really the only aspect when one nation makes another dependent on it from the physical point of view in the matter of this world's material goods. And people do not always see that the particular nation that has made the other one materially dependent upon it has become spiritually dependent upon the one it has made materially subservient to it. This, however, is only the beginning of the kind of truths that we shall have to become familiar with throughout the whole civilized world. And there is no other way to come to the kind of universal understanding of the sort of things that will acquire their full significance when applied in practical life, unless we really have the inner courage to involve ourselves in actual spiritual truths.

This is how it is in the end with regard to the question: Do there happen to be individuals in the world today who are in possession in any sort of way of truths of a higher kind, and who have a way of conveying these to people, and who are perhaps associated with one another?

I have already indicated that it does not depend solely upon truths being sent out into the world by certain individuals, but that it depends also on how far the world wants to receive these truths. I have referred to certain obstacles existing today, and that could be expressed something like this. The Bodhisattva is already waiting, but people have first of all to make themselves capable, in sufficient numbers, of understanding him. And if the question is raised as to whether those who have spiritual truths to bring to the world do bring them to human beings, one is permitted to say that anything existing externally in the form of printed matter does not yet mean anything. I just want to mention that plenty of things can exist on the printed page today containing the deepest treasures of wisdom. But it is always a matter of whether these words of wisdom are being understood. And there are plenty of means of understanding them, and plenty of these could be applied. However, my dear friends, an understanding among individual people who have something to say about higher worlds was easier at the time when this wisdom was brought in consecrated places such as these Druid circles, and when the thought waves that went out from them did not encounter the waves of wireless telegraphy.

On the other hand we do not want to take up a reactionary attitude to wireless telegraphy. It is obviously a material blessing for humankind. But the crux of the matter is that if spiritual communications are really going to circulate, stronger forces are required in this moment of time when spiritual waves encounter waves

of wireless telegraphy than were necessary before now. If people would only realize the fundamental, deep truth that precisely in our time, when our material culture has, for humanity's blessing, reached the heights it has done, it is all the more essential that an active spiritual impulse takes hold of people's hearts and that it spreads out from there.

There was really a good opportunity here, a tremendous one. For we lived in an atmosphere that in very truth still radiated a magical element in those ancient sanctuaries—and I was able to draw your attention to this in the course of these lectures. Therefore it was a good choice to have hit on this particular place where what once existed in middle and northern Europe before the Mystery of Golgotha passed through the world, which still awaited the Mystery of Golgotha, was able to burst into life in its own way, spiritually, yet to start with did not find a continuation when Christianity—as I described this morning—came up from the south. In a certain sense it is still waiting.

Indeed, my dear friends, when one arrives up there in that remarkable solitude where these stone circles are standing, one can still encounter the actual echoes of that which once worked so powerfully in these northern parts of Europe. And in that stream of forces existing then there was many a spiritual component that cannot work today because human souls have to move on and, due to the progress they have made, they could not stand its influence, for it would hamper their freedom. A consequence of the fact that this profoundest of occult knowledge, once brought to light by way of holy mysteries, was as it were transferred in the course of time to cosmic memory, and hovers as glowing clouds around the hollows between the mountain peaks that harbour these sanctuaries—a consequence of this is that this special atmosphere spreads over all we have been able to do here towards a new life of the spirit. It is things such as this that evoke in the deepest sense Frau Dr Steiner's and my heartiest gratitude, that thanks to the efforts of Mr Dunlop, Mrs Merry and others we can inscribe this Penmaenmawr enterprise into the existence of the anthroposophical movement.

It has already been mentioned very nicely that many people have contributed both in the foreground and the background to enable all this to happen. And to these people, too, we extend heartiest thanks for both preparing for and sustaining our Summer School activities so beautifully, and add to this our warmest gratitude to you, my dear audience, for your devoted attention to the anthroposophical activity and the eurythmy that has been able to take place in

this lovely setting. I have already mentioned the fact that people who know how much work it takes to put on something like this, and have often done such a thing themselves, will really be able to judge what has been done. And they will realize something else, too. Those who on previous occasions were part of my circle and had to prepare for such things themselves, always sent their skin to a tanners to have it toughened beforehand, for basically you just cannot satisfy everybody, and you are bound to get whipped for it. And so it is a good thing if the particular people who are behind the scenes arranging everything have a tanned skin for the duration.

