

ROSICRUCIANISM AND MODERN INITIATION

SIX LECTURES BY RUDOLF STEINER

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ROSICRUCIANISM AND MODERN INITIATION

I

RESEARCH INTO THE LIFE OF THE SPIRIT DURING THE MIDDLE AGES

In close connection with what I had to bring before you in the lectures given at our Christmas Foundation Meeting, I should like, in the lectures that are now to be given, to speak further of the movement that is leading us in modern times to research into the life of the spirit. I refer to the movement spoken of under the name of Rosicrucianism or some other occult designation, and I should like to take this opportunity of giving you a picture of it in its inner aspect and nature. It will be necessary first of all to say something, by way of introduction, about the whole manner of forming ideas which had become customary round about the ninth, tenth, and eleventh centuries A.D., and which only very gradually disappeared; for it is even to be found here and there among stragglers, as it were as late as the nineteenth century. I do not want today to deal with the matter from a historical point of view, but rather to place before your mind's eye conceptions and ideas that you are to think of as inwardly experienced by certain people belonging to these centuries. In point of fact it is not generally realised that we have only to go back a comparatively short time in history, to find that the men who were accounted to be scholars were possessed of a world of ideas altogether different from our own.

In these days we speak of chemical substances, we enumerate seventy or eighty chemical elements; but we have no idea how very little we are saying when we name one substance as oxygen, another as nitrogen, and so on. Oxygen, for instance, is something that is present only under certain well-defined conditions - conditions of warmth, e.g., and other circumstances of earthly life, and it is impossible for a reasonable person to unite a conception of *reality* with something that, when the temperature is raised by so and so many degrees, is no longer present in the same measure or manner as it is under the conditions that obtain for man's physical life on Earth. It was the realisation of facts like this that underlay research during the early and middle part of the Middle Ages; the life of research of those times set out to get beyond the relative in existence, to arrive at true existence.

I have marked a transition as between the ninth and tenth centuries A.D., because before this time man's perceptions were still altogether spiritual. It would never, for example, have occurred to a scholar of the ninth century to imagine Angels, Archangels, or Seraphim as falling short in respect of reality - purely in respect of *reality* - of the physical men he saw with his eyes. You will

find that before the tenth century, scholars always speak of the spiritual Beings, the so-called *Intelligences of the Cosmos*, as of beings one actually meets in life. The people of that time were of course well aware that the day was long past when such vision had been common human experience, but they knew that in certain circumstances the meeting could still take place. We must not, for instance, overlook the fact that on into the ninth and tenth centuries countless priests of the Catholic Church were quite conscious of how, in the course of their celebration of the Mass, it happened that in this or that enactment they met spiritual Beings, the Intelligences of the Cosmos. With the ninth and tenth centuries, however, the direct and immediate connection with the Intelligences of the Universe began to disappear from men's consciousness; and there began to light up, in its place, the consciousness of the *Elements of the Cosmos*, the earthy, the fluid or watery, the airy, the warm or fiery. And so it came about that just as hitherto men had spoken of Cosmic Intelligences that rule the movements of the planets, that lead the planets across the constellations of the fixed stars, and so forth, now they spoke instead of the immediate environment of the Earth. They spoke of the elements of earth, water, air, fire. Of chemical substances, in the modern sense of the word, they did not as yet take account. That came much later. It would, however, be a great mistake to imagine that the scholars of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries - even in a sense, the scholars of the eighteenth century - had ideas of warmth, air, water, earth, that resembled the ideas men have today. Warmth is spoken of today merely as a condition in which bodies exist. No one speaks any longer of actual warmth-ether. Air, water - these have likewise become for the modern man completely abstract. It is time we studied these ideas and learned to enter into a true understanding of them. And so today I should like to give you a picture, showing you how a scholar of those times would speak to his pupils.

When I wrote my *Outline of Occult Science* I was obliged to make the account of the evolution of the Earth accord at any rate a little with the prevailing ideas of the present day. In the thirteenth and twelfth centuries one would have been able to give the account quite differently. The following might then have been found in a certain chapter, e.g., of *Occult Science*. An idea would have been called up, to begin with, of the Beings who may be designated as the Beings of the First Hierarchy: *Seraphim, Cherubim, Thrones*. The Seraphim would have been characterised as Beings with whom there is no subject and object, with whom subject and object are one and the same, Beings who would not say: Outside me are things - but: The world is, and I am the World, and the World is I. Such Beings know only *of themselves*, and this knowledge of themselves is for them an inner experience of which man has a weak reflection when he has the experience of being filled, shall we say, with a *glowing enthusiasm*. It is, you know, quite difficult to make the man of today understand what is meant by "glowing enthusiasm." Even in the beginning of the nineteenth cen-

tury men knew better what it is than they do today. In those days it could still happen that some poem or other was being read aloud and the people were so filled with enthusiasm - forgive me, but it really was so - that present-day man would say they had all gone out of their minds. They were so moved, so warmed! Today people freeze up just when you expect them to be "enthused." Now it was lifting this element of enthusiasm, this rapture of the soul that came naturally especially to the men of Middle and Eastern Europe - it was by lifting it into consciousness, by making it alone the complete content of consciousness, that men came to form an idea of the inner life of the Seraphim. Again as a bright, clear element in consciousness, full of light, so that *thought turns directly into light*, illuminating everything - such an idea did men form of the element of consciousness of the Cherubim. And the element of consciousness of the Thrones was conceived as *sustaining, bearing the worlds in Grace*.

There you have one such sketch. I could go on speaking of it for a long time. For the moment I only wanted to show you that in those days one would have tried to describe the Seraphim, Cherubim and Thrones in the true qualities of their being.

And then one would have gone on to say: the Choir of Seraphim, Cherubim and Thrones works together, in such wise that the Thrones found and establish a kernel; the Cherubim let their own light-filled being stream forth from this centre or kernel; and the Seraphim enwrap the whole in a mantle of warmth and enthusiasm that rays far out into cosmic space. [footnote: Drawings were made on the blackboard, with coloured chalks]

All the drawing I have made is *Beings*: in the midst the Thrones; in the circumference around them the Cherubim; and, outermost of all, the Seraphim. All is essential Being, Beings who move and weave into one another, do, think, will, feel in one another. All is of the very essence of Being. And now, if a being having the right sensitiveness were to take its path through the space where the Thrones have in this manner established a kernel and centre, where the Cherubim have made a kind of circling around it and the Seraphim have, as it were, enclosed the whole - if a being with the required sensitiveness were to come into this realm of the activity of the First Hierarchy, it would feel warmth in varying differentiations - here greater warmth, there less; but it would all be an experience of soul, and yet at the same time physical experience in the senses; that is to say, when the being felt itself warm in soul, the feeling would be actually the feeling you have when you are in a well-warmed room.

Such a united building-up by Beings of the First Hierarchy did verily once take place in the Universe; it formed what we call the Saturn existence. The warmth is merely the expression of the fact that *the Beings are there*. The warmth is nothing more than the expression of the fact that the Beings are there.

A picture will perhaps make clearer to you what I mean. Let us suppose you have an affection for a certain human being. You feel his presence gives you warmth. But now someone comes along who is frightfully abstract and says: "The person himself doesn't interest me, I will imagine him absent; the warmth he sheds around him, that alone is what interests me." Or suppose he doesn't even say "The warmth *he sheds around him* is all that interests me." Suppose he says: "The *warmth* is all that interests me." He talks nonsense, of course, you will see that at once; for if the man is not there who sheds the warmth, then the warmth is not there either. The warmth is in any case only there when the man is there. In itself it is nothing. The man must be there, if the warmth is to be there. Even so must Seraphim, Cherubim and Thrones be there; if the Beings are not there, neither is the warmth. The warmth is merely the revelation of Seraphim, Cherubim and Thrones.

Now in the time of which I speak, everything was exactly as I have described it. Men spoke of Elements. They spoke of the Element of Warmth, and by the Element of Warmth they understood Cherubim, Seraphim, Thrones - and that is the Saturn existence.

The description went further. It was said: Seraphim, Cherubim, Thrones - these alone have the power to bring forth something of the nature of Saturn, to place it into the Cosmos. The highest Hierarchy alone is capable of placing such an existence into the Cosmos. But when this highest Hierarchy had once placed it there and a new world-becoming had taken its start, then the evolution could go on further. The Sun, as it were, that is formed of Seraphim, Cherubim and Thrones could carry evolution further. And it came to pass in the following manner. Beings of the Second Hierarchy, *Kyriotetes, Dynamis, Exusiai*, Beings that had been generated by the Seraphim, Cherubim and Thrones, press into the space that has been formed through the working of Seraphim, Cherubim and Thrones, that has been fashioned to Saturn warmth. Thither entered younger, cosmically younger Beings. And how did these cosmically younger Beings work? Whereas the Cherubim, Seraphim and Thrones reveal themselves in the Element of Warmth, the Beings of the second Hierarchy form themselves in the Element of *Light*. Saturn is dark; it gives warmth. And now within the dark world of the Saturn existence arises that which can arise through the working of the Sons of the First Hierarchy, through *Exusiai, Dynamis* and *Kyriotetes*.

What is it that is able now to arise within the Saturn warmth? The penetration of the Second Hierarchy signifies an *inner illumination*. The Saturn Warmth is inwardly shone through with light and at the same time it becomes denser. Instead of only the Warmth Element there is now also *Air*. And in the revelation of Light we have the entry of the Second Hierarchy.

You must clearly understand that it is in very deed and truth *Beings* who thus press their way into the Saturn existence. One who had the requisite power of perception would see the event as a penetration of *Light*; it is Light that reveals the path of the Beings. And wherever Light occurs, there occurs too, under certain conditions, shadow, darkness, dark shadow. Through the Penetration by the Second Hierarchy in the form of Light, shadow also comes to pass. What is shadow? It is *Air*. And indeed until the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries men knew what Air is. Today men know only that air consists of oxygen, nitrogen and so forth. When that is said, it is very much as if someone were to say about a watch that it consisted of glass and silver. He would be saying nothing at all about the watch. And nothing at all is said about Air as a cosmic phenomenon when we say that it consists of oxygen and nitrogen. We say very much, on the other hand, if we know: Air comes forth from the Cosmos as the *shadow of Light*. In actual fact we have, with the entry of the second Hierarchy into the Saturn warmth, the entry of Light and we have too the shadow of Light, Air. And when we have this we have Sun. Such is the way one would have had to speak in the thirteenth and twelfth centuries.

And what follows after this? The further evolution comes about through the working of the Sons of the Second Hierarchy - *Archai, Archangels, Angels*. The Second Hierarchy have accomplished the entry of the Element of Light, Light that has drawn after it its shadow, the darkness of Air - not the indifferent, neutral darkness that belongs to Saturn, the darkness that is simply absence of Light, but the darkness that is wrought out as the antithesis of Light. And now to this Element of Light the Third Hierarchy - Archai, Archangels, Angels - add through their own nature and being a new Element, an Element that is like our human desire, like our impulse to *strive after something*, to long for something. Thereby the following comes to pass.

Let us suppose an Archai or Archangel Being enters, and comes upon an Element of Light, encounters, as it were, a place of Light. In this place of Light the Being receives, through its receptivity for the Light, the urge, the desire for darkness. The Angel Being bears Light into darkness - or an Angel Being bears darkness into Light. These Beings are mediators, messengers between Light and Darkness. It follows from this that what previously has only shone in Light and drawn after it its shadow, the darkness of Air, begins now to shine in colour, to glow in a play of colour. Light begins to appear in darkness, darkness in light. The Third Hierarchy create *colour out of light and darkness*.

Here we may find a connection with something that is historical, with something that is to be found in written document. For in the time of Aristotle men still knew, when they contemplated in the Mysteries, whence colours come; they knew that the Beings of the Third Hierarchy have to do with colour. Therefore Aristotle, in his colour harmony, showed that colour signifies a

working together of Light and Darkness. But this spiritual element in man's thought, whereby he knew that behind Warmth he has to see Beings of the First Hierarchy, behind Light and its shadow Darkness, Beings of the Second Hierarchy, and behind the iridescent play of Colour he has to see in a great cosmic harmony, Beings of the Third Hierarchy - this spiritual element in man's thought has been lost. And nothing is left for man today but the unhappy Newtonian Theory of Colour. The Initiates continued to smile at Newton's theory till the eighteenth century, but in that time it became an article of faith for professional physicists.

One must indeed have lost all knowledge of the spiritual world when one can speak in the sense of Newton's Theory of Colour. If one is still inwardly stimulated by the spiritual world, as was the case with Goethe, then one resists it. One places before men the truth of the matter, as Goethe did, and attacks with might and main. For Goethe never censured so hardly as when he had to censure Newton, he went for him and his theory hammer and tongs! Such a thing is incomprehensible nowadays, for the simple reason that in our time anyone who does not recognise the Newtonian Theory of Colour is a fool in the eyes of the physicists. But things were different in Goethe's time. He did not stand alone. True, he stood alone as one who spoke openly on the matter; but there were others who really knew, even as late as the end of the eighteenth century, whence colour comes, who knew with absolute certainty how colour wells up from within the Spiritual.

But now we must go further. We have seen that Air is the shadow of Light. And as, when Light arises, under certain conditions we find the dark shadow, so when colour is present and works as a *reality* - and it can do so, for when it penetrates into the Air-element, it flames up in this Air, works in it, in a word is something, is no mere reflection but a reality flashing and sparkling in the Air-element - when this is so, then under certain conditions we get pressure, counter-pressure, and out of the real Colour there comes into being the fluid, the Element of *Water*. As, for cosmic thinking, the shadow of Light is *Air*, so is Water the reflection, the creation of Colour in the Cosmos.

You will say: No, that I *cannot* understand! But try for once really to grasp Colour in its true meaning. Red - surely you do not think that red is, in its essence, the neutral surface it is generally regarded as being? Red is something that makes an attack upon you. - I have often spoken of this. - You want to run away from red; it thrusts you back. Blue-violet, on the other hand, you want to run after! It runs away from you all the time; it grows deeper and ever deeper. Everything is contained in the colours. The colours are a world, and the soul element in the world of colour simply cannot exist without movement; we ourselves, if we follow the colours with soul-experience, must follow with movement.

People gaze open-eyed at the rainbow. [footnote: A sketch of a rainbow was made on the blackboard with chalks of the colours as seen in the sky: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, violet.] But if you look at the rainbow with a little imagination, you may see there elemental Beings. These elemental Beings are full of activity and demonstrate it in a very remarkable manner. Here (at yellow) you see some of them streaming forth from the rainbow, continually coming away out of it. They move across and the moment they reach the lower end of the green they are drawn to it again. You see them disappear at this point (green). On the other side they come out again. To one who views it with imagination, the whole rainbow manifests a streaming out of spirit and a disappearing of it again within. It is like a spiritual dance, in very deed a spiritual waltz, wonderful to behold. And you may observe too how these spiritual Beings come forth from the rainbow with terrible fear, and how they go in with invincible courage. When you look at the red-yellow, you see fear streaming out, and when you look at the blue-violet you have the feeling: there all is courage and bravery of heart.

Now picture to yourselves: There before me is no mere rainbow! Beings are coming out of it and disappearing into it - here anxiety and fear, there courage ... And now, here the rainbow receives a certain thickness and you will be able to imagine how this gives rise to the element of Water. In this watery element spiritual Beings live, Beings that are actually a kind of copy of the Beings of the Third Hierarchy.

