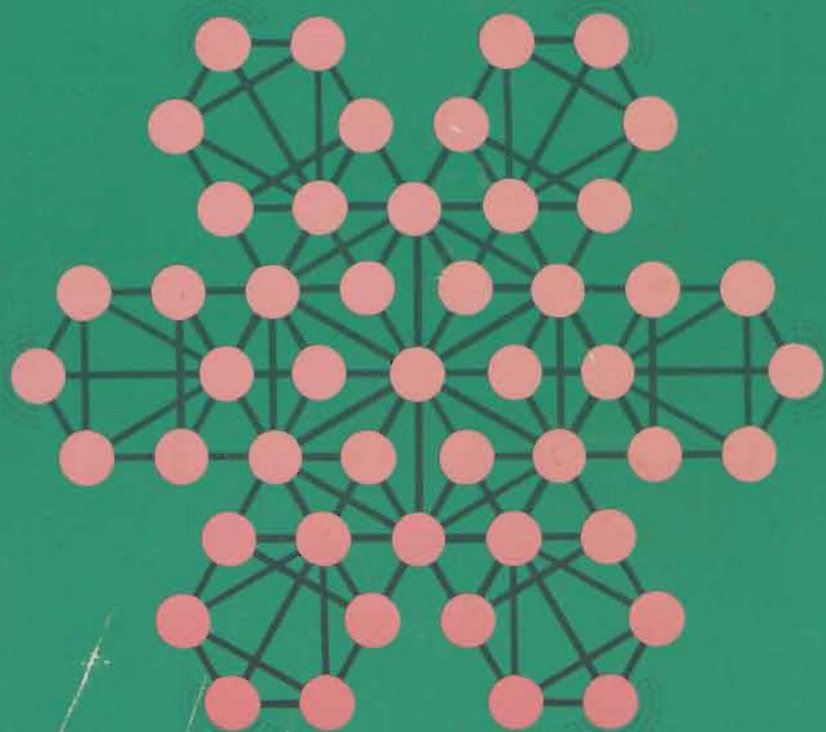


# MAGIC AND THE QABALAH



W.E. BUTLER

## About this book . . .

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Although the Qabalah may be said to have its origin in some of the earliest experiences and speculations of the Hebrew race, it also contains immemorial traditions which have come to us from the Night of Time and from a land now lost. This composite tradition forms the theme of W. E. Butler's stimulating book, in which the noted occultist has sought to illumine as well as to instruct, aiming his writing at the deeper levels of his readers' minds.

The word QBL, from which the name 'Qabalah' is formed, signifies 'from mouth to ear': it was an unwritten tradition of esoteric knowledge passed from one generation of initiates to another in an unbroken line. Although Western scholars question the accuracy of such oral transmissions, W. E. Butler studied them in India and claims they can be very accurate indeed. However, there comes a time when some part of the oral teaching is committed to paper, and it is the accumulation of these writings over the centuries that constitutes the historical Qabalah.

Some Qabalistic writings originated long before the Christian era, others were elaborated during the most fertile Talmudic period: the core of this collection from pre-existing and ancient sources were formed by Rabbi ben Jochai in the reign of the Roman Emperor Antoninus, A.D. 86-161, according to W. E. Butler's personal view.

The author promises that those who, having read this book, will use its chapters as food for meditation practice, will find therein something which will be helpful in the work of producing those changes of consciousness which are the goals of magical art. He wishes to pass on to others 'some of the glimpses of reality which it has been my good fortune to have received myself'.

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# **MAGIC AND THE QABALAH**

**An examination of the Qabalah both in its  
Jewish context and in its relationship to the  
Western magical tradition.**

*By the same author*

AN INTRODUCTION TO TELEPATHY

APPRENTICED TO MAGIC

HOW TO DEVELOP CLAIRVOYANCE

HOW TO DEVELOP PSYCHOMETRY

HOW TO READ THE AURA

MAGIC: ITS RITUAL POWER AND PURPOSE

THE MAGICIAN: HIS TRAINING AND WORK

# MAGIC AND THE QABALAH

*by*  
W. E. BUTLER



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TO  
THE REVERED MEMORIES  
OF  
“R.K.”, “D.N.F.” AND “A.V.O.”



## PREFACE

**L**ITTLE need be written as a preface to this book. Following my usual custom, I have written to illumine as well as to instruct, and my writing is aimed at the deeper levels of the minds of my readers. How far I may succeed in this depends upon many factors, some of which are outside my conscious control. I can only send the book forth upon its mission and trust that it may help some of its readers to understand a little more of the wonderful philosophy of the Qabalah.

Again I have to thank my patient amanuensis, Mrs Hilda Eastburn, for her help in the preparation and typing of the manuscript of the book. Under somewhat difficult conditions she has been of the greatest help to me in its initial production.