The anthroposophical movement, my dear friends, really has grown from a small beginning. I referred a short while ago in Dornach to the time—it was about 21 years ago now—when the anthroposophical movement was introduced into the theosophical movement by way of the periodical *Lucifer Gnosis*.⁴⁸ It did not fold up; it was just that there was such a lot of work involved that it could not go on. It had not only an adequate number of subscribers but too many to handle at the very time I could not continue with it. But this is where the anthroposophical movement took its start in a very small way. The greater part of *Lucifer Gnosis* fell to me to write; then I had to go to the printing works to do the corrections, after which Frau Dr Steiner and I received the booklets, which had to be put into their wrapping; then we had to write the addresses on them ourselves (we did not even have printed addresses or a typewriter); then we picked up a washing basket each and took them all to the post. This is the small way in which the anthroposophical movement began. Even where lectures were concerned we had no right to expect such wonderful, elegant rooms as we now have. I once gave a lecture in a room the floor of which was covered with holes, and I had to be careful, when walking round the hall, that at every step my legs did not disappear into a hole. Therefore it was not such a great surprise to me—more like a memory—that rain came in here, for here in the Town Hall the ceiling also has holes! Compared with what we had to do without in the beginning of the anthroposophical movement, things as they are now seem like real festive occasions. I am not ashamed to tell you that it once happened to me in Berlin—because we could not get a certain venue on those particular evenings, and for some other reasons that I cannot tell you about now—I had to give a lecture in a room that was divided by a folding screen behind which we heard the chinking of beer glasses, because it was a public bar. And another time, when we could not have the hall we asked for, we were told, ‘Something more important is going on there, so go to the only space we have,’ which was something between a cellar and a stable. The anthroposophical movement has certainly had to go

through a struggle. And this is why it knows how to be thankful when people do things from their hearts. And you will see why we appreciate so much what has been happening here over these days.

I would like these words of thanks to include all the deepest, warmest satisfaction I am feeling right now about these days in Penmaenmawr. I just want to say in conclusion that it is of course always expecting a great deal of the audience when I have to do anthroposophical work here in Britain that they have to spend double the time for a lecture, because it all has to be translated. Only from one point of view am I not even sorry, and that is that we have been shown something really quite extraordinary, namely, the excellent translating skill of Mr Kaufmann⁴⁹ (the later George Adams). He will also have to translate what I am now saying, and I beg of him not to leave out these last words, otherwise I warn him that I shall request Herr Dr Baravalle⁵⁰ to translate them. I also want to express my gratitude to Mr Kaufmann for what he has done for us with such dedication, despite almost becoming ill because he did not bring his winter coat with him to a place where one really needs to have one. He has been doing this work without a break, and I have definite confirmation that he has done it to the greatest satisfaction of the audience. He deserves the warmest thanks; for whatever would I have done if Mr Kaufmann had not been here to convey to you what I wanted so much to tell you? So I think that I have now shown that there is ample reason why, in the name of both Frau Dr Steiner and myself, I am giving the heartiest thanks to everyone—Mr Dunlop, Mrs Merry, and also Mr Kaufmann and all the other people who have played their part both in the foreground and behind the scenes. And let me also assure you that I will maintain a very warm and vivid memory of all we were able to experience here in Penmaenmawr.

With these words I would like to conclude my message of farewell and of gratitude for these beautiful days in Penmaenmawr, and say that this should be something that unites us for the future, for I believe that we have been together in the kind of harmony that was hallowed by historic memories.

No.

MEMBER'S TICKET.

INTERNATIONAL SUMMER SCHOOL

Penmaenmawr, N. Wales.

August 18th to Sept. 1st, 1923.

Name D. Rudolf Steiner

Local Address Grand Hotel

NOT TRANSFERABLE.