There is no doubt about it: if we want to get near the men of real knowledge in the eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth centuries, we must understand these things. Indeed we cannot even understand the men of still later times, we cannot understand Albertus Magnus, if we read him with the knowledge we have today. We must read him with a manner of knowledge that takes account of the fact that spiritual things like these were still a reality for him: only then shall we understand how he expresses himself, how he uses his words.

Thus we have, as a reflection of the Hierarchies, first Air and then Water. The Hierarchies themselves dive in, as it were - the second Hierarchy in the form of Light, the third Hierarchy in the form of Colour. And with this latter event the Moon existence is attained.

And now we come to the *Fourth Hierarchy*. (I am telling it you, remember, as it was thought of in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.) We today do not speak of the Fourth Hierarchy; but men still spoke in that way in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. What is this Fourth Hierarchy? It is *Man*. Man himself is the fourth Hierarchy. But by the Fourth Hierarchy was not meant the two-legged being that goes about the world today, ageing year by year! To the true man of knowledge of those times, present-day man would have appeared as

something very strange. No, in those times they spoke of original Man, of Man before the Fall, who still bore a form that gave him power over the Earth, even as the Angels and Archangels and Archai had power over the Moon existence, the second Hierarchy over the Sun existence and the first Hierarchy over the Saturn existence. They spoke of Man in his original Earthly existence and then they were right to speak of him as the Fourth Hierarchy. And with this Fourth Hierarchy came - as a gift it is true, of the higher Hierarchies, but the higher Hierarchies have held it only as a possession they did not themselves use but guarded and kept - with the Fourth Hierarchy came *Life*. Into the world of Colour, into the iridescent world of changing colour, of which I have only been able to give you the merest hints and suggestions, came Life.

You will say: Then did nothing live before this time? My dear friends, you can understand how it is from the human being himself. Your Ego and your astral body have not life, and yet they exist, they have being. That which is of the soul and the spirit does not need life. Life begins only with your etheric body. And the etheric body is something external, it is of the nature of a sheath. Thus only after the Moon existence and with the Earth existence does Life enter into the domain of that evolution to which our Earth belongs. *The world of moving, glancing colour is quickened to life*. And now not only do Angels and Archangels and Archai experience a longing desire to carry Darkness into Light, and Light into Darkness, thereby calling forth the play of colour in the planet; now a desire becomes manifest to experience this play of colour as something *inward*, to feel it all inwardly; when Darkness dominates Light, to feel weakness, laziness; when Light dominates Darkness, to feel activity. For what is happening really, when you run? When you run, Light predominates over Darkness in you; when you sit and are lazy and indolent, then Darkness predominates over Light. It is a play of Colour, an activity of Colour, not physical, but of the soul. Colour permeated with Life, in its iridescence streamed-through with Life - that is what appeared with the coming of the Fourth Hierarchy, Man. And in this moment of cosmic becoming, the forces that became active in the play of colour began to *build contours*, began to fashion forms. Life, as it rounded off and moulded the colours, called into being the *hard, fast form of the crystal*. And we have come into Earth existence.

Such things as I have been describing to you were fundamental truths for the mediaeval alchemists and occultists, Rosicrucians and others, who flourished - though history tells us little of them - from the ninth and tenth on into the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and of whom stragglers are to be found as late as the eighteenth and even the beginning of the nineteenth century - always however in these later times regarded as strange and eccentric people. Only with the entry of the nineteenth century did this knowledge become entirely hidden. Only then did men come to acquire a conception of the world that led them to a

point of view which I will indicate in the following way. Imagine, my dear friends, that here we have a man. Suppose I cease to have any interest in this man, but I take his clothes and hang them on a coat-hanger that has a knob here above like a head. From now on I take no further interest in the man and I tell myself: *There* is the man! What does it matter to me what can be put into these clothes? *That*, the coat-hanger with the clothes, is the man! This is really what happened with the Elements. It does not interest us any longer that behind Warmth or Fire is the First Hierarchy, behind Light and Air the Second Hierarchy, behind what we call Chemical Ether or Colour Ether and Water the Third Hierarchy, and behind the Life Element and Earth the Fourth Hierarchy, Man. - The peg, the hanger and on it the clothes. - That is all!

There you have the first Act of the drama. The second Act begins with Kant! One has there the hanger and the clothes hanging on it, and one begins to philosophise in true Kantian fashion as to what the “thing-in-itself” of these clothes may be. And one comes to a realisation that the “thing-in-itself” of the clothes cannot be known. Very clever, very clever indeed! Of course, if you first take away the man and have only the coat-hanger with the clothes, you can philosophise over the clothes, you can make most beautiful speculations! You can either philosophise in Kantian fashion and say: “The ‘thing-in-itself’ cannot be known,” or in the fashion of Helmholtz and think to yourself: “But these clothes, they cannot of themselves have forms; there is nothing really there but tiny, whirling specks of dust, tiny atoms, which hit and strike each other and behold, the clothes are held in their form!”

Yes, my friends, that is the way thought has developed in recent times. It is all abstract, shadowy. And yet we live today in this way of thinking, in this way of speculating; it gives the stamp to our whole natural-scientific outlook. And when we do not admit that we think in this atomistic way, then we do it most of all! For we are very far from admitting that it is quite unnecessary to dream of a whirling dance of atoms, and that what we have rather to do is to *put back the man into the clothes*. This is however the very thing which the renewal of Spiritual Science must try to do.

I wanted to indicate to you today, in a number of pictures, the nature and manner of thinking in earlier centuries and what is really contained in the older writings, although it has become obscure. The very obscurity, however, has led to incidents that are not without interest. A Norwegian scientist of today has reprinted a passage from the writings of Basilius Valentinus and has interpreted it in terms of modern chemistry. He could not possibly say otherwise than that it is nonsense, because this is what it appears to be if, in the modern sense, one thinks of a chemist standing in a laboratory, making experiments with retorts and other up-to-date apparatus. What Basilius Valentinus really gives in this passage is a fragment of embryology, expressed in pictures. That

is what he gives - a fragment of embryology. According to the modern mode of thought it seems to indicate a laboratory experiment, which then proves to be nonsense. For you will not expect to reproduce the real processes of embryology in a retort - unless you be like the mediaevaly minded Wagner of Goethe's *Faust*.

It is time that these things were understood. And in connection with the great truths of which I was able to speak during the Christmas Foundation Meeting, I shall have more to say concerning the spiritual life and its history during the last few centuries.

ROSICRUCIANISM AND MODERN INITIATION

II

HIDDEN CENTRES OF THE MYSTERIES IN THE MIDDLE AGES

Yesterday I began to speak to you of the spiritual-scientific strivings of the ninth century after Christ. We learnt how such strivings were still seriously followed as late as the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries; and I endeavoured to tell you something of the content of these strivings. Today I should like to touch more on their historical aspect. We have to remember that the Mysteries of ancient times were of such a nature and character that in the places of the Mysteries an actual meeting with the Gods was able to take place. I described in the lectures recently given at the Christmas Foundation how the human being who was an Initiate or was about to receive Initiation could verily meet with the Gods. And it was also possible, in the Mysteries, to discover places which by their very locality were expressly fitted and prepared to induce such meeting with the Gods.

The preparation of these centres and the adoption of them as the official places - if I may use so crude an expression - is at the foundation of the impulses for all the older civilisations. Gradually, however, knowledge and understanding of these places disappeared; we may even say that from the time of the fourth century it is no longer to be found in its old form. Here and there we can still find survivals, but the knowledge is no longer so strict and exact. Notwithstanding this, however, Initiation never ceased; it was only the form in which the candidates found their way, that changed. I have already indicated how things were in the Middle Ages. I have told you how here and there were individuals, living simple, humble unpretentious lives, who did not gather around them a circle of official pupils in one particular place, but whose pupils were scattered in various directions in accordance with the karma of mankind or the karma of some people or nation. I have described one such instance in what I said about Johannes Tauler in my book *Mysticism and Modern Thought*. There is no need for me to speak about that here. I should like however to tell you of another typical example, one that had very great influence, lasting from the twelfth and thirteenth on into the fifteenth century. The spiritual streams that were working during these centuries are in large measure to be traced to the events of which I would like now to speak. Let me give you first, as it were, a sketch of the situation.

The time when these events took place is round about the year 1200 A.D. There were at that time a great number of people, especially younger people,

who felt within them the urge for higher knowledge, for a union with the spiritual world - one may truthfully say, for a meeting with the Gods. And the whole situation and condition of the times was such that very often it looked as though a man who was searching and striving in this way found his teacher almost by chance. In those days one could not find a teacher by means of books, it could only come about in an entirely personal way. And often it looked from without like a chance happening, although in reality deep connections of destiny were at work in the event. And it was so in the case of the pupil of whom I am now going to tell you.

This pupil found a teacher in a place in Middle Europe through just such an apparently chance event. He met an older man of whom he at once had the feeling: He will be able to lead me farther in that search which is the deepest impulse of my soul. And now let me give you the gist of a conversation between them. I do not of course mean that only *one* such conversation took place between teacher and pupil, but I am compressing several into one.

The pupil speaks to the teacher and tells him of his earnest desire to be able to see into the spiritual world; but it seems to him as though the nature of man as it is in that time - it is about the twelfth century - does not allow him to penetrate to the spiritual worlds. Nevertheless, he feels that in Nature one has something that is the work, the creation of divine-spiritual Beings. When one looks at what the objects of Nature are in their deeper meaning, when one observes how the processes of Nature take their course, one cannot but recognise that behind these creations stands the working of divine-spiritual Beings. But man cannot come through to these spiritual Beings. The pupil, who was a young man somewhere between 25 and 28 or so, felt strongly and definitely that the humanity of the time, because of the kind of connection of the physical body with the soul, cannot come through, it has hindrances in itself.

The teacher began by putting him to the test. He said to him: You have your eyes, you have your ears: look with your eyes on the things of Nature, hear with your ears what goes on in Nature; the Spiritual reveals itself through colour and through tone, and as you look and listen, you cannot help feeling how it reveals itself in these.

Then the pupil replied: Yes, but when I use my eyes, when I look out into the world, with all its colour, then it is as though my eye stops the colour, as though the colour suddenly turns numb and cold when it reaches the eye. When I listen with my ear to tones, it is as though the sounds turn to stone in my ear; the frozen colours and the dead, hard sounds will not let the spirit of Nature through. And the teacher said: But there is still the Revelation of the religious life. In Religion you are taught how Gods made and fashioned the world, and

how the Christ entered into the evolution of time and became Man. What Nature cannot give you, does not Revelation give?

And the pupil said: Revelation does indeed speak powerfully to my heart, but I cannot really comprehend it, I cannot connect what is out there in Nature with what Revelation says to me. It is impossible to bring them into relation with one another. And so, since I do not understand Nature, since Nature reveals nothing to me, neither do I understand the Revelation of Religion.

And the teacher made answer: I understand you well; it is even so. If you must speak thus, if it is with your heart and soul as you say, then you, as you stand in the world today, will not be able to understand either Nature or Revelation: for you live in a body that has undergone the Fall - such was the manner of speaking in those days - and this "fallen" body is not suited to the earthly environment in which you are living. The earthly environment does not afford the conditions for using your senses and your feeling and your understanding in such a way that you may behold in Nature and in Revelation a light, an enlightenment that comes from the Gods. If you are willing, I will lead you away out of the Nature of your earthly environment, which is simply unsuited to your being, I will lead you away from it and give you the opportunity to understand Revelation and Nature better. And the teacher and the pupil discussed together when this should take place.

One day, the teacher led the pupil up a high mountain, whence the surface of the Earth with its trees and flowers could no longer be seen at all - you know how this is so on high mountains - but as the pupil stood there with his teacher he could see below him as it were a sea of cloud, which completely covered the Earth with which he was familiar; up there one was far removed from the affairs of Earth - at all events, the situation suggested this. One looked out into space with its great masses of cloud, and one saw below as it were a sea, a moving, surging sea composed entirely of cloud. Morning mist, and the breath of morning in the air! Then the teacher began to speak to the pupil. He spoke of the wide spaces of the worlds, he spoke of the cosmic distances, of how, when one gazes out into these vastnesses in the night time, one sees the stars shining forth from thence. He told him many things, so that gradually the heart of the pupil, removed as it were far away from the Earth, became wholly given up to Nature and the manner of Nature's existence.

The preparation continued until the pupil came into a mood of soul which may be indicated by the following comparison. It was as though, not for a moment only, but for quite a long time, all that he had ever experienced during his earthly life in this incarnation were something he had dreamed. The scene now spread out before him, the rolling waves of cloud, the wide sea of cloud, with here and there a drift rising up like the crest of a wave; the far spaces of the

worlds, broken here and there by rising shapes of cloud - and scarcely even that, for there was no more than a glimpse here and there of cloud forms at the farthest end of space - this whole scene showing so little variation, having so little content in comparison with the manifold variety of all his experiences down below on the surface of the Earth, was now for the pupil like the content of his day-waking consciousness. And everything he had ever experienced on Earth was for him no more than the memory of a dream he had dreamed. Now, *now*, so it seemed to him, he had woken up. And whilst he continued to grow more and more awake, behold, from a cleft in the rock which he had not hitherto noticed, came forth a boy of 10 or 11 years old. This boy made a strange impression upon him, for he at once recognised in him his own self in the 10th or 11th year of his age. What stood before him was the Spirit of his Youth.

You will easily guess, my dear friends, that to this scene is due one of the impulses that made me introduce into the Mystery Plays the figure of the Spirit of Johannes' Youth. [footnote: The Soul's Awakening. Scene 6. Four Mystery Plays.] It is the "motif" alone you must think of, certainly not of anything like photography. The Mystery Plays are no occult romances where you have but to find the key, and all is plain!

The pupil stood before the Spirit of his boyhood, his very self. He, with his 15 or 28 years, stood face to face with the Spirit of his youth. And a conversation could take place, guided by the teacher, but in reality taking place between the pupil and his own younger self. Such a conversation has a unique character; you may see that for yourselves in the Mystery Plays, from the style that is there followed. For when a man is face to face with the Spirit of his own youth - and such a thing is always possible - then he gives something of his ripe understanding to the childlike ideas of the Spirit of his youth, and at the same time the Spirit of his youth gives something of his freshness, his childlikeness, to what the man of older years possesses. The meeting becomes fruitful in a spiritual way through the very fact of this mutual interchange. And this conversation had the result that the pupil came to understand Revelation, the Revelation that is given in religion.

The conversation turned especially on Genesis, the beginning of the Old Testament, and on the Christ becoming Man. Under the guidance of the teacher and because of the special kind of fruitfulness that worked in the conversation it ended with the pupil saying these words: "Now I understand what Spirit it is that works in the Revelation. Only when one is transplanted, as it were, far away from the earthly into the heights of the Ether, there to comprehend the Ether-heights with the help of the power of childhood - this power of childhood being projected into the later years of life - only then does one understand Revelation aright. And now I understand wherefore the Gods have given to man Revelation - for the reason that men are not able, in the state in which they

are on Earth, to see through the works of Nature and discover behind them the works of the Gods. Therefore did the Gods give them the Revelation which is ordinarily quite incomprehensible in the mature years of life, but which can be understood when childhood becomes real and living in the years of maturity. Thus it is really something abnormal, to understand the Revelation.”