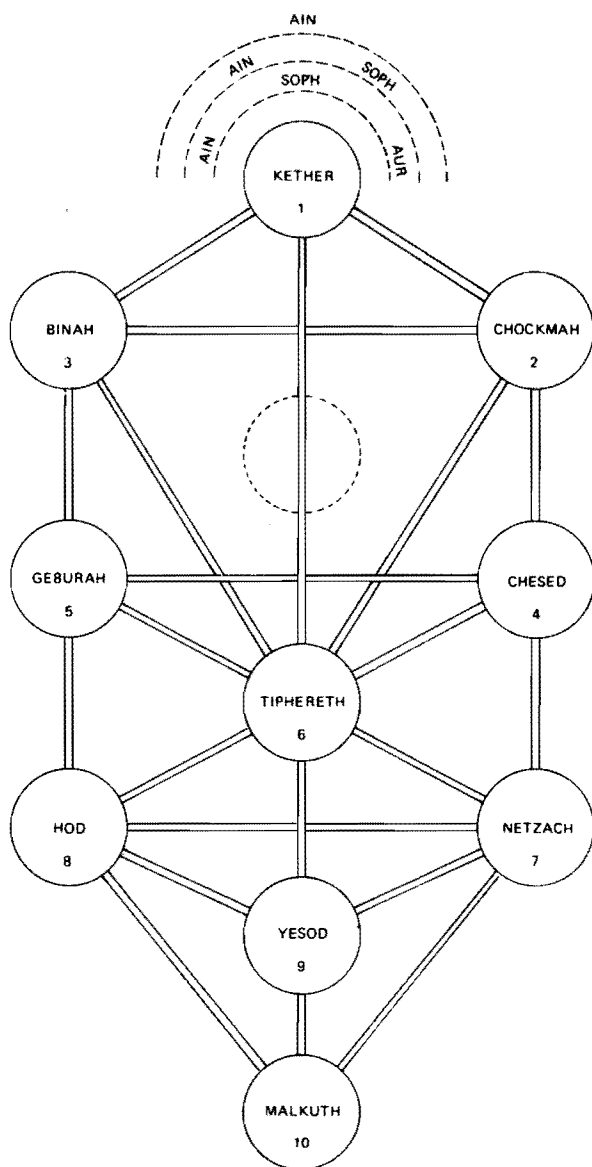
I have also to acknowledge with gratitude advice and help given to me by the Warden of the Society of the Inner Light.

Finally, I would thank all those readers of my earlier books who have written to me. I shall always be happy to reply to letters, critical or otherwise, if the writers would kindly enclose a stamped addressed envelope.

May this book prove worthy of its dedication to those who were true exponents of the philosophy outlined therein, and to whom I owe far more than I can ever say.

Southampton 1963.

W. E. BUTLER



**THE TREE AND THE PATHS**

## CHAPTER I

### A General Introduction

**I**T was Omar Khayam who lamented that he had, when young, heard great argument among the philosophers, "but evermore came out by that same door wherein I went." Very many men throughout the ages have echoed this lament. According to esoteric teachings, however, there has always existed a body of knowledge based upon the direct personal experience of men of exceptional quality. This direct experience has been explained and codified by teachers, who, from the beginning of human life on this planet, have constituted a guiding body known variously as "The Brotherhood", or the "College of the Holy Spirit".

This teaching has been checked and verified by generations of seers. It is the *Corpus Hermeticus*, a faith and a belief, limited in its expression in any particular age or period of time. The esoteric student is indeed a "spiritual scientist", and is always trying to express this basic philosophy in the forms of his own day; but because this is not only a *received philosophy* but also, primarily, a "theosophy" capable of being checked and verified by its followers, it is a living teaching, opening up new vistas of thought and action.

There are certain powers and faculties in man which enable him to verify the teachings for himself, and to make a living contact with the inner side of things; and, since humanity is *one*, it is evident that these powers are latent in all men. They are the so-called "psychic" faculties, and are variously developed in mankind. In some cases they are only a little below the surface, in others, they are buried so deeply that it is not possible to bring them to any great degree of functioning, though even this partial emergence can give a basis upon which the individual concerned may construct a helpful and workable philosophy of life.

Where they are near the surface, the psychic faculties tend

to appear spontaneously, and there exists a "rule of thumb" method of bringing them into activity that has been used throughout the ages; a method quite apart from those so carefully designed and controlled in the esoteric schools.

However, even though these psychic faculties do not manifest in the waking consciousness, it should be clearly understood that they are always working below the surface, thereby influencing the deeper subconscious levels.

This is important, for in these deep unconscious levels of the mind of man, exist the great driving forces known as the instincts. We are used to their classification under the headings of "self-preservation", "sex", and the "herd" instincts. Jung has pointed out that there is yet another basic instinct in man, the religious instinct, an instinct just as powerful as any of the others. For this reason it has been found impossible to pin-point the exact time in human evolution when religious observances began. This religious instinct manifested itself in