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PROMOTED BY

THE ANTHROPOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

TO BE HELD AT

PENMAENMAWR, NORTH WALES

FROM AUGUST 18TH TO SEPTEMBER 1ST, 1923



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London Headquarters: 46 GLOUCESTER PLACE, W.1

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Hon. Secretary, SUMMER SCHOOL: MRS. E. C. MERRY, 46 GLOUCESTER PLACE, W.1,
to whom all communications regarding the INTERNATIONAL SUMMER SCHOOL should be addressed.

OBJECTS OF THE ANTHROPOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

1. To provide opportunities for the study of Anthroposophy, and to encourage sympathetic co-operation among all who regard Man as a spiritual being, however much they may differ as regards creed, nationality, social position, etc.
2. To encourage the search after the spiritual reality hidden behind all sense phenomena, and to promote the knowledge of genuine spiritual science.
3. To study and acknowledge the truth contained in the various conceptions of the world.



DRUIDS' CIRCLE

PRELIMINARY NOTICE OF THE SUMMER SCHOOL

DR. RUDOLF STEINER, of Dornach, Switzerland, will give a special course of lectures under the general title: **SPIRITUAL AND PHYSICAL EVOLUTION OF THE WORLD AND HUMANITY, PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE, FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF ANTHROPOSOPHY.**

Other lecturers and subjects will be announced later.

Opportunities will be provided for those interested to receive preliminary instruction in **EURHYTHMY** as inaugurated by DR. STEINER. Demonstrations of Eurhythmy will also be given, under the direction of **FRAU MARIE STEINER**, by students trained at Dornach.

Special arrangements will be made for appropriate Music.

Excursions will also be arranged.

Applications should be sent in without delay. Details of the accommodation will be found overleaf.

This International Summer School affords an unique opportunity for combining a holiday amidst beautiful scenery, with stimulation of thought.



PENMAENMAWR FROM THE QUARRIES

INTERNATIONAL SUMMER SCHOOL OF SPIRITUAL SCIENCE

THE accommodation at Penmaenmawr is limited. There is one first-class Hotel overlooking the sea; a good private Hotel; a few small boarding houses; and a fair number of apartments where visitors do their own catering. There is also a "Holiday Guest House" that accommodates some sixty people at cheaper rates.

Approximate charges are arranged in four groups below :

- GROUP 1. Inclusive charges, 55s. per week. Very few single rooms.
- GROUP 2. Apartments (own catering), from £1 1s. to 30s. per week.
- GROUP 3. Boarding Establishments from £3 13s. 6d. to £4 4s. per week.
- GROUP 4. Grand Hotel, from £4 7s. 6d. to £5 5s. (single),
" £4 14s. 6d. " £7 7s. (double),
for each person per week, inclusive.

A booking fee of £1 is made to cover expenses of the School, and must be paid when applying for accommodation. *It is not returnable.*

When a number start from the same station arrangements will be made with the Railway Companies for the reservation of seats; also excursion fares where possible.

All applications for rooms, or for further copies of this circular, should be made to MRS. E. C. MERRY, Hon. Secretary, INTERNATIONAL SUMMER SCHOOL, 46 GLOUCESTER PLACE, LONDON, W.1.

BOOK EARLY

APPLICATION FORM

Date of arrival? Length of stay?

From what place will you begin your journey?

State which "group" of accommodation you require?

Will you share a bedroom? Do you require vegetarian diet?

(Friends are earnestly requested to make up their own parties and share rooms if possible, as single rooms are difficult to get.)

Advance booking fee £1: Amount enclosed

Name (MR., MRS., or MISS)

Address

Notes

1. Christmas Course for teachers in Dornach from 23 December 1921 to 7 January 1922. GA 303.
2. A two-week cycle of educational lectures by Rudolf Steiner in Ilkley, 5–17 August 1923. In GA 307.
3. Daniel Dunlop, 1868–1935, General Secretary of the Anthroposophical Society in Great Britain 1930–5. As the organizer of the ‘International Summer School’ he proposed the title for the cycle of lectures for Penmaenmawr 1923. (See letter from Mrs Merry below.)

3F Hyde Park Mansions

London NW1

Feb. 3rd 1923

Dear Dr. Steiner,

I am writing on behalf of Mr. Dunlop regarding the Summer School he is hoping to arrange. He makes the following suggestion, subject to your approval, that the title of the Summer School should be: ‘Humanity in the past, the present and the future in the light of spiritual science, philosophy and art’.