All this made a powerful impression on the pupil. And the impression remained; he could not forget it. The Spirit of his youth vanished. The first phase of the instruction was over. A second had now to come. And the second took its course in the following way.

Once more the teacher led the pupil forth, but this time on a different path. He did not now lead him to a mountain top, but he took him to a mountain where there was a cave, through which they passed to deep, inner clefts, going down as far as the strata of the mines. There the pupil was with the teacher in the deep places of the Earth, not now in the Ether-heights raised high above the Earth, but in the depths, far down below the surface of the Earth.

Once again it was for the consciousness of the pupil as though all that he had ever experienced on Earth went past him like dreams. For he was living down there in an environment in which his consciousness was particularly awakened to perceive his relation with the depths of the Earth. What took place for him was really none other than what lies behind such legends as are told, for example, of the Emperor Barbarossa and his life in Kyffhauser, or of Charles the Great and his life beneath a mountain near Salzburg. It was something of this nature, that took place now, if only for a short time: it was a life in the depths of the Earth, far removed from the earthly life of man.

And again the teacher was able, by speaking with the pupil in a special way, to bring to his consciousness the fact - this time - of his union with the Earth-depths. And now there came forth out of a wall an old man, who was less recognisable to the pupil than the Spirit of his Youth, but of whom he nevertheless felt that after many years he would himself become that old man. He knew that there stood before him his own self in future old age. And now followed a similar conversation, this time between the pupil and his own older self - himself as an old man - once more a conversation under the guidance of the teacher.

What resulted from this second conversation was different from what came from the first; for now there began to arise within the pupil a consciousness of his own physical organisation. He felt how his blood flowed, he felt every single vein in his body; he went with it, went with the nerve fibres; he was made aware of all the single organs of his human organisation and the meaning and significance of each for the whole. And he felt too how all that is related to man out in the Cosmos works into him. He felt the inworking of the plant-

world, in its blossoming, in its rooting; he felt how the mineral element in the Earth works in the human organism. Down there in the depths he felt the forces of the Earth - how they are organised and how they circulate within his being; he felt them creating there within him, undergoing change, destroying and building substances; he felt the Earth creating, and weaving and being, in man. The result of this conversation was that when the old man, who was himself, had disappeared, the pupil could say: “Now has the Earth, in which I have been incarnated, at last really spoken to me through her beings; now a moment has been mine when I have seen through the things and processes of Nature, seen through them to the work of the Gods that is behind these things and processes of Nature.”

The teacher then led the pupil out again on to the Earth, and as he took leave of him, said: Behold now! The man of today and the Earth of today are so little suited to one another that you must receive the Revelation of Religion from the Spirit of your own Youth, receiving it on the mountain high up above the Earth, and you must receive the Revelation of Nature deep below the Earth, in clefts that are far down below the surface of the Earth. And if you can succeed in illuminating what your soul has felt in the hollow clefts of the Earth, with the light your soul has brought from the mountain, then you will attain unto wisdom.

Such was the path by which a deepening of the soul was brought about in those times - it was about the year 1200 A.D. - this is how the soul became filled with wisdom. The pupil of whom I have told you was thereby brought verily to Initiation, and he now knew what power he must put forth in his soul to arouse to activity the light of the heights and the feeling of the depths. Further instruction was then given him by the teacher, showing him how self-knowledge really always consists in this: - one perceives on the one hand that which lies high above Earth-man, and on the other hand that which lies deep below Earth-man: these two must meet in man's own inner being. Then does man find within his own being the power of God the Creator.

The Initiation that I have described to you is a characteristic example of the Initiations which led afterwards to what we may designate as “mediaeval Mysticism.” It was a mysticism that sought for self-knowledge, but always in order to find in the self the way to the divine. In later times this mysticism became abstract. The concrete union with the external world, as it was given for these pupils who were carried up into the Ether-heights and down into the Earth-depths, was no longer sought for. Consequently there was not the same deep stirring of the soul, nor did the whole experience attain to such a degree of intensity. And yet there was still the search, there was still the inner impulse to seek within for the God, for God the Creator. Fundamentally speaking, all the seeking and striving of Meister Eckhart, of Johannes Tauler and of the later

mystics whom I have described in my book *Mysticism and Modern Thought* owes its impulse to these earlier mediaeval Initiates.

Those who worked faithfully in the sense of such mediaeval forms of Initiation were however very much misunderstood, and it is by no means easy for us to find out what these pupils of the mediaeval Initiates were really like.

It is, as you know, possible to come a considerable distance along the path into the spiritual world. Those who follow thoroughly and actively what is given in my book *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds and its Attainment* do find the way into the spiritual worlds. Everything that has been physically real in the past is of course only to be found now by way of the spiritual world - therefore also such scenes as I have now described, for there are no material documents that record such scenes. There are however regions of the spiritual world which are hard of access even for a very advanced stage of spiritual power. In order to research into these regions, we must have come to the point of actually having intercourse with the Beings of the spiritual world, in a quite simple, natural way, as we have with men on Earth. When we have attained so far, we shall come to perceive and understand the connection between these Initiates of whom I have told you, and their pupils, e.g., such a pupil as Raimon Lull, who lived from 1235 to 1315 and who, in what history can tell of him, seems to leave us full of doubts and questions.

What you can learn of Raimon Lull by studying historical documents is indeed very scanty. But if you are able to enter into a personal relationship with Raimon Lull - you will allow me to use the expression: perhaps, in the light of all I have been telling you lately, it will not sound so paradoxical to you after all - if you are able to do this, then he shows himself to you as someone quite different from what the historical documents make him out to be. For he shows himself to be pre-eminently a personality who, under the influence and inspiration of the very Initiate of whom I have spoken to you as the "pupil," made the resolve to use all his power to bring about a renewal in his own time of the *Mysteries of the World*, of the Logos, as they had been in olden times. He set himself to renew the Mysteries of the Logos by means of that self-knowledge for which so powerful an impulse was working in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The so-called *Ars Magna* of Raimon Lull is to be adjudged from this point of view. He said to himself: When man speaks, then we really have in speech a microcosm. That which man utters in speech is in truth the whole man, concentrated in the organs of speech; the secret and mystery of each single word is to be sought in the whole human being, and therefore in the world, in the Cosmos.

And so the idea came to Raimon Lull that one must look for the secret of speech first in the human being, by diving down, as it were, from the speech

organs into the whole organism of the human being; and then in the Cosmos, for the whole human organism is to be explained and understood out of the Cosmos. Let us suppose, for example, we want to understand the true significance of the sound A (as in "father"). The point is that the sound A, which comes about through the forming and shaping of the outgoing breath, depends on a certain inner attitude of the etheric body, which you can easily learn to know today. Eurhythmy will show it you; for this attitude of the etheric body is carried over in Eurhythmy to the physical body and becomes the Eurhythmic movement for the sound A.

All this was not by any means fully clear to Raimon Lull; with him it was more of a dim, intuitive feeling. He did however get so far as to follow the inner attitude or gesture of the human being out into the Cosmos and say, for example: If you look in the direction of the constellation of the Lion (Leo), and then look in the direction of the Balance (Libra), the connection between the two lines of vision will give you A. Or again, turn your eye in the direction of Saturn. Saturn stops your line of vision, comes in the way. And if Saturn, for example, stands in front of the Ram (Aries), you have, as it were, to go round the Ram with Saturn. And then you have from out of the Cosmos the feeling of O. [footnote: "Readers unfamiliar with the movements in Eurhythmy for the sounds of speech, are recommended to turn to the first three chapters of the book *Eurhythmy as Visible Speech* (15 lectures) by Rudolf Steiner]

From ideas like these, though dimly perceived, Raimon Lull went on to find certain geometrical figures, the corners and sides of which he named with the letters of the alphabet. And he was quite sure that when one experiences a feeling and impulse to draw lines in the figures - diagonals, for instance, across a pentagon, uniting the five points in different ways - then one has to see in these lines different combinations of sounds, which combinations of sounds express certain secrets of the World-All, of the Cosmos. Thus did Raimon Lull look for a kind of renaissance of the secrets of the Logos, as they were known and spoken of in the Ancient Mysteries. You will find it all quite misrepresented in the historical documents. When however one enters little by little into a personal relationship with Raimon Lull, then one comes to see how in all these efforts he was trying to solve once more the riddle of the Cosmic Word. And it is a fact that the pupils of the mediaeval Initiates continued for several centuries to spend their lives in endeavours of this kind. It was an intensive striving, first to immerse oneself in man, and then to come forth as it were, to rise out of the human being into the secrets of the Cosmos.

Thus did these wise men - for we may truly call them so - seek to unite Revelation with Nature. They believed - and much of their belief was well-founded - that in this way they could come behind the Revelation of Religion and behind the Revelation of Nature. For it was quite clear to them that man, as he is now

living on the Earth, was destined and intended to become the Fourth Hierarchy, but that he has “fallen” from his true and proper nature, and become more deeply involved in physical existence than he should be, thereby at the same time losing the power adequately to develop his soul and spirit. It was from such strivings that there arose, later on, what we know as the Rosicrucian Movement.

It was at a place of instruction of the Rosicrucians, of the first, original Rosicrucians, that the scene I have depicted to you today, the scene between the teacher and the pupil, at first upon a high mountain and then down in a deep cleft of the Earth, emerged like a kind of Fata Morgana, came again as it were like a ghost, reflected within a Rosicrucian school as knowledge. And it taught the pupils to recognise how man has by inner effort and striving to attain to two things, if he would come to a true self-knowledge, if he would find again his adjustment to the Earth and be able at last to become in actual reality a member of the Fourth Hierarchy. For within the Rosicrucian School the possibility was given to recognise what it was that had taken place with the pupil when he had seen before him in bodily form the Spirit of his Youth. A loosening of the astral body had taken place; the astral body, that was stronger at that moment than it otherwise ever is in life, was loosened. And in this loosening of the astral body the pupil had come to know the meaning and significance of Revelation. And again, what took place with the pupil in the depths of the Earth was also made clear and comprehensible in the Rosicrucian School. This time the astral body was drawn right back within. It was contracted and drawn together, so that the pupil was able to perceive and apprehend the certainty of man’s own inner being.

And now exercises were found within Rosicrucianism, comparatively simple exercises, consisting in symbolic figures, to which one gave oneself up in devotion and meditation. The force and power of which the soul became possessed through devotion to these figures, enabled the students on the one hand to loosen the astral body and become like the pupil on the mountain top in the Ether-heights, and on the other hand, through the compression and contraction of the astral body, to become like the pupil in the clefts of the Earth. And it was then possible, without the help, as before, of external environment, simply through performing a powerful inner exercise, to enter into the inner being of man.

I have given you here a picture of something to which I have made a slight allusion in my preface to the new edition of the book *Mysticism and Modern Thought*. I said there that what we find in Meister Eckhart, in Johannes Tauler, in Nicolas Cusa, in Valentine Wiesel and the rest, is a late product of a great and mighty striving of mankind, an earlier, original striving that preceded them all. And this earlier striving in the Spirit, this search for self-knowledge, in

connection on the one hand with Revelation and on the other hand with the illumination of Nature - I wanted to show you today how this is one of the currents that take their course in the so-called “Dark Ages.”

The man of modern times conjures darkness into the Middle Ages out of his own imagination. In reality there were in those times many enlightened spirits, of such a kind however, that the “enlightened” spirits of today cannot understand their light and consequently remain in the dark.

It is indeed characteristic of modern times, that men take light for darkness and darkness for light. If however we can look into what lies behind the literature of those earlier times and are able to see that of which the literature gives only a dim reflection, then we may receive a powerful and lasting impression.

Something of this I wanted to show you today: tomorrow we will complete the picture.

ROSICRUCIANISM AND MODERN INITIATION

III

THE TIME OF TRANSITION

I spoke to you yesterday of the special form in which the results of research in the realm of spiritual knowledge were communicated in the Middle Ages. This form was, so to speak, the last Act before a door was shut for the evolution of the spirit of man, a door that had been open for many centuries and given entrance by way of natural gift and faculty into the spiritual world. The door was shut when the time came for man, so far as his instinctive faculties were concerned, to be placed out-side the kingdom of the divine-spiritual Will that ruled over him. From that time forward he had to find in his own inmost being, in his own will, the possibility to evolve conscious freedom in the soul.

All the great moves of evolution, however, take place slowly, gradually, step by step. And the experience that had been attained by the pupil when the teacher led him up into the Ether-heights and down into the deep clefts of the Earth - even in those times it was no longer possible in the form it had taken in the ancient Mysteries - this experience was now, in later times, directly connected with an experience of Nature (though not with Nature on the Earth's surface itself) which came to man in a more unconscious form.

Think for a moment how it was with those persons who strove after knowledge about the year 1200 and on through the following century. They heard tell how, only a short time before, pupils were still able to find teachers, like the one of whom I told you yesterday; but they themselves were directed to human thinking as the means of attaining knowledge.

In the succeeding time of the Middle Ages we can see this human thinking developing and spreading, asserting itself in an impressive manner. It sets out on new paths with inner zeal, with sincere and whole-hearted devotion, and these paths are followed by large circles of knowledge-seekers. What we may truly call the knowledge of the Spiritual, that too continued its way. And after a few centuries we come to the time when Rosicrucianism proper was founded. Rosicrucianism is connected with a change that took place in the whole spiritual world in respect of man. I shall best describe the change by giving you once again a picture.

Mysteries in the old sense of the word were no longer possible in the time of which I have been speaking. There were however men who yearned for knowledge in the sense of the ancient Mysteries, and who experienced hard and heavy conflicts of soul when they heard how in the past men had been led up to

the mountain and down to the clefts of the Earth, and had thus found knowledge. They developed all possible inner methods, they made all possible inner efforts in order to rouse the soul within them, that it might after all yet find the way. And he who is able to see such things can find in those times, as we said just now, not places of the Mysteries, but gatherings of knowledge-seekers who met together in an atmosphere warmed through and through with the glow of piety. What appears later as Rosicrucianism, sound and genuine Rosicrucianism, as well as the debased and charlatan kinds, comes in reality from men who gathered together in this simple way and sought so to temper their souls that genuine spiritual knowledge might yet be able to arise for them. In such a gathering, that took place in most unpretentious surroundings, the simple living-room of a kind of manor house, a few persons were once met, who, through certain exercises half thoughtful and meditative in character, half of the nature of prayer, done in common by them all, had developed a mystical mood in which all shared. It was the same mystical mood of soul that was cultivated in later times by the so-called "Brothers of the Common Life," and later still by the followers of Comenius and by many other Brotherhoods. In this small circle, however, it showed itself with a peculiar intensity, and whilst these few men were there gathered together, making devotion, so to say, of their ordinary consciousness, of their whole intellect, in this intense mystical atmosphere of soul, it happened that a being came to them, not a being of flesh and blood like the teacher whom the pupil met and who led him to the mountains and to the clefts of the Earth, but a being who was only able to appear in an etheric body in this little company of men. This being revealed himself as the same who had guided the pupil about the year 1200. He was now in the after-death state. He had descended to these men from the spiritual world; they had drawn him thither by the mood of soul that prevailed in them - mystical, meditative, pious.

My dear friends, in order that no misunderstanding may arise, let me expressly emphasise that there is there no question of any mediumistic power. The little company who were gathered there would have looked upon any use - or any sanctioning - of mediumistic powers, as deeply sinful; they would have been led to do so by certain ideas belonging to old and honoured tradition. Just in those very communities of which I am telling you, mediumship and all that is related to it was regarded not merely as harmful but as sinful - and for the following reason. These persons knew that mediumship goes together with a peculiar constitution of the physical body; they knew that it is the physical body that gives the medium his spiritual powers. But the physical body they looked upon as "fallen," and information that came by the help of mediumship they could not but regard under all circumstances as acquired by the help of Ahimanic or Luciferic powers.

In those times, things like this were still clearly and exactly known. And so we have not to think of anything mediumistic in this connection. There was the mood of mysticism and meditation, and that alone. And it was the enhancing and strengthening of this mood through fellowship of soul, that, so to speak, enchanted into the circle, but of his own free-will, that disembodied human being, purely spiritual, and yet at the same time human.

The being spoke to them thus, in a deeply solemn manner: - "You are not altogether prepared for my appearance but I am among you discarnate, without physical body, forasmuch as a time has come when for a short period of Earth existence the Initiate of olden times is unable to appear in a physical body. The time will come again when he can do so, when the Michael period begins. But I am come to reveal to you that the inner being of man nevertheless remains unchanged, that the inner being of man, if it holds itself aright, can yet find the way to the divine-spiritual existence. For a period of time, however, the human intellect and understanding will be so constituted that it will have to be suppressed in order for that which is of the Spirit to be able to speak to the human soul. Therefore remain in your mystic and pious mood of soul ... You have received from me, all of you together, the picture, the imagination. I have, however, been able to give you no more than a mere indication of that which will come to fulfilment within you; you will go on further and find a continuation of what you have here experienced!" -

And now, three from the number gathered there together, were chosen, to the end that they might establish a special union with the spiritual world, once more not at all through any kind of mediumistic powers but through a development of that mystic, meditative, pious mood of soul. These three, who were guarded and protected by the rest of the circle, closely and intimately cared for by the others, experienced from time to time a kind of absence of mind. They were at these times, in their external bodily nature, wonderfully lovely and beautiful, they acquired a sort of shining countenance, shining like the sun, and they wrote down, in symbols, revelations which they received from the spiritual world. These symbolic revelations were the first pictures by which the Rosicrucians were shown when it behoved them to know of the spiritual world. These revelations contained a kind of philosophy, a kind of theology and also a kind of medicine.

And the remarkable thing was that the others (it seems to me as though the others were four in number, so that the whole was a company of seven), after the experience they had with their brothers, beholding how their eyes shone like the sun and how their countenances were bright and radiant - these other four were able to give again in ordinary language what was conveyed in the symbols. The brothers whose destiny it was to bring the symbols from the spiritual world, could only write down the symbols, they could only say, when

they returned again into their ordinary consciousness: "We have been among the stars, and have found the old teachers of the secret knowledge." They could not themselves turn the symbolic pictures that they drew, into ordinary human speech. The others could and did. And this is the source of a great deal of knowledge that passed over into the literature of the theology, more particularly such as was philosophical in character (not the theology of the Church but rather of the laity) and into the literature of medicine. And what was thus received from the spiritual world in symbols was afterwards communicated to small groups that were organised by the first Rosicrucians.

Again and again, in the time from the thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries, there was still the possibility in certain very small groups for experiences of this nature. Revelations came frequently to men from the spiritual world in this or some similar way. But those who had to translate what was thus revealed in pictures were not always capable of doing it quite faithfully. Hence the want of clarity in the philosophy of this period. One has to discover for oneself what it really means, by seeking for it again in the world of the Spirit. For those however who have had knowledge of this kind of revelation received from the spiritual world, it has always been possible to link on to such revelations.

But picture to yourselves, my dear friends, what strange feelings must gradually have come over these men, who had to receive the very highest knowledge - for what was given to them was so accounted - from a direction that was growing more and more foreign, almost uncanny, to them; for they could no longer see into the world out of which the secrets came to them; ordinary consciousness could not reach so far. It can readily be understood that such things easily led to charlatanism and even to fraud. Indeed at no time of human evolution have charlatanism and the highest and purest of revelation stood so close to one another as in this period. It is difficult to distinguish the true from the false - so much so that many regard the whole of Rosicrucianism as charlatan. One can understand this, for the true Rosicrucians are extra-ordinarily hard to find among the charlatans, and the whole matter is all the more difficult and problematic for the reason that one has always to bear in mind that the spiritual revelation comes from sources which in their real quality and nature remain hidden.

The small circles gathered by the first Rosicrucians grew to a larger brotherhood, who always went about unrecognised, appearing here and there in the world, generally with the calling of a physician, healing the sick, and at the same time spreading knowledge as they went. And it was so that in regard to very much of this knowledge, the spreading of it was not without a certain embarrassment, inasmuch as the men who carried it on were not able to speak of the connection in which they stood to the spiritual world.

But now something else was developed in this pursuit of spiritual knowledge and spiritual research, something that is of very great beauty. There were the three brethren and the four. The three are only able to attain their goal when the four work together with them. The two groups are absolutely interdependent. The three receive the revelations from the spiritual world, the four are able to translate them into ordinary human language. What the three give would be nothing but quite unintelligible pictures, if the four were not able to translate them. And again, the four would have nothing to translate, if the three did not receive their revelations, in picture form, from the spiritual world. This gave rise to the development within such communities of an inner brotherhood of soul, a brotherhood in knowledge and in spiritual life, which in some circles of those times was held to be among the very highest of human attributes. Such small groups of men did indeed learn to know through their striving the true worth of brotherhood. And gradually they came more and more to feel how the evolution of humanity towards freedom is such that the bond between men and Gods would be completely severed were it not kept whole by such brotherhood, where the one looks to the other, where the one is in very truth dependent on the other.

We have here a picture of something in the soul which is wonderfully beautiful. And much that was written in those days possesses a certain charm which we only understand when we know how this atmosphere of brotherhood which permeated the spiritual life of many circles in Europe in those times, shed its radiant light into the writings.

There is however another mood that we find in those who are striving for knowledge, and this mood began gradually to pervade their whole endeavours and made people anxious. If in those times one did not approach the sources of spiritual revelation, ultimately it was so that one could no longer know whether these revelations were good or evil. And a certain anxiety began to be felt in regard to some of the influences. The anxiety spread later over large circles of people, who came to have fear, intense fear of all knowledge.

The development of the mood of which I speak may be particularly well studied in the examples of two men. One is Raimund of Sabunda, who lived in the fifteenth century, being born about 1430. Raimund of Sabunda is a remarkable man. If you study carefully what remains to us of his thought, then you will have the feeling: This is surely almost the very same revelation that was communicated in full consciousness about the year 1200 by the teacher who took his pupil to the mountain tops and to the chasms of the Earth! Only in Raimund of Sabunda of the fifteenth century, it is all given in a vague, impersonal style, philosophical in character, theological too and medical. The truth is that Raimund of Sabunda had also received his revelations by way of the genuine Rosicrucians, that is to say, by the path that had been opened by the great Initi-

ate of the twelfth century, whose work and influence I described to you yesterday, and who continued to inspire men from out of the spiritual world, as I have been relating to you today. For the revelation that afterwards came through Rosicrucianism, as I have often described to you, came originally from this great Initiate and those who were with him in the spiritual world; the mood and feeling of the whole teaching was set by him. Anxiety, however, was at this time beginning to take hold of men. Now Raimund of Sabunda was a bold, brave spirit, he was one of those men who can value ideas, who understand how to live in ideas. And so, although we notice in him a certain vagueness due to the fact that the revelations have their source after all in the spiritual world, yet in him we find no trace of anxiety or fear in regard to knowledge.

All the more striking is another and very characteristic example of that spiritual stream: Pico della Mirandola, who also belongs to the fifteenth century.

The short-lived Pico della Mirandola is a very remarkable figure. If you study deeply the fruits of his thought and contemplation, you will see how the same initiative I have just described is everywhere active in them, due to the continuation of the wisdom of that old Initiate by way of the Rosicrucian stream. But in Pico della Mirandola you will observe a kind of shrinking back before this knowledge. Let me give you an instance. He established how everything that happens on Earth - stones and rock coming into being, plants living and growing and bearing fruit, animals living their life - how all this cannot be attributed to the forces of the Earth. If anyone were to think: There is the Earth, and the forces of the Earth produce that which is on the Earth, he would have quite a wrong notion of the matter. The true view, according to Pico della Mirandola, is that up there are the Stars and what happens in the Earth is dependent on the Stars. One must look up to the Heavens, if one wants to understand what happens on Earth. Speaking in the sense of Pico della Mirandola we should have to say: You give me your hand, my brother man, but it is not your feeling alone that is the cause why you give me your hand, it is the star standing over you that gives you the impulse to hold out your hand to me. Ultimately everything that is brought about has its source in the Heavens, in the Cosmos; what happens on Earth is but the reflection of what happens in the Heavens.

Pico della Mirandola gives expression to this as his firm conviction, and yet at the same time he says: But it is not for man to look up to these causes in the stars, he has only to take account of the immediate cause on Earth.

From this point of view Pico della Mirandola combats - and it is most characteristic that he does so - the Astrology that he finds prevalent. He knows well that the old, real and genuine Astrology expresses itself in the destinies of men.

He knows that; it is for him a truth. And yet he says: one should not pursue Astrology, one should look only for the immediate causes.

Note well what it is we have before us here. For the first time we are confronted with the idea of “boundaries” to knowledge. The idea shows itself in a significant manner, it is still, shall we say, human in character. Later, in Kant, in du Bois-Reymond, you will find expressed in them: “Man cannot cross the boundaries of knowledge.” The idea is said to rest on an inner necessity. That is not the case with Pico della Mirandola in the fifteenth century. He says: “What is on Earth, has undoubtedly come about through cosmic causes. But man is called upon to forgo the attainment of a knowledge of these cosmic causes; he has to limit himself to the Earth.” Thus we have in the fifteenth century, in such a markedly characteristic person as Pico della Mirandola, voluntary renunciation of the highest knowledge.

My dear friends, we have here a spiritual event in the history of culture of the greatest imaginable importance. Men made the resolve: We will renounce knowledge! And that which comes to pass externally in such a person as Pico della Mirandola has once more, in very deed and fact, its counterpart in the Spiritual.

It was again in one of those simple gatherings of Rosicrucians that in the second half of the fifteenth century, on the occasion of a ritual arranged for this very purpose, man’s Star-knowledge was in deeply solemn manner offered up in sacrifice. What took place in that ritual, which was enacted in all the solemnity proper to such a festival, may be expressed as follows. - Men stood before a kind of altar and said: “We resolve now to feel ourselves responsible not for ourselves alone nor our community, nor our nation, nor even only for the men of our time; we resolve to feel ourselves responsible for all men who have ever lived on Earth, to feel that we belong to the whole of mankind. And we feel that mankind has deserted the rank of the Fourth Hierarchy and has descended too deeply into matter” (for the Fall into Sin was understood in this sense) “and in order that man may be able to return to the rank of the Fourth Hierarchy, may be able to find for himself in freedom of will what in earlier times Gods have tried to find for him and with him, let now the higher knowledge be offered up for a season!”

And certain Beings of the spiritual world, who are not of human kind, who do not come to Earth in human incarnation, accepted the sacrifice in order to fulfil therewith certain purposes in the spiritual world. It would take us too far to speak of these here; we will do so another time. But the impulse to freedom was thereby made possible for man from out of the spiritual world.

I tell you of this ritual in order to show you how everything that takes place in the external life of the physical senses has its spiritual counterpart; we have

only to look for it in the right place. For it can happen that such a celebration, enacted - I will not say in this instance, with full knowledge, but enacted by persons who stand in connection with the spiritual world - may have very deep meaning; from it can radiate impulses for a whole culture or a whole stream of civilisation. Whoever wants to know the fundamental colouring and tone of a particular epoch of time must look for that source in the Spiritual whence spring the forces that stream through this epoch of time.

In the years that followed, whatever came into being of a truly spiritual nature, was an echo of this creative working from out of the unknown spiritual worlds. And side by side with the external materialism that developed in the succeeding centuries, we can always find individual spirits who lived under the influence of that renunciation of the higher knowledge.

I should like to give you a brief description of a type of man who might be met with from the fifteenth century onwards through the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. You might find him in some country village as a herb-gatherer for an apothecary, or in some other simple calling. If one takes an interest in special forms and manifestations of the being of man as they show themselves in this or that individuality, then one may meet and recognise such a person. At first he is extraordinarily reserved, speaks but little, perhaps even turns away your attention from what you are trying to find in him by talking in a trivial manner, on purpose to make you think it is not worth while to converse with him. If, however, you know better than to look merely at the content of the words a man says, if you know how to hear the ring of the words, how to listen to the way the words come out of a man, then you will go on listening to such a one, despite all discouragement. And if out of some karmic connection he receives the impression that he really should speak to you, then he will begin to speak, carefully and guardedly. And you will make the discovery that he is a kind of wise man. But what he says is not earthly wisdom. Neither is there contained in it much of what we now call spiritual science. But they are warm words of the heart, far-reaching moral teachings; nor is there anything sentimental about his way of uttering them, he speaks them rather as proverbs.

He might say something like this. “Let us go over to yonder fir-tree. My soul can creep into the needles and cones, for my soul is everywhere. From the cones and needles of the fir-tree, my soul sees through them, looks out into the deeps and distances of the worlds beyond; and then I become one with the whole world. That is the true piety, to become one with the whole world. Where is God? God is in every fir-cone. And he who does not recognise God in every fir-cone, he who sees God somewhere else than in every fir-cone - he does not know the true God.”

I want only to describe to you how these men spoke, men that you might find in the way I have described. Such was their manner of speaking. And they might go on to say more. "Yes, and when one creeps into the fir-cones and into the needles of the fir-tree, then one finds how the God rejoices over the human beings in the world. And when one descends deep down into one's own heart, into the abysses of the innermost of man's nature, there also one finds the God; but then one learns to know how He is made sad through the sinfulness of men."

In such wise spake these simple sages. A great number of them possessed - to speak in modern language - "editions" of the geometrical figures of the old Rosicrucians. These they would show to those who approached them in the right way. When however they spoke about these figures - which were no more than quite simple, even poor, impressions - then the conversation would unfold in a strange manner. There were many people who, although they took interest in the unpretentious wise man before them, were at the same time overcome with curiosity as to what these strange Rosicrucian pictures really meant, and asked about them. But they received from these wise men, who were often regarded as eccentric, no clear and exact answer; they received only the advice: If one attains the right deepening of soul, then one can see through these figures, as through a window, into the spiritual world. The wise men would give as it were a description of what they themselves had been able to feel and experience from the figures rather than any explanation or interpretation of them. And often it was so, that when one had heard these expressions of feeling in connection with the figures, one could not put them into thought at all; for these simple sages did not give thoughts. What they gave, however, had an after-working that was of immense significance. One left these men, not only with warmth in one's soul, but with the feeling: I have received a knowledge that lives in me, a knowledge I can by no means enclose in thoughts and concepts.

That was one of the ways in which, during this period from the fourteenth, fifteenth to the end of the eighteenth century, the nature of the Divine and the nature of the Human, what God is and what Man is, was taught and made known to man through feeling. We cannot quite say, without words, but we can say, without ideas, although not on that account without content.