The date he has in mind is from the 18th August to the 1st of September, that is, if the educational conference takes place first. He asks whether it is an understood thing that we should hold both of these conferences, and whether you intend that the educational conference shall take place first or Mr. Dunlop’s

Summer School? He would also like to ask you whether you might like to give him a quite general indication about the title of the course you have in mind for his Summer School.

He is looking for a suitable venue, and will let you know as soon as one has been found.

I would be grateful to have a reply as soon as possible.

Your devoted

Eleanor C. Merry

Hon. Secretary, Summer School

4. Harry Collison, 1868–1945, lawyer, painter, writer, translator of Rudolf Steiner's works into English, General Secretary of the AS in GB from 1923.

The welcoming words Rudolf Steiner refers to as given by these two gentlemen were not taken down by the stenographer.

5. Eleanor C. Merry, 1873–1956. English writer and painter. She joined with D.N. Dunlop in organizing the Summer School in Penmaenmawr in 1923 and in Torquay in 1924.

6. 'Guru': an Indian term used in a theosophical setting for the spiritual teacher.

7. King Alfonso X of Castile (1223–84), called 'the Wise, the Astronomer'. He was king from 1225 to 1282 and formed a council of 50 Arabian, Jewish and Christian astronomers who brought out his well-known code of laws and his planetary tables. The remark 'If God had left it to me I would have made a much simpler world!' is quoted in Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibniz, *Théodicée*, Part Two (Hanover/Leipzig 1744).

8. The Kant-Laplace theory sprang from the Nebularhypotheses of the philosopher and mathematician Immanuel Kant (1724–1804), according to which the earth was formed from a primeval mist and, independently of Kant (and deviating from him in many ways), from the theories of the French

mathematician and astronomer Pierre Simon Laplace (1749–1827) in *Exposition du système du monde* (1796).

9. In English the word ‘imagination’ is also used for fantasy.

10. Louis Claude Marquis de Saint-Martin (1743–1803) was a French philosopher and theosophist who in 1775 published his first work, *Des erreurs et de la vérité ou les hommes rappelés au principe universel de la science, par un ph ... inc ...* (unknown philosopher) under the fictitious place name of ‘Edimbourg’ (actually Lyon, 1775). This gained him the pseudonym of ‘Saint-Martin, the unknown philosopher’. Matthias Claudius translated this work; it came out in 1782 in Breslau under the title *Irrthümer und Wahrheit, oder Rückweiss für die Menschen auf das allgemeine Principium aller Erkenntniss* (Errors and truth, or the recall of human beings to the general principle of all knowledge). In 1925 the publishing company Der kommende Tag in Stuttgart published the book with the title *Irrtümer und Wahrheit* by Louis Claude de Saint-Martin in this translation. See also *Beiträge zur Rudolf Steiner Gesamtausgabe* (booklet no. 32, Christmas 1970, ‘Saint-Martin, the unknown philosopher’).

On pp. 36f of the Stuttgart edition it says: ‘... In addition to this they [human beings] were armed with a lance assembled out of four metals so well amalgamated that as long as the world has existed no one has been able to separate them. This lance had the characteristic that it burnt like fire, as well as being so sharp there was nothing it could not penetrate, and so thorough that it always pierced in two places. All these advantages, as well as an infinite amount of other gifts which human beings received at the same time, made them truly strong and formidable. The area in which these human beings had to fight was covered with a wood of seven trees, each bearing 16 roots and 490 branches. Their fruit constantly replenished itself, and gave the people the most excellent food, and the trees themselves served as a barricade, making the area inaccessible ... It is impossible to conceive of a condition sadder and more lamentable than the human situation in the moment of the Fall; for human beings all at once lost not only that formidable lance, which nothing could resist, but the armour itself with which they had been clad also disappeared and was replaced for a time with another armour which, because it was not impenetrable like the first one, was a source of never-ending hazard.’