In this period much intercourse went on among men by means of a silencing of thought. No one can arrive at a true conception of the character of this period who does not know how much was brought to pass in those days through this silencing of thought, when men interchanged not mere words but their very souls.

I have given you, my dear friends, a picture of one of the features of that time of transition when freedom was first beginning to flourish among men. I shall have more to say on this from many aspects. For the moment, taking my start from all that took place at the Christmas Foundation Meeting, I wanted here to add something further to what was given then.

ROSICRUCIANISM AND MODERN INITIATION

IV

THE RELATIONSHIP OF EARTHLY MAN TO THE SUN

Heart-Knowledge and the Attitude of the Rosicrucian Schools

What I have been telling you in recent lectures requires to be carried a little further. I have tried to give you a picture of the flow of spiritual knowledge through the centuries, and of the form it has taken in recent times, and I have been able to show how from the fifteenth until the end of the eighteenth or even the beginning of the nineteenth century, the spiritual knowledge that was present before that period as clear and concrete albeit instinctive knowledge, showed itself in this later age more in a devotion of heart and soul to the Spiritual, to all that is of the Spirit in the world.

We have seen how the knowledge man possessed of Nature and of how the spiritual world works in Nature, is still present in the eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth centuries. In a personality like Agrippa of Nettesheim, whom I have described in my book *Mysticism and Modern Thought*, we have one who was still fully possessed of the knowledge, for example, that in the several planets of our system are spiritual Beings of quite definite character and kind.

In his writings, Agrippa of Nettesheim assigns to each single planet what he calls the *Intelligence* of the planet. This points to traditions which were still extant from olden times, and even in his day were something more than traditions. To look up to a planet in the way that became customary in later Astronomy and is still customary today, would have been utterly impossible to a man like Agrippa of Nettesheim. The external planet, nay, every external star was no more than a sign, an announcement, so to say, of the presence of spiritual Beings, to whom one could look up with the eye of the soul, when one looked in the direction of the star. And Agrippa of Nettesheim knew that the Beings who are united with the single stars are the Beings who rule the inner existence of the star or the planet, rule also the movements of the planet in the Universe, the whole activity of the particular star. And such Beings he called: the Intelligence of the star.

Agrippa knew also how, at the same time, hindering Beings work from the star, Beings who undermine the good deeds of the star. They too work from out of the star and also into it; and these Beings he called *Demons* of the star. And together with this knowledge went an understanding of the Earth, that saw in the Earth too a heavenly body having its Intelligence and its Demon. The understanding however for star Intelligence and star Demonology was little by

little completely lost, with all that was involved in it. What was essentially involved in it may be expressed in the following way.

The Earth was of course looked upon as ruled in her inner activity, in her movement in the Cosmos, by Intelligences whom one could bring together under the name of the Intelligence of the Earth star. But what was the Intelligence of the Earth star, for the men of Agrippa's time? It is exceedingly difficult today even to speak of these things, because the ideas of men have travelled very far away from what was accepted as a matter of course in those times by men of insight and understanding. The Intelligence of the Earth star was *Man* himself, the human being as such. They saw in Man a being who had received a task from the Spirituality of the Worlds, not merely, as modern man imagines, to walk about on the Earth, or to travel about it in trains, to buy and sell, to write books, and so forth and so forth - no, they conceived Man as a being to whom the World-Spirit had given the task to rule and regulate the Earth, to bring law and order into all that has to do with the place of the Earth in the Cosmos. Their conception of Man was expressed by saying: Through what he is, through the forces and powers he bears within his being, Man gives to the Earth the impulse for her movement around the Sun, for her movement further in Universal Space.

There was in very truth still a feeling for this. It was known that the task had once been allotted to Man, that Man had really been made the Lord of the Earth by the World-Spirituality, but in the course of his evolution had not shown himself equal to the task, had fallen from his high estate. When men are speaking of knowledge nowadays it is very seldom that one hears even a last echo of this view. What we find in religious belief concerning the Fall really goes back ultimately to this idea; for there the point is that originally Man had quite another position on the Earth and in the Universe from the position he takes today; he has fallen from his high estate. Setting aside however this religious conception and considering the realm of thought, where men think they have knowledge that they have attained by definite and correct methods, it is only here and there that we can still find today an echo of the ancient knowledge that once proceeded from instinctive clairvoyance, and that was well aware of Man's task and of his Fall into his present narrow limitations.

It may still happen, for example, that one may have a conversation with a person - I am here relating facts - who has thought very deeply, who has also acquired very deep knowledge concerning this or that matter in the spiritual-realm. The conversation turns on whether Man, as he stands on Earth today, is really a creature who is self-contained, who carries his whole being and nature within him. And such a personality as I have described will say to you, that this cannot be. Man must really in his nature be a far more comprehensive being - otherwise he could not have the striving he has now, he could not develop the

great idealism of which we can see such fine and lofty examples; in his true nature Man must be a great and comprehensive being, who has somehow or other committed a cosmic sin, as a consequence of which he has been banished within the limits of this present earthly existence, so that today he is really sitting imprisoned as it were in a cage. You may still meet with this view here and there as a late straggler, as it were. But speaking generally, where shall we find one who accounts himself a scientist, who seriously occupies himself with these great and far-reaching questions? And yet it is only by facing them that man can ever find his way to an existence worthy of him as man.

It was, then, really so that Man was regarded as the bearer of the Intelligence of the Earth. But now, a person like Agrippa of Nettesheim ascribed to the Earth also a Demon. When we go back to the twelfth or thirteenth century, we find this Demon of the Earth to be a Being who could only become what he became on the Earth, because he found in Man the tool for his activity.

In order to understand this, we must acquaint ourselves with the way men thought about the relationship of the Earth to the Sun, or of Earthly man to the Sun, in those days. And if I am now to describe to you how they understood this relationship, then I must again speak in Imaginations: for these things will not suffer themselves to be confined in abstract concepts. Abstract concepts came later, and they are very far from being able to span the truth; we have therefore to speak in pictures, in Imaginations.

Although, as I have described in my *Outline of Occult Science*, the Sun separated itself from the Earth, or rather separated the Earth off from itself, it is nevertheless the original abode of Man. For ever since the beginning of the Saturn existence Man was united with the whole planetary system including the Sun. Man has not his home on Earth, he has on Earth only a temporary resting place. He is in truth, according to the view that prevailed in those olden times, a Sun-being. He is united in his whole being and existence with the Sun. And since this is so, he ought as a being of the Sun to stand quite differently on the Earth than he actually does. He ought to stand on the Earth in such a way that it should suffice for the Earth to have the impulse to bring forth the seed of Man in etheric form from out of the mineral and plant kingdoms, and the Sun then to fructify the seed brought forth from the Earth. Thence should arise the etheric human form, which should itself establish its own relationship to the physical substances of the Earth, and itself take on Earth substantiality. The contemporaries of Agrippa of Nettesheim - Agrippa's own knowledge was, unfortunately, somewhat clouded, but better contemporaries of his did really hold the view that Man ought not to be born in the earthly way he now is, but Man ought really to come to being in his etheric body through the interworking of Sun and Earth, and only afterwards, going about the Earth as an etheric being, give himself earthly form. The seeds of Man should grow up out of the

Earth with the purity of plant-life, appearing here and there as ethereal fruits of the Earth, darkly shining; these should then in a certain season of the year be overshadowed, as it were, by the light of the Sun, and thereby assume human form, but etheric still; then Man should draw to himself physical substance - not from the body of the mother, but from the Earth and all that is thereon, incorporating it into himself from the kingdoms of the Earth. Thus - they thought - should have been the manner of Man's appearance on the Earth, in accordance with the purposes of the Spirit of the Worlds.

And the development that came later was due to the fact that Man had allowed to awaken within him too deep an urge, too intense a desire for the earthly and material. Thereby he forfeited his connection with the Sun and the Cosmos, and could only find his existence on Earth in the form of the stream of inheritance. Thereby, however, the Demon of the Earth began his work; for the Demon of the Earth would not have been able to do anything with men who were Sun-born. When Sun-born man came to dwell on the Earth, he would have been in very truth the Fourth Hierarchy. And one would have had to speak of Man in the following manner. One would have had to say: *First Hierarchy*: Seraphim, Cherubim, Thrones; *Second Hierarchy*: Exusiai, Dynamis, Kyriotetes; *Third Hierarchy*: Angels, Archangels, Archai; *Fourth Hierarchy*: Man - three different shades or gradations of the human, but none the less making the Fourth Hierarchy.

But because Man gave rein to his strong impulses in the direction of the physical, he became, not the being on the lowest branch, as it were, of the Hierarchies, but instead the being at the summit of the highest branch of the earthly kingdoms: mineral kingdom, plant kingdom, animal kingdom, human kingdom. This was the picture of how Man stood in the world.

Moreover, because Man does not find his proper task on the Earth, the Earth herself has not her right and worthy position in the Cosmos. For since Man has fallen, the true Lord of the Earth is not there. What has happened? The true Lord of the Earth is not there, and it became necessary for the Earth, not being governed from herself in her place in the Cosmos, to be ruled from the Sun; so that the tasks that should really be carried out on Earth fell to the Sun. The man of mediaeval times looked up to the Sun and said: In the Sun are certain Intelligences. They determine the movement of the Earth in the Cosmos; they govern what happens on the Earth. Man ought, in reality, to do this; the Sun-forces ought to work on Earth through Man for the existence of the Earth. Hence that significant mediaeval conception that was expressed in the words: The Sun, the unlawful Prince of this world.

And now reflect, my dear friends, how infinitely the Christ Impulse was deepened through such conceptions. The Christ became, for these mediaeval men,

the Spirit Who was not willing to find His further task on the Sun, Who would not remain among those who directed the Earth in unlawful manner from without. He wanted to take His path from the Sun to the Earth, to enter into the destiny of Man and the destiny of Earth, to experience Earth events and pass along the ways of Earth evolution, sharing the lot of Man and of Earth.

Therewith, for mediaeval man, the Christ is the one Being Who in the Cosmos saved the task of Man on the Earth. Now you have the connection. Now you can see why, in Rosicrucian times, it was again and again impressed upon the pupil: "O Man, thou art not what thou art; the Christ had to come, to take from thee thy task, in order that He might perform it for thee."

A great deal in Goethe's *Faust* has come down from mediaeval conceptions, although Goethe himself did not understand this. Recall, my dear friends, how Faust conjures up the Earth Spirit. With these mediaeval conceptions in mind, we can enter with feeling and understanding into how this Earth Spirit speaks. -

In the tides of Life,
In Action's storm,
A fluctuant wave,
A shuttle free,
Birth and the Grave,
An eternal Sea,
A weaving, flowing
Life, all glowing:
Thus at Time's humming loom 'tis my hand prepares
The garment of Life which the Deity wears.

For who is it that Faust is really conjuring up? Goethe himself, when he was writing Faust, most assuredly did not fully know. But if we go back from Goethe to the mediaeval Faust and listen to this mediaeval Faust in whom Rosicrucian wisdom was living, then we learn how he too wanted to conjure up a spirit. But whom did he want to conjure up in the Earth Spirit? He did not ever speak of the Earth Spirit, he spoke of *Man*. The deep longing and striving of mediaeval man was: to be Man. For he felt and knew that as Earth man he is not truly Man. How can manhood be found again? The way Faust is rebuffed, pushed on one side by the Earth Spirit is a picture of how man in his earthly form is rebuffed by his own being. And this is why many accounts of conversion to Christianity in the Middle Ages show such extraordinary depth of feeling. They are filled with the sense that men have striven to attain the manhood that is lost, and have had to give up in despair, have rightly despaired of being able to find in themselves, within earthly physical life, this true and genuine manhood; and so they have arrived at the point where they must say: Human

striving for true manhood must be abandoned, earthly man must leave it to the Christ to fulfil the task of the Earth.

In this time, when man's relation to true manhood as well as his relation to the Christ was still understood in what I would call a superpersonal-personal manner - in this time Spirit-knowledge, Spirit-vision was still a real thing, it was still a content of experience. It ceased to be so with the fifteenth century. Then came the tremendous change, which no one really understood. But those who know of such things know how in the fifteenth, in the sixteenth centuries, and even later, there was a Rosicrucian school, isolated, scarcely known to the world, where over and over again a few pupils were educated, and where above all, care was taken that one thing should not be forgotten but be preserved as a holy tradition. And this was the following. - I will give it to you in narrative form.

Let us say, a new pupil arrived at this lonely spot to receive preparation. The so-called Ptolemaic system was first set before him, in its true form, as it had been handed down from olden times, not in the trivial way it is explained nowadays as something that has been long ago supplanted, but in an altogether different way. The pupil was shown how the Earth really and truly bears within herself the forces that are needed to determine her path through the Universe. So that to have a correct picture of the World, it must be drawn in the old Ptolemaic sense: the Earth must be for Man in the centre of the Universe, and the other stars in their corresponding revolutions be controlled and directed by the Earth. And the pupil was told: If one really studies what are the best forces in the Earth, then one can arrive at no other conception of the World than this. In actual fact, however, it is not so. It is not so on account of man's sin. Through man's sin, the Earth - so to speak, in an unauthorised, wrongful way - has gone over into the kingdom of the Sun; the Sun has become the regent and ruler of earthly activities. Thus, in contradistinction to a World-System given by the Gods to men with the Earth in the centre, could now be set another World-System, that has the Sun in the centre, and the Earth revolving round the Sun - it: is the system of Copernicus.

And the pupil was taught that here is a mistake in the Cosmos, a mistake in the Universe brought about by human sin. This knowledge was entrusted to the pupil and he had to engrave it deeply in his heart and soul. - Men have overthrown the old World-System (so did the teacher speak) and set another in its place; and they do not know that this other, which they take to be correct, is the outcome of their own human guilt. It is really nothing else than the expression, the revelation of human guilt, and yet men take it to be the right and correct view. What has happened in recent times? (The teacher is speaking to the pupil.) Science has suffered a downfall through the guilt of man. Science has become a science of the Demon.

About the end of the eighteenth century such communications became impossible, but until that time there were always pupils here and there of some lonely Rosicrucian School, who received their spiritual nourishment imbued as it were with this feeling, with this deep understanding.

Even such a man as Leibnitz, the great philosopher, was led by his own thought and deliberation to try and find somewhere a place of learning where the relation between the Copernican and Ptolemaic Systems could be correctly formulated. But he was not able to find any such place.

Things like this need to be known if one is to understand aright, in all its shades of meaning, the great change that has come about in the last centuries in the way man looks on himself and on the Universe. And with this weakening of man's living connection with himself, with this estrangement of man from himself came afterwards the tendency to cling to the external intellect that today rules all. Is this external intellect verily human experience? No, for were it human experience, it could not live so externally in mankind as it does. The intellect has really no sort of connection with what is individual and personal, with the single individual man; it is well nigh a convention. It does not flow out of inner human experience; rather it approaches man as something outside him.

You may feel how the intellect became external by comparing the way in which Aristotle himself imparted his Logic to his pupils with the way in which it was taught much later, say in the seventeenth century. - You will remember how Kant says that Aristotle's Logic has not advanced since his time. - In the time of Aristotle, Logic was still thoroughly human. When a man was taught to think logically, he had a feeling as though - if again I may be allowed to express myself in imaginative terms - as though he were thrusting his head into cold water and thereby became estranged from himself for a moment; or else he had a feeling such as Alexander expressed when Aristotle wanted to impart Logic to him: You are pressing together all the bones of my head! It is the feeling of something external. But in the seventeenth century this externality was taken as a matter of course. Men learned how from the major and minor premise the consequent must be deduced. They learned what we find treated so ironically in Goethe's Faust:

“The first was so, the second so.
Therefore the third and fourth are so:
Were not the first and second, then
The third and fourth had never been!