11. Jakob Böhme, 1575–1624. See among other things Rudolf Steiner, *Mystics*

After Modernism, Anthroposophic Press 2000, GA 7: ‘It is as though nature were shouting for joy as, at the peak of her development, she marvels at what echoes towards us from out of the works of the master shoemaker Jakob Böhme of Görlitz, as though marvelling at her own being. There appears before us a man whose words have wings woven of the blissful feeling of seeing his own knowledge glowing within himself as a higher wisdom...’

12. Wie erlangt man Erkenntnisse der höheren Welten? (1904), GA 10.
Knowledge of the Higher Worlds (Rudolf Steiner Press 2004).

13. Friedrich Nietzsche, 1844–1900.

14. Samuel Taylor Coleridge, 1772–1834.

15. Christian Morgenstern, 1871–1914. The poem mentioned here by Rudolf Steiner can be found in Palmström, Korf and Palma Kunkel and also in Alle Galgenlieder.

Die Gruchsorgel

Palmström baut sich eine Geruchsorgel

Und spielt drauf v. Korfs Niesswurz-Sonate.

Diese beginnt mit Alpenkraüter-Triolen

Und erfreut durch eine Akazien-Arie.

Doch im Scherzo, plötzlich und unerwartet,

Zwischen Tuberosen und Eukalytus,

Folgen die drei berühmten Niesswurz-Stellen,

Welche der Sonate den Namen geben.

Palmström fällt bei diesen Ha-Cis Synkopen

Jedesmal beinahe vom Sessel, während
Korf daheim, am sichern Schreibtisch sitzend,
Opus hinter Opus aufs Papier wirft ...

The Scent Organ

Palmström builds himself a scent organ
And on it he plays Korf's sneezewort sonata.
This begins with alpine flower triplets
And includes a charming acacia aria.
Then suddenly and unexpectedly,
Between the tuberose and the eucalyptus,
There come the three famous sneezewort episodes
Which give the sonata its name.
Each time Palmström plays the B/C# syncopations
He almost falls off his stool
While Korf, sitting at home at his solid desk,
Throws opus after opus onto paper...

16. Svante Arrhenius (1854–1927), Swedish natural scientist, a pioneer of modern physical chemistry. He gained a Nobel Prize for his work on electrical conduction in dilute solutions. In one of his books, *Das Werden der Welten* (Leipzig 1907, English translation, *Worlds in the Making*, 1908), he suggested the name 'nebulium' for a hypothetical gas represented by certain then

unidentified lines in the spectra of gaseous nebulae. In 1927 it was shown that the lines are due to singly and doubly ionized atoms of oxygen.

17. Isaac Newton, 1642–1727.

18. See among other things lecture given in Dornach on 22 September 1923, GA 225.

19. ‘We are such stuff/ as dreams are made on, and our little life / is rounded with a sleep.’ W. Shakespeare, *The Tempest*, Act 4, Scene 1.

20. Ibid.

21. Immanuel Swedenborg, 1688–1772, Swedish scientist and mystic. Compare with lecture by Rudolf Steiner in Dornach, 23 September 1923, ‘Jakob Böhme, Paracelsus, Swedenborg’, in *Kulturphänomene*, GA 225.

22. Johann Friedrich Oberlin, 1740–1826, Protestant vicar in Waldersbach im Steintal (Alsace).

23. Theophrastus Bombastus Paracelsus von Hohenheim, 1493–1541. See note 21 concerning lecture in GA 225.

24. Swedenborg possessed an extensive knowledge in the realm of the natural sciences, and also made significant mechanical inventions. Among other subjects he wrote works on algebra, the planetary movements, the ebb and flow of tides, and on mineralogy and mining. *Opera philosophica et mineralogica* (1731); *Oeconomia regni animalis* (1740/41); *Regnum animale* (1744/45).

25. The original blackboard drawing was not preserved.

26. See the chapter ‘The Soul World’ in *Theosophy. An Introduction to the Spiritual Processes in Human Life and in the Cosmos* (Rudolf Steiner Press, 2005) (1904), GA 9.

27. See the volume of three lectures given by Dr Steiner in September 1923, shortly after his return to the Continent from Penmaenmawr, entitled *Man in the Past, the Present and the Future*. These three lectures are followed by a fourth, *The Sun-Initiation of the Druid Priests and their Moon Science* (Rudolf Steiner Press, London 1982).