“There will your mind be drilled and braced,
As if in Spanish boots ‘twere laced!”

Whether, like Alexander, one feels the bones of one's head all pressed together, or whether one is laced up in Spanish boots with all this First, Second, Third, Fourth - we have in either case a true picture of what one feels.

But this externality of abstract thought was no longer *felt* in the time when Logic began to be taught in the schools. Today of course this has more or less ceased. Logic is no longer specifically taught in the schools. It is rather as if there had once been a time when hundreds and hundreds of people had put on the same uniform under direction, and done it with enthusiasm, and then afterwards there came a time when they did it of their own free will without giving it a thought.

During all the time however when the Logic of the abstract was gaining the upper hand, the old spiritual knowledge was incapable of going forward. Hence we see it in its turn becoming external, and assuming a form of which examples are to be found in the writings of Eliphaz Levi or the publications of Saint-Martin. These are the last offshoots of the old Spirit-knowledge and Spirit-vision.

What do we find in a book such as Eliphaz Levi's, *The Dogma and Ritual of High Magic*? In the first place there are all kinds of signs - Triangles, Pentagrams and so forth. We find words from languages in use in bygone ages, especially from the Hebrew. And we find that what in earlier times was life and at the same time knowledge that could pass over into man's action and into man's ideas - this we find has become bereft of ideas on the one hand, and on the other hand has degenerated into external magic. There is speculation as to the symbolic meaning of this or that sign, concerning all of which the modern man, if he is honest, would have to confess that he can find nothing particular in it. There are also practices connected with all manner of rites, while those who spoke of these rites and frequently practised them were far from having any clear notion at all of their spiritual connection. Such books are invariably pointers to what was once understood in olden times, was once an inward knowledge-experience, but when Eliphaz Levi, for example, was writing his books, was no longer understood. As for Saint-Martin - of him I have already written in the *Goetheanum Weekly*.

Thus we see how what had once been interwoven into the soul-and-spirit of man's life, could not be held there but fell a victim to complete want of understanding. The common impulse and striving for the Divine that shows itself in the feeling of man from the fifteenth to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is genuine and true. Beautiful things are to be found in this impulse, things lovely and sublime. Much that has come from these times and that is far too little noticed today has about it as it were a magic breath - the genuine spell of the Spiritual.

Side by side, however, with all this, a seed is sprouting, the seed of the lack of understanding of old spiritual truths. We have therewith a hardening, ossifying process, and a growing impossibility to approach the Spiritual in a way that is in accord with the age. We come across men of the eighteenth century who speak of a downfall of all that is human, and of the rise of a terrible materialism. Often it seems as though what these men of the eighteenth century say applies just as well to our own time. And yet it is not so; what they say does not apply to the last two-thirds of the nineteenth century. For in the nineteenth century a further stage has been reached. What was still regarded in the eighteenth century with a certain abhorrence on account of its demoniacal character, has come to be taken quite as a matter of course. The men of the nineteenth century had not the power to say: Copernicus! - Yes; but such a conception of the Universe was only able to arise because man did not become on Earth that which he should have become, and so the Earth was left without a ruler- and the rulership passed over to the unrighteous lords of the world (the expression occurs again and again in mediaeval writings), these took over the leadership of the Earth - even as the Christ left the Sun and united Himself with the destiny of the Earth.

Only now, at the end of the nineteenth century, has it again become possible to look into these things with a clear vision such as man possessed in olden times; only now in the Michael Age has the possibility come again. We have spoken repeatedly of the dawn of the Michael Age, and of its character. But there are tasks that belong to this Michael Age, and it is possible now to point to these tasks, after all that we have been considering in the Christmas Meeting and since, about the evolution of Spirit-vision throughout the centuries.

ROSICRUCIANISM AND MODERN INITIATION

V

OCCULT SCHOOLS IN THE EIGHTEENTH AND FIRST HALF OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

We have seen how the old knowledge that was once acquired by means of instinctive clairvoyance gradually faded into a kind of evening twilight. It is difficult to find any trace of that old wisdom in modern times, particularly after the eighteenth century, for what I have told you is really true, namely that in recent times what has persisted - or rather, to put it more correctly, what has only recently made its appearance, is the external observation of Nature, Logic, the sequence of abstract thoughts. But neither with external observation of Nature nor with the mere sequence of abstract logical thoughts can a bridge be built for man whereby he may attain to reality. Much of the ancient wisdom has nevertheless maintained a sort of existence in traditional form and may be found even as late as the middle of the nineteenth century. And in order that we may orientate ourselves rightly to the important subjects with which we shall have to deal, I should like today to speak further about some of the ideas that were still to be found in the first half of the nineteenth century and are really survivals of the ancient wisdom.

I relate these things to you in order that you may see how in a time that does not lie so very far back, the whole manner of thinking was nevertheless entirely different from what it is today. As I said before, it is exceedingly difficult to arrive at these things, for it is single individuals - living all alone, or having around them at the most a small circle of pupils - who carried on the ancient wisdom, preserving it in secret, often without themselves understanding its wonderfully deep foundation. A similar picture has really to be made of the conditions as they were in still earlier times, for it is quite certain that the two characters who are familiar to you under the names of Faust and Paracelsus encountered in the course of their wanderings such lonely individuals - cave-dwellers of the soul we may call them - and learned a great deal from them; learned from them what they themselves afterwards developed and elaborated through an inner faculty of their own, a faculty that was in their cases, too, of a rather instinctive nature.

What I am now going to relate to you was however much later, it was in the early decades of the nineteenth century. Once more we find a small group - call it a school if you will - a lonely school of Central Europe. There, in this little circle, was to be found a deep and penetrating teaching concerning Man. A long time ago, on a spiritual path, I became aware that at a certain place in

Central Europe there existed such a small company of men who had knowledge. As I have said, I learned to know of it on a spiritual path; I was not able at that time to make observations in the physical world, since I was not then in the physical world, but in a spiritual way it became known to me that a little company of this kind existed.

I should, however, not speak of what was taught within this little company, had not the essence of what was hidden in it subsequently again disclosed itself to research made independently through Spiritual Science; I should not speak of it, had I not myself, so to speak, found the things anew. For it is just in the re-finding that one obtains the right orientation to the wisdom that has survived from olden times, and that is truly overpowering in its greatness. From this little company of which I speak, a tradition goes right back in history, back through the whole of the Middle Ages into the times of antiquity that I described to you in the lectures given at the Christmas Meeting, the times, that is to say, of Aristotle. The tradition does not, however, come directly from Greece; it comes from Asia, by way of what was brought over to Asia from Macedonia by Alexander.

Within this little company is known and taught in all exactness a deep and penetrating teaching concerning Man, in respect especially of two human faculties. We may see there a spiritual scientist - he may truly be so called - who is a fully developed Master, instructing his pupils. The symbols by which he teaches them consist in certain geometrical forms, let us say for example a form such as this - (Two intersecting triangles) - and at the points are generally to be found some words in Hebrew. It was impossible to find any direct connection with such symbols, one could do nothing with them directly. And the pupils of this master knew through the instructions they received that what, for example, Eliphaz Levi gives later on, is in reality nothing more than a talking around the subject, for the pupils were at that time still able to learn how the true meaning of such symbols is only arrived at when these symbols are rediscovered in the nature and being of the human organisation itself.

We find in particular one symbol that played a great part for this little company of men. You get the symbol when you draw apart this "Solomon's Key," so that the one triangle comes down and the other is raised up. The symbol thus obtained played, as I said, a significant part even as late as the nineteenth century, within this little community or school.

The Master then made the members of his little circle of pupils take up a certain attitude with their bodies. They had to assume such a position that the body itself as it were inscribed this symbol. He made them stand with their legs far apart, and their arms stretched out above. Then by lengthening the lines of the arms downwards, and the lines of the legs upwards, these four lines came

to view in the human organism itself. A line was then drawn to unite the feet, and another line to unite the hands above. These two joining lines were felt as lines of force; the pupil became conscious that they do really exist. It became clear to him that currents pass, like electro-magnetic currents, from the left fingertips to the right fingertips, and again from the left foot to the right foot. So that in actual fact the human organism itself writes into space these two intersecting triangles.

The next step was for the pupil to learn to feel what lies in the words: "Light streams upwards, Weight bears downwards." The pupil had to experience this in deep meditation, standing in the attitude I have described. Thereby he gradually came to the point where the teacher was able to say to him: "Now you are about to experience something that was practised over and over again in the ancient Mysteries." And the pupil attained then in very truth to this further experience, namely that he experienced and felt the very marrow within his bones.

You will be able to obtain some feeling for these things if you will bring what I am saying into connection with something I said to you only yesterday. I told you then, in another connection, that if men continue only to think so abstractly as has become the custom in the course of time, then this living in abstract thoughts remains something external; man as it were externalises himself. It is the exact opposite that occurs when, in this way, a consciousness of the bones from inside is attained.

But now there is something else that will help you to come to an understanding of the matter. Paradoxical as it may sound, it is yet true that such a book as my *Philosophy of Spiritual Activity* cannot be grasped by mere Logic, it must be understood by the whole human being. And in point of fact you will not understand what is said in that book concerning Thinking, unless you know that in reality man experiences Thought by means of the inner knowledge and feeling of his skeleton. A man does not really think with the brain, he thinks with his skeleton, when he thinks in sharply defined thoughts. And when thought becomes concrete, as is the case in the *Philosophy of Spiritual Activity*, then it passes over into the whole human being.

But now the pupils of this Master went further still; they learned to feel the *inside*, the inner nature, of the bones. Therewith they were able to experience a last example of what was practised in manifold ways in the ancient Mystery Schools, they learned to experience symbols by making their own organism into these symbols; for only so can symbols be really and truly experienced. Explanation and interpretation of symbols is really nonsense; so too is all theorising about symbols. The true attitude to symbols is to make them and actually *experience* them. It is the same as with fables and legends and fairy tales. -

These should never be received merely abstractly, one must identify oneself with them. There is always something in man whereby he can enter into all the figures of the fairy tale, whereby he can make himself one with the fairy tale. And so it is with these true symbols of olden times, which come originally from spiritual knowledge; I have expressed it by writing these words in your own language.

In modern times there is little sense if Hebrew words are written, words that are no longer fully understood; for then the man who reads them is not inwardly quickened to life, he has not an inward experience of the symbol, rather he is cramped by it. It is as though his bones were broken. And that is what really happens - spiritually of course - when one studies seriously such writings as those of Eliphaz Levi.

Thus, then, did these pupils learn to experience the inside of their bones. But, my dear friends, when you begin to experience the inside of the bones, you are really no longer in your body. If you hold something in your finger a few inches in front of your nose, the object you are holding is not in you; just as little is what you experience within your bones really in you. You go inwards, it is true, but nevertheless you go out of yourself. And this going out of oneself, this going to the Gods, this going into the spiritual world, is what the pupils of that lonely school learned to grasp and understand. For they learned to know the lines which from the side of the Gods were drawn into the world, the lines that were drawn by the Gods to establish and found the world. They found in one direction, namely through Man, the path to the Gods.

And then the teacher put into words what the pupil was experiencing. - He expressed it in a sentence that will naturally appear ludicrous and paradoxical to many people today but that holds nevertheless, as You will be able to recognise, a deep truth:-

Behold the man of bone,
And thou behordest Death.
Look within the bones
And thou beholdest the Awakener -

that is, the Awakener of man in the Spirit, The Being who brings man into connection with the world of the Gods.

Now in the time of which we are speaking, not very much could be attained on this path; something however could be attained. Something of the teaching concerning the evolution of the Earth through different metamorphoses became clear to the pupils. Through being able to place themselves into the Spirit-being of Man, they learned to look back into Atlantean times and even farther. As a matter of fact very many things that were not in those times written down

or printed but were related by word of mouth concerning the evolution of the Earth, had their origin in a knowledge and insight that came about in this way.

Such was one of the teachings given in this school.

Another teaching is also very interesting. This teaching brought to light in a practical manner the higher position of Man in respect to the animals. Facts that we put to practical use in various ways and that are of great value to us, were known and understood even as late as the nineteenth century by men who based their knowledge on good old traditions of knowledge and insight. We are proud today that we have police-dogs who are able to track out all kinds of wrongdoing in life. This practical use had not been thought of in olden times. But the faculty of dogs, for example, in this direction was even better known than it is today. Man had insight to perceive around the human being, a very fine substance, finer than anything that can be seen or smelt or sensed in any way. And it was known that there is a fine fluid belonging also to the world as a whole. It was recognised as a special differentiation of warmth-currents, in union with all manner of other currents, which were looked upon as electro-magnetic; and the scent of the dog was connected with these currents of warmth and electro-magnetism. The pupils of that little school of which I have been telling you, had their attention drawn to the same kind of faculty in other animals too. It was shown to them how this sense for a fine fluid flowing through the world was present in a very great many animals. And then it was pointed out to them how that which in the case of the animal develops downwards in the direction of the coarse and material, develops in man upwards into a quality of soul. And now we come to something taught in this school that is of the very greatest interest. It was taught by reference to facts of external anatomy, but a deeply spiritual truth was indicated. It was said to the pupil: "Behold, Man is a Microcosm; he imitates in his organism what takes place in the great structure of the Universe." Nor was Man regarded as a microcosm, as a little world, only in respect of the processes that go on within him. What shows itself plastically in man, in plastic forms and structures - this too was referred back to processes in the external world.

Thus, profound and solemn attention was given in this school to the passage of the Moon through First Quarter, Full Moon, Last Quarter, New Moon; they learned to watch how the Moon in this way goes through twenty-eight to thirty phases. They watched out in the Cosmos the passage of the Moon through her phases. They watched the Moon as she moves within her orbit. They saw how she describes her twenty-eight to thirty curves or turns and they understood how Man has in his spinal column these twenty-eight to thirty vertebrae and how the development of the spinal column in the embryo corresponds with the movements and forces of the Moon. They saw in the form and shape of the human spinal column the copy of the monthly movement of the Moon. And in

the twenty-eight to thirty nerves that go out from the spinal column into the whole organism, they saw a copy of the streams that the Moon sends down continually upon the Earth, sending them down at the various stages of her path in the heavens. Actually and literally, in these continuations of the vertebrae they saw a reflection of the inpouring of the Moon-streams. In short, in what the human being bears within him in the nerves of the spinal marrow together with the spinal marrow itself, they saw something that unites him with the Cosmos, that brings him into living connection with the Cosmos.

All this that I have indicated to you was presented to the pupil. And he was then made to observe something else. It was said to him: "Look at the optic nerve: watch how it goes from the brain across into the eye. You will see that in the course of its passage into the eye it is divided into very fine threads. How many threads? The threads that go from the optic nerve into the inside of the eye are exactly as many in number as the nerves that go out from the spinal marrow; there are twenty-eight to thirty of them. So that we may say, a spinal marrow system in miniature goes from the brain through the optic nerve into the eye.

Thus has Man - so said the teacher to his pupils - thus has man received this thirty-membered system of nerves and spinal marrow from the Gods, who in primeval antiquity formed and shaped his existence; but Man himself has fashioned, in his eye, in his sense-world-beholding eye, a copy of the same; there, in the front of the head-organism he has fashioned for himself a copy of what the Gods have made of him.

After this, the pupil's attention was directed to the following. The organisation of the spinal marrow stands, as we have seen, in connection with the Moon. But on the other hand, through the special relationship that the Moon has to the Sun, we have a year of twelve months; and from the human brain twelve nerves go out to the various parts of the organism, the twelve chief nerves of the brain. In this respect, Man, in his head organisation, is a microcosm, in respect, namely, of the relationship between Sun and Moon. In the whole form and figure of Man is expressed an imitation of the processes out yonder in the Cosmos.

Again, the pupil was taught to observe something more. He has seen how in the optic nerve, through the way the optic nerve is split up into thirty divisions, Man imitates the Moon system of the spine. And he has seen how twelve nerves go out from the brain. But now again, when the particular part of the brain that sends the olfactory nerve into the nose is examined the fact is disclosed that, there, in that little portion of the brain the whole big brain is imitated. Just as in the eye the system of nerves and spinal marrow is imitated, so in the organ of smell the whole brain is imitated, inasmuch as the olfactory

nerve enters the nose in twelve divisions, in twelve strands. So that Man has an actual, miniature human being in front, here, in his head. And then the pupil was made to observe that anatomically this miniature human being is no more than a mere indication. Things grow different; only the most minute anatomical investigation could avail here; although on the other hand, as it were in compensation, they express themselves especially strongly in the astral body. Having however only bare indications of them, they cannot be made use of in ordinary life. Yet we can learn to do so. And even as the pupil was shown how to experience the inside of his bones, so was he shown how to experience, in a really living way, this particular part of his being.

And here we come to something that is in truth more akin to the whole Western outlook than are many other things that come over to us from the East. For the East too speaks of this concentration on the root of the nose, this concentration on the point between the eyebrows. (This is how the exact spot is defined.) But in truth this concentration is a concentration on the miniature man that is situated in this spot and can be grasped astrally. A meditation can actually be so formed as to enable one to apprehend something in the region like a miniature man in embryonic development. The pupil in that school received this guidance: he learned to apprehend, in intensely concentrated thought, a kind of embryonic development of a miniature human being.

By this means did the pupils who had the faculties for it, develop the two-petalled lotus-flower. [footnote: see *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds and its Attainment* by Rudolf Steiner] And then it was said to them: The animal develops this faculty downwards, to the fluid of warmth and of electro-magnetism. Man on the other hand develops into the astral what has its place here in the head and nose. At first sight it appears to be merely a sense of smell, but the faculty, the activity of the eye plays over into it. Man develops this into the astral. He acquires the faculty whereby he is able, not merely to follow that fluid as do the animals, but to evoke continual interchange with the astral light, and to perceive by means of the two-petalled lotus-flower what he is continually writing into the astral light his whole life long. The dog scents only that which has remained, that which is there present. Man has a different experience. Inasmuch as he moves with his two-petalled lotus-flower, even when he cannot perceive with it, he is forever writing everything that is in his thoughts into the astral light; and now he acquires the faculty that enables him to follow what he has written; and to perceive at the same time something else, namely, the true difference between Good and Evil.

In this manner echoes of ancient primeval treasures of wisdom were still present, of which the rudiments were still taught in later days, even practically. And we can see how very much has been lost under the influence of the materialistic streams that began to work so forcibly about the middle of the nine-

teenth century. For such things as I have been indicating to you were still, to a certain degree at least, experienced and known in certain circles, isolated and hermit-like though they were. And in the most varied domains of life knowledge was still derived from such hidden sources, knowledge that was later entirely disregarded, and that many today long to find again. But on account of the crude methods that prevail in our time, external cognition cannot regain it.

Now together with all else that was taught to the pupils of that little circle, there was one special and definite teaching. It was shown to the pupil how when he makes use of the organ that is really an organ of smell raised up into the astral light, then he learns to know the true substance of all things, he learns to know *Matter*. And when he comes to a knowledge of the inside of his bony system, and thereby learns to know the true and authentic World Geometry, to know the way in which the forces have been inscribed into the world by the Gods, then he learns to understand the *Forms* that work in the things of the world. Thus if you would learn to know Quartz in its substance – so it was said to the pupil – then look at it in the two-petalled lotus-flower. If you would learn to know its crystal form, how the substance is given shape and form, then you must apprehend this form out of the Cosmos with the power of apprehension that you can gain by living experience of the inside of the bony system.

Or again, the pupil was taught as follows. - If you use your head-organ, then you learn to know how a plant is fashioned in respect of *Substance*. If You learn to experience the inside of your bony system, then you learn to know how a certain plant *grows*, why it has this or that form of leaf, this or that arrangement of its leaves, why it unfolds its blossoms in this or that manner.

Everything that is Form had to be understood in the one way, everything that is Substance in the other way. And it is really interesting to find, when we go back to Aristotle, how he makes this distinction in respect of everything that exists, the distinction between Form and Substance. In later times, of course, it was taught in a merely abstract way.

In the stream that came from Greece to Europe the abstractness with which these things were set forth in books was enough to drive one to despair; this went on throughout the Middle Ages, and in still more recent times has gone from bad to worse. But if you go back to Aristotle, you find that, with him, Forms really lead back to the experience I described, you find with him the true insight into things that is able to see in every head that which he calls the Matter or Substance in the things. This insight possessed by Aristotle was the aspect of his teaching that was carried into Asia.

But now the inner knowledge - that is to say, the knowledge that is in accord with the Akashic Records - the inner knowledge of the philosophy taught in Greece, points us to something of which I could naturally only give quite an

external indication in my *Riddles of Philosophy*, where I showed how Aristotle held the view that in Man, Form and Matter flow into one another; in Man, Matter is Form and Form Matter. You will find this where I am speaking of Spirit in *Riddles of Philosophy*.

Aristotle himself, however, taught it in quite a different way. Aristotle taught that when you approach the minerals, you experience in the first place their *Form* by means of the inside of the bones of the lower leg, and you experience their *Substance* in the organ of the head. The two are far apart. Man holds them apart, Form and Substance; in the mineral kingdom itself they come together in crystallisation. When man comes to an understanding of the plant, then he experiences its Form by means of his experience of the inside of the thigh-bone, its Substance once more by means of the organ of the head, the two-petalled lotus-flower. The two experiences have already come a little nearer. And when man experiences the animal, then he feels the animal in its Form through the experience he has of the inside of the bones of the lower arm, and again he feels its Substance through the organ of the head - this time the two are very near together. And if now man experiences Man himself, then he experiences the Form of Man through the inside of the upper arm that is connected with the brain by way of the speech formation. I have often spoken of this in my introductory words on Eurhythmy. There the two-petalled lotus-flower unites with what goes from the inside of the upper arm to the brain. And particularly in speech we experience our fellow human being no longer divided as to Form and Content, but as *one* in Form and Content.

This teaching still survived in all its concreteness in the time of Aristotle. And as we have said, a trace of it can still be found as late as the nineteenth century. But there we come to an abyss. In the 'forties of the nineteenth century these things were utterly and completely lost. And the abyss lasted until the end of the nineteenth century when the coming of the Michael Age gives the possibility for these truths to be found again. When, however, men step over this abyss, they are really stepping over a threshold. And at the threshold stands a Guardian. Men were not able to see this Guardian when they went past him between the years 1842 and 1879. But now they must, for their own good, look back and take note of him. For to continue not heeding him and to live on into the following centuries without heeding him would bring terrible trouble upon mankind.

ROSICRUCIANISM AND MODERN INITIATION

VI

THE TASKS OF THE MICHAEL AGE

The Michael period into which the world has been entering ever since the last third of the nineteenth century, and into which human beings will have to enter with increasing consciousness, is very different from former periods of Michael. For so it is in the earthly evolution of mankind. One after another the seven great Archangel Spirits enter from time to time into the life of man. Thus, after given periods of time a certain guidance of the world - such as the guidance of Gabriel or Uriel, Raphael or Michael - is repeated. Our own period is, however, essentially different from the preceding period of Michael. This is due to the fact that man stands in quite another relation to the spiritual world since the first third of the fifteenth century than he ever did before. This new relation to the spiritual world also determines a peculiar relation to the Spirit guiding the destinies of mankind, whom we may call by the ancient name of Michael.

Recently I have been speaking to you again of the Rosicrucian Movement. Rosicrucianism, I remarked, has indeed degenerated to charlatany in many quarters. Most of that which has been transmitted to mankind under the name is charlatany. Nevertheless, as I have explained on former occasions, there did exist an individuality whom we may describe by the name of Christian Rosenkreutz. This individuality is, in a sense, the type and standard: he reveals the way in which an enlightened spirit - a man of spiritual knowledge - could enter into relation with the spiritual world at the dawn of the new phase of humanity.

To Christian Rosenkreutz it was vouchsafed to ask many questions, deeply significant riddles of existence, and in quite a new way when compared with the earlier experiences of mankind. You see, while Rosicrucianism was arising, directing the mind of man - with "Faustian" endeavour, as it was sometimes called in later times - towards the spiritual world, an abstract naturalistic science was arising on the other hand. The bearers of this modern stream of spiritual life, men like Galileo, Giordano Bruno, Copernicus or Kepler - worthy as they are of fullest recognition - were differently situated from the Rosicrucians, who wanted to foster, not a merely formal or abstract, but a true knowledge of the world. The Rosicrucians perceived in their own human life and being how utterly the times had changed, and with it the whole relation of the Gods to mankind.

We may describe it as follows. - Quite distinctly until the fourth century A.D., and in a rudimentary way even until the twelfth and thirteenth century, man was able to draw forth from himself real knowledge about the spiritual world. In doing the exercises of the old Mysteries, he could draw forth from himself the secrets of existence. For the humanity of olden times it really was so: the Initiates drew forth, what they had to say to mankind, from the depths of their souls to the surface of their thought - their world of ideas. They had the consciousness that they were drawing forth their knowledge from the inner being of the human soul. The exercises they underwent were intended, as you know, to stir the human heart to its depths, to inform the human heart and mind with experiences which man does not undergo in the ordinary round of life. Thereby the secrets of the world of the Gods were, so to speak, drawn forth from the depths, from the inner being of man.

Man, however, cannot see the secrets he draws out of himself while in the very act of doing so. True, in the old instinctive clairvoyance man did behold the secrets of the world: he beheld them in Imagination; he beheld them hearingly in Inspiration; he united himself with them in Intuition.

These things, however, are impossible so long as man merely stands there alone - just as little as it is possible for me to draw a triangle without a board. The triangle I draw on the board portrays to me what I bear in a purely spiritual way within me. The triangle as a whole - all the laws of the triangle are in me; but I draw the triangle on the board, thereby bringing home to myself what is really there within me. So it is when we make external diagrams. And it is the same when it is a question of deriving real knowledge out of the being of man, after the manner of the ancient Mysteries. This knowledge too must, in a sense, be written somewhere. Every such knowledge, in effect, to be seen in the Spirit, must be inscribed in that which has been called from time immemorial "the astral light," - i.e., in the fine substantiality of the Akasha. Everything must be written there, and man must be able to develop the faculty of writing in the astral light.

This faculty has depended on many and varied things in the course of human evolution. Not to speak, for the moment, of pristine ages, I will leave on one side the first Post-Atlantean epoch, the ancient Indian. At that time it was somewhat different. Let me begin with the ancient Persian epoch, as described in my *Outline of Occult Science*. There was in that time instinctive clairvoyance, there was knowledge of the divine-spiritual world. This knowledge could be written in the astral light so that man could behold it, inasmuch as the Earth, the solid Earth, afforded resistance. The writing itself is done, needless to say, with spiritual organs; but these organs also require a basis of resistance. The things that are thus seen in the Spirit are not inscribed, of course, on the Earth itself; they are written into the astral light. But the Earth acts as a ground of

resistance. In the old Persian epoch the seers could feel the resistance of the Earth: thereby alone, the perceptions they drew forth from their inner being grew into actual visions.

In the next, the Egypto-Chaldean epoch, all the knowledge that the Initiates drew forth from their souls was able to be written in the astral light by virtue of the fluid element. You must conceive it rightly. The Initiate of the old Persian epoch looked to the solid earth. Wherever there were plants or stones, the astral light reflected back to him his inner vision. The Initiate of the Egypto-Chaldean epoch looked into the sea, into the river, or into the falling rain, the rising mist. When he looked into the river or the sea, he saw the secrets that endure. Those secrets, on the other hand, which relate to the transient - to the creation of the Gods in transient things - he beheld in the downpouring rain or the ascending mist. You must familiarise yourself with the idea. The ancients had not the prosaic, matter-of-fact way of seeing the mist and rain which is ours today. Rain and mist said very much to them - revealed to them the secrets of the Gods.

Then in the Graeco-Latin period, the visions were like a Fata Morgana in the air. The Greek saw his Zeus, his Gods, in the astral light; but he had the feeling that the astral light only reflected the Gods to him under the Proper conditions. Hence he assigned his Gods to special places - places where the air could offer the proper resistance to the inscriptions in the astral light. And so it remained until the fourth century A.D. Even among the first Fathers of the Christian Church, and notably the old Creek Fathers, there were many (as you may even prove from their writings) who saw this Fata Morgana of their own spiritual visions through the resistance of the air in the astral light. Thus they had clear knowledge of the fact that out of Man, the Logos, the Divine Word revealed Himself through Nature. But in the course of time this knowledge faded and grew feeble. Echoes of it still continued in a few specially gifted persons, even until the twelfth or thirteenth century. But when the age of abstract knowledge came - when men became entirely dependent on the logical sequence of ideas and the results of sense-observation - then neither earth nor water nor air afforded resistance to the astral light, but only the element of the warmth-ether. It is unknown, of course, to those who are completely wrapped up in their abstract thoughts. They do not know that these abstract thoughts are also written in the astral light. They are written there indeed; but in this process the element of the warmth-ether is the sole resistance.

The following is now the case. Remember once more that in the ancient Persian epoch men had the solid earth as a resistance so as to behold their entries in the astral light. What is thus contained in the astral light - all that, for which the solid earth is the resistance - rays on and out, but only as far as the sphere of the Moon. Farther it cannot go. Thence it rays back again. Thus it remains,

so to speak, with the Earth. Man beholds the secrets reflected by virtue of the Earth; they remain because of the pressure of the lunar sphere.

Now let us consider the Egypto-Chaldean epoch. The water on the Earth reflects. What is thus reflected goes as far as the Saturn-sphere. And now it is Saturn that presses for man on Earth to "hold" what he beholds in spirit. And if we go on into Graeco-Latin period - even into the twelfth or thirteenth century - we find the visions inscribed in the astral light by virtue of the air. This time it goes to the very end of the cosmic sphere and thence returns. It is the most fleeting of all; yet still it is such that man remains united with his visions. The Initiates of all these epochs could say to themselves every time: Such spiritual vision as we have had - through earth or water or air - it is there. But when the most modern time arrived, only the element of the warmth-ether was left to offer resistance. And the element of the warmth-ether carries all that is written in it out into the cosmic realms, right out of space into the spiritual worlds. It is no longer there.