28. The following part of the text is incomplete in the shorthand report and has been rendered in accordance with the latest thorough investigation. For a better understanding of the text see lectures on related themes in *An Occult Physiology* (Rudolf Steiner Press 2005), Prague, 23 March 1911, GA 128; in *Wonders of the World* (Rudolf Steiner Press, 1963), 25 August 1911, GA 129; in *Esoteric Christianity and the Spiritual Guidance of Humanity* (Rudolf Steiner Press, 2000), Basel, 1 October 1911 ('The Etherization of the Blood'), GA 130.

29. 'But when the fulness of time was come', Gal. 4:4.

30. Rudolf Steiner, *Occult Science, an Outline* (Rudolf Steiner Press, 2005) (1910), GA 13, chapter 'Concerning the Life of the Human Being after Death'.

31. Compare Rudolf Steiner, *Cosmic Memory* (Rudolf Steiner Pub., 1971) (1904), GA 11; also the chapter 'Cosmic and Human Evolution' in *Occult Science, an Outline*.

32. *Pistis Sophia* is the title of a work attributed to the Gnostic Valentinus, and having been brought to England by the Englishman Askew was first published, in Latin, by Petermann in 1851. The first French translation followed in 1885, the first English one, by Mead, in 1896, and the first German one, *Koptisch-gnostische Schriften*, Volume I, in 1905.

33. Lilly Kolisko, 1889–1976 directed the biological department of the Scientific Research Institute of *Der kommende Tag* in Stuttgart and wrote, among other things, 'The Function of the Spleen and the Question of Platelets' (1921); 'Physiological and Physical Proof of the Efficacy of the Smallest Entities' (Stuttgart 1923), published by the working community of anthroposophical doctors, Stuttgart 1960.

34. This treatise, translated into English, is included in a volume entitled *Agriculture of Tomorrow*, published by Frau Dr Kolisko in 1939. It is now out of print, but is obtainable from the library at Rudolf Steiner House, Park Road, London NW1 6XT.

35. On 28 August 1923 in *The Healing Process* (Anthroposophic Press, 2000) (1923/24), GA 319.

36. In the lecture of 23 March 1921 in Stuttgart, Rudolf Steiner spoke of 'important documents, important matters' for the fourth century, which had

possibly ‘disappeared through some incident’, and added the comment: ‘I admit quite frankly that I have not yet got to the end of this problem, but it is possible to follow it further’. In *Naturbetrachtung, Mathematik, wissenschaftliches Experiment* (Observation of nature, mathematics and scientific experiment). This occurred in this particular lecture as well as in the lecture of 5 April 1924 in Prague, where ‘Drama’ is further characterized in an impressive way. (In *Karmic Relationships*, Vol. V, Rudolf Steiner Press 1984.)

37. Scotus Erigena, c. 810–877. A copy of his written work, declared heretical and burnt in the thirteenth century, was rediscovered by chance and published in the seventeenth century. See Rudolf Steiner, *Riddles of Philosophy* (Anthroposophic Press, 1973) (1914), GA 18.

38. See primarily Rudolf Steiner, *The Mystery of the Trinity* (Anthroposophic Press, 1991), Oxford, 22 August 1922, GA 214.

39. The teacher of Dante was Brunetto Latini, c. 1220–94. He wrote *Il Tesoretto*. His influence is described in the lecture given by Rudolf Steiner in Dornach, 30 January 1915, GA 161, and in various lectures of the year 1924, especially in the lecture given in Dornach on 10 September 1924, GA 238, *Karmic Relationships* Vol. IV (Rudolf Steiner Press, 1997).

40. Dante Alighieri, 1265–1321, *Divina Commedia*. First publication Foligno 1472.

41. Josef Breuer, 1842–1925. Regarding the ‘hypnosis’ mentioned here, Breuer and Freud described five cases of this form of therapy in *Studien über Hysterie* (Leipzig/Vienna 1895).

42. Sigmund Freud, 1856–1939. See, too, the lecture given by Rudolf Steiner in Dornach, 13 September 1915, GA 253, *Community Life* (Anthroposophic Press, 1991).

43. Carl Gustav Jung, 1875–1961. ‘The concept of God is, namely, quite simply an essential psychological function of an irrational nature, which has nothing at all to do with the question of the existence of God.’ In *The Psychology of Unconscious Processes* (Zurich 1917).

44. See Rudolf Steiner, *Geisteswissenschaftliche Impulse zur Entwicklung der Physik. Erster naturwissenschaftlicher Kursus: Licht, Farbe, Ton-Masse*,

Elektrizität, Magnetismus (Stuttgart 1919/ 20), GA 320.

45. Oliver Lodge, 1851–1940, English physicist. No more details could be found, but apparently it referred to the lectures that appeared later in book form under the title *Evolution and Creation* by Sir Oliver Lodge, published in 1926 by Hodder and Stoughton in London.

46. Rudolf Steiner goes into the problem of occult imprisonment in greater detail on the same day in the course of his Farewell Address. He had already used this expression in a somewhat different sense in 1915. See *The Occult Movement in the Nineteenth Century* (Rudolf Steiner Press, 1973). By way of certain things that can be done only by certain occult brothers, and which are done only by brotherhoods who involve themselves in arts that are actually not permissible, that is, by way of particular arts and machinations, they enabled H.P. Blavatsky to live at certain times in a world that directed all her occult wisdom into her inner being.

47. Oliver Lodge's son Raymond fell at the Western Front in August 1915. In his book *Raymond or Life and Death* with examples of the evidence for survival of memory and affection after death (George H. Doran Comp., New York 1916). Oliver Lodge describes spiritualistic seances in which contact was made with the deceased person and in which the photograph that had been mentioned was prophesied and described.

48. The first number of the periodical *Lucifer-Gnosis* appeared in June 1903 in Berlin under the title *Lucifer, Zeitschrift für Seelenleben und Geisteskultur* (*Lucifer, periodical for the life of the soul and the culture of the spirit*), publisher Rudolf Steiner.

49. George Kaufmann, 1894–1963. Thanks to his unique talent for languages he was able, with the help of his notes, to give an immediate free rendering of Rudolf Steiner's lectures.

50. Hermann von Baravalle, 1898–1973. See *Der Lehrerkreis um Rudolf Steiner in der ersten Waldorfschule* (The teachers around Rudolf Steiner in the first Waldorf School) (Verlag Freies Geistesleben, 1977).

Note on Rudolf Steiner's Lectures

The lectures and addresses contained in this volume have been translated from the German, which is based on stenographic and other recorded texts that were in most cases never seen or revised by the lecturer. Hence, due to human errors in hearing and transcription, they may contain mistakes and faulty passages. Every effort has been made to ensure that this is not the case. Some of the lectures were given to audiences more familiar with anthroposophy; these are the so-called 'private' or 'members' lectures. Other lectures, like the written works, were intended for the general public. The difference between these, as Rudolf Steiner indicates in his Autobiography, is twofold. On the one hand, the members' lectures take for granted a background in and commitment to anthroposophy; in the public lectures this was not the case. At the same time, the members' lectures address the concerns and dilemmas of the members, while the public work arises from, and directly addresses Steiner's own understanding of universal needs. Nevertheless, as Rudolf Steiner stresses: 'Nothing was ever said that was not solely the result of my direct experience of the growing content of anthroposophy. There was never any question of concessions to the prejudices and preferences of the members. Whoever reads these privately printed lectures can take them to represent anthroposophy in the fullest sense. Thus it was possible without hesitation—when the complaints in this direction became too persistent—to depart from the custom of circulating this material "For members only". But it must be borne in mind that faulty passages do occur in these reports not revised by myself.' Earlier in the same chapter, he states: 'Had I been able to correct them [the private lectures], the restriction for members only would have been unnecessary from the beginning.' The original German editions on which this text is based were published by Rudolf Steiner Verlag, Dornach, Switzerland in the collected edition (Gesamtausgabe, 'GA') of Rudolf Steiner's work. All publications are edited by the Rudolf Steiner Nachlassverwaltung (estate), which wholly owns both Rudolf Steiner Verlag and the Rudolf Steiner Archive.