It is so indeed, my dear friends. Take the most pedantic of modern professors with his ideas. He must of course have ideas - some of them have none at all - but if he has ideas, then they are entered through the warmth-ether in the astral-light. Now the warmth-ether is transient and fleeting; all things become merged and fused in it at once, and go out into cosmic distances. Such a man as Christian Rosenkreutz knew that the Initiates of olden times had lived with their visions. They had fastened and confirmed what they beheld, knowing that it was there, reflected somewhere in the heavens - be it in the Moon sphere or in the planetary sphere, or at the end of the Universe - it was reflected. But now, nothing at all was reflected. For the immediate, wide-awake vision of man, nothing at all was reflected. Now men could find ideas about Nature, the Copernican cosmology could arise, all manner of ideas could be formed, but they were scattered in the warmth-ether, out into cosmic vast.

Then it came about that Christian Rosenkreutz, by inspiration of a higher Spirit, found a way to perceive the reflected radiation after all, in spite of the fact that it was only a reflection by the warmth-ether. It was brought about as follows. Other conditions of consciousness - dim, subconscious and sleep-like - were called into play; conditions in which man is even normally outside his body. Then it became perceptible that that which is discovered with modern abstract ideas is after all inscribed, albeit not in space, but in the spiritual world. This, then, is what we see in the Rosicrucian Movement: the Rosicrucians, as it were in a transition stage, made themselves acquainted with all that could be discovered about Nature in this epoch. They received it into themselves and assimilated it as only man can assimilate it. They enhanced into true Wisdom what for the others was only Science. Holding it in their souls, they tried to pass over into sleep in highest purity and after intimate meditations.

Then the divine-spiritual worlds - no longer the spatial end of the Universe, but the divine-spiritual worlds - brought back to them in a spiritually real language what had first been apprehended in abstract ideas.

In Rosicrucian schools, not only was the Copernican cosmology taught, but in special states of consciousness its ideas came back in the form I explained here during the last few days. It was the Rosicrucians, above all, who realised that that which man receives in modern knowledge must first be carried forth, so to speak, and offered to the Gods, that the Gods may translate it into their language and give it back again to men.

The possibility has remained until this present. It is so indeed, my dear friends. If you are touched by the Rosicrucian principle as here intended, study the system of Haeckel, with all its materialism; study it, and at the same time permeate yourselves with the methods of cognition indicated in *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds and its Attainment*. Take what you learn in Haeckel's *Anthropogenesis*. In that form it may very likely repel you. Learn it nevertheless; learn all that can be learned about it by outer Natural Science, and carry it towards the Gods. You will get what is related about evolution in my *Outline of Occult Science*.

Such is the connection between the feeble, shadowy knowledge which man can acquire here until his physical body, and that which the Gods can give him, if with the proper spirit he duly prepares himself by the learning of this knowledge. But man must first bring towards Them what he can learn here on the Earth, for in truth the times have changed.

Moreover another thing has happened. Let a man strive as he will today; he can no longer draw anything forth from himself as did the old Initiates. The soul no longer gives anything forth in the way it did for the old Initiates. It all becomes impure, filled with instincts, as is evident in the case of spiritualist mediums, and in other morbid or pathological conditions. All that arises merely from within, becomes impure. The time of such creation from within is past; it was past already in the twelfth or thirteenth century. What happened can be expressed approximately as follows:

The Initiates of the old Persian epoch wrote very much in the astral light with the help of the resistance of the solid earth. When the first Initiate of the old Persian epoch appeared, the whole of the astral light, destined for man, was like an unwritten slate. I shall speak later of the old Indian epoch. Today I shall only go back to the ancient Persian epoch. All Nature: all the elements - solid, liquid, airy and warmth-like - were an unwritten slate.

Now the Initiates of the old Persian epoch wrote on this slate as much as could be written by virtue of the resistance of the earth. There, to begin with, the se-

crets destined to come to man from the Gods were written in the astral light. To a certain degree the tablet was inscribed; yet in another respect it was empty. Thus the Initiates of the Egypto-Chaldean epoch were able to continue the writing in their way; for they gained their visions by the resistance of the water.

Then came the Greek Initiates; they inscribed the third portion of the tablet. Now the tablet of Nature is fully inscribed; it was quite fully inscribed by the thirteenth or fourteenth century. Then human beings began to write in the warmth-ether; that, however, scatters and dissolves away in the vast expanse. For a time - until the nineteenth century - men wrote in the warmth-ether; they had no inkling that these experiences of theirs stand written in the astral light. But now, my dear friends, the time has come when men must recognise: not out of themselves in the old sense, can they find the secrets of the world, but only by so preparing themselves in heart and mind that they can read what is written on the tablet which is now full of writing. This we must prepare to do today. We must make ourselves ripe for this - no longer to draw forth from ourselves like the old Initiates, but to be able to read in the astral light all that is written there. If we do so, precisely what we gain from the warmth-ether will work as an inspiration. The Gods come to meet us, and bring to us in its reality what we have acquired by our own efforts here on Earth. And what we thus receive from the warmth-ether reacts in turn on all that stands written on the tablet by virtue of air, water and earth.

Thus is the Natural Science of today the true basis for spiritual seership. Learn first by Natural Science to know the properties of air, water and earth. Attain the corresponding inner faculties. Then, as you gaze into the airy, into the watery, into the earthy element, the astral light will stream forth. It does not stream forth like a vague mist or cloud; but so that we can read in it the secrets of world-existence and of human life.

What, then, do we read? We - the humanity of today - read what we ourselves have written in it. For what does it mean to say that the ancient Greeks, Egyptians, Chaldeans, Persians wrote in the astral light? It was we ourselves who wrote it in our former lives on Earth.

You see, my dear friends: just as our inner memory of the common things that we experience in earthly life preserves them for us, so too the astral light preserves for us what we have written in it. The astral light is spread around us - a fully written tablet with respect to the secrets which we ourselves have inscribed. There we must read, if we would find the secrets once more. It is a kind of evolution-memory which must arise in mankind. A consciousness must gradually arise that there is such an evolution-memory, and that in relation to former epochs of culture the humanity of today must read in the astral light,

just as we, at a later age, read in our own youth through ordinary memory. This must come into the consciousness of men. In this sense I have held the lectures this Christmas-time, so that you could see that the point is to draw forth from the astral light the secrets that we need today. The old Initiation was directed mainly to the *subjective* life; the new Initiation concentrates on the *objective* - that is the great difference. For all that was subjective is written in the outer world. All that the Gods have secreted into man ... what they secreted in his sentient body came out in the old Persian epoch; what they secreted in his intellectual or mind-soul came out during the Grecian epoch. The Spiritual soul which we are now to evolve is independent, brings forth nothing more out of itself; it stands over against what is already there. As human beings we must find our humanity again in the astral light.

So then it was with the Rosicrucian Movement: in a time of transition it had to content itself with entering into certain dream-like conditions, and, as it were, dreaming the *higher truth* of that which Science discovers here - in a dry, matter-of-fact way - out of the Nature around us.

And this is how it has been since the beginning of the Michael epoch, since the end of the 1870's: The same thing that was attained in the way above-described in the time of the old Rosicrucians, can now be attained in a conscious way. Today, therefore, we can say: We no longer need that other condition which was half-conscious. What we need is a state of enhanced consciousness. Then, with the knowledge of Nature which we acquire, we can dive into the higher world; and the Nature-knowledge we have acquired emerges and comes towards us from that higher world. We read again what has been written in the astral light; and as we do so, it emerges and comes to meet us in spiritual reality. We carry up into a spiritual world the knowledge of Nature here attained, or again, the creations of naturalistic art, or the religious sentiments working naturalistically in the soul. (Even religion has become naturalistic nowadays.) And as we carry all this upward - if we develop the necessary faculties - we do indeed encounter Michael.

So we may say: the old Rosicrucian Movement is characterised by the fact that its most illumined spirits had an intense longing to meet Michael; but they could only do so as in dream. Since the end of the last third of the nineteenth century, men can meet Michael in the Spirit, in a *fully conscious way*.

Michael, however, is a peculiar being: Michael is a being who reveals nothing if we ourselves do not bring Him something from our diligent spiritual work on Earth. Michael is a silent Spirit - silent and reserved. The other ruling Archangels are Spirits who talk much - in a spiritual sense, of course; but Michael is taciturn. He is a Spirit who speaks very little. At most He will give sparing in-

dications, for what we learn from Michael is not really the word, but, if I may so express it - the look, the power, the direction of His gaze.

This is because Michael concerns Himself most of all with that which men *create* out of the Spirit. He lives with the consequences of all that men have created. The other Spirits live more with the causes; Michael lives with the consequences. The other Spirits kindle in man the impulses for that which he shall do. Michael will be the true spiritual hero of Freedom; He lets men do, and He then takes what becomes of human deeds, receives it and carries it on and out into the Cosmos, to continue in the Cosmos what men themselves cannot yet do with it.

For other beings of the Hierarchy of Archangeloi, we feel that impulses are coming from Them. In a greater or lesser degree, the impulses come from Them. Michael is the Spirit from whom no impulses come, to begin with; for His most characteristic epoch is the one now at hand, when things are to arise out of human freedom. But when man does things out of spiritual activity or inner freedom, consciously or unconsciously kindled by the reading of the astral light, then Michael carries the human earthly deed out into the Cosmos; so it becomes cosmic deed. Michael takes care for the results; the other Spirits care more for the causes.

However, Michael is not only a silent, taciturn Spirit. Michael meets man with a very clear gesture of repulsion, for many things in which the human being of today still lives on Earth. For example, all knowledge that arises as to the life of men or animals or plants, tending to lay stress on inherited characteristics - on all that is inherited in physical nature - is such that we feel Michael constantly repelling it, driving it away with deprecation. He means to show that such knowledge cannot help man at all for the spiritual world. Only what man discovers in the human and animal and plant kingdoms independently of the purely hereditary nature, can be carried up before Michael. Then we receive, not the eloquent gesture of deprecation, but the look of approval which tells us that it is a thought righteously conceived in harmony with cosmic guidance. For this is what we learn increasingly to strive for: as it were to meditate, so as to strike through to the astral light, to see the secrets of existence, and then to come before Michael and receive His approving look which tells us: That is right, in harmony with the cosmic guidance.

So it is with Michael. He also sternly rejects all separating elements, such as the human languages. So long as we only clothe our knowledge in these languages, and do not carry it right up into the thoughts, we cannot come near Michael. Therefore, today in the spiritual world there is a very significant battle. For on the one hand the Michael impulse has entered the evolution of humanity. The Michael impulse is there. But on the other hand, in the evolution of

humanity there is much that will not receive this impulse of Michael but wants to reject it. Among the things that would fain reject the impulse of Michael today are the feelings of nationality. They flared up in the nineteenth century and became strong in the twentieth - stronger and stronger. By the principle of nationality many things have been ordered, or rather, have become sadly disordered in the most recent times.

All this is in terrible opposition to the Michael principle; all this contains Ahrimanic forces which strive against the inpouring of the Michael-force into the earthly life of man. So then we see this battle of the upward-attacking Ahrimanic spirits who would like to carry upward what comes through the inherited impulses of nationality - which Michael sternly rejects and repels.

Truly today there is the most vivid spiritual conflict in this direction. For this is the state of affairs over a great portion of mankind. Thoughts are not there at all; men only think in words, and to think in words is no way to Michael. We only come to Michael when we get through the words to real inner experiences of the Spirit - when we do not hang on the words, but arrive at real inner experiences of the Spirit.

This is the very essence, the secret of modern Initiation: to get beyond the words, to a living experience of the Spiritual. It is nothing contrary to a feeling for the beauty of language. Precisely when we no longer think in language, we begin to feel it. As a true element of feeling, it begins to live in us and flow outward from us. This is the experience to which the man of today must aspire. Perhaps, to begin with, he cannot attain it for speech, but through writing. For in respect of writing, too, it must be said: Today men do not have the writing but the writing has them. What does it mean, "the writing has them"? It means that in our wrist, in our hand, we have a certain train of writing. We write mechanically, out of the hand. This is a thing that fetters man. He only becomes unfettered when he writes as he paints or draws - when every letter beside the next becomes a thing that is painted or drawn ...

Then there is no longer what is ordinarily called "a handwriting." Man draws the form of the letter. His relation to the letter is objective; he sees it before him - that is the essential thing.

For this reason, strange as it may sound, in certain Rosicrucian schools learning-to-write was prohibited, even until the fourteenth or fifteenth century; so that the form, the mechanism which comes to expression in writing, did not enter the human being's organism. Man only approached the form of the letter when his spiritual vision was developed. Then it was so arranged that simultaneously with his learning of the conventional letters, needed for human intercourse, he had to learn others - specifically Rosicrucian letters - which are supposed to have been a secret script. They were not intended as such; the idea

was that for an A one should learn at the same time another sign: ☉. For then, one did not hold fast to the one sign but got free of it. Then one felt the real A as something higher than the mere sign of A or ☉. Otherwise, the mere letter A would be identified with that which comes forth from the human being, soaring and hovering as the living sound of it.

With Rosicrucianism many things found their way into the people. For it was one of their fundamental principles: - from the small circles in which they were united, the Rosicrucians went out into the world, as I have already told you, generally working as doctors. But at the same time, while they were doctors, they spread knowledge of many things in the wide circles into which they came. Moreover, with such knowledge, certain moods and feelings were spread. We find them everywhere, wherever the Rosicrucian stream has left its traces. Sometimes they even assume grotesque forms. For instance, out of such moods and feelings of soul, men came to regard the whole of this modern relationship to writing - and *a fortiori*, to printing - as a black art. For in truth, nothing hinders one more from reading in the astral light than ordinary writing. This artificial fixing hinders one very much from reading in the astral light. One must always first overcome this writing when one wants to read in the astral light.

At this point two things come together, one of which I mentioned a short while ago. In the production of spiritual knowledge man must always be present with full inner activity. I confess that I have many note-books in which I write or put down the results I come to. I generally do not look at them again. Only, by calling into activity not only the head but the whole man, these perceptions which do indeed take hold of the entire man come forth. He who does so, by and by accustoms himself not to care so much for what he sees physically, what is already fixed; but to remain in the activity, in order not to spoil his faculty of seeing in the astral light. It is good to practise this reticence. As far as possible, when fixing things in ordinary writing, one should adhere not to writing as such, but draw the letters and re-draw them after one's pleasure (for then it is as though you were painting, it becomes an art). Thus one acquires the faculty not to spoil the impressions in the astral light.

If we are obliged to relate ourselves to writing in the modern way, we mar our spiritual progress. For this reason, in the Waldorf School educational method, great care is taken that the human being does not go so far in writing as in the profane educational methods of today. Care is taken to enable him to remain within the Spiritual, for that is necessary.

The world must receive once more the principle of Initiation as such among the principles of civilisation. Only thereby will it come about that man, here on the Earth, will gather in his soul something with which he can go before Michael,

so as to meet Michael's approving look, the look that says: "That is right, cosmically right." Thereby the will is fastened and made firm, and the human being is incorporated in the spiritual Progress of the Universe. Thereby, man himself becomes a co-operator in that which is about to be instilled into the evolution of mankind on Earth by Michael - beginning now in this present epoch of Michael.

Many, many things must be taken into account if man wishes rightly to cross that abyss of which I spoke yesterday, where in truth a Guardian is standing. We shall show in the next lectures how the abyss opened out in the 1840's, and how man today, as he looks back, can find his true relation to this abyss and to this Guardian - helped by such detailed knowledge as I have once again been trying to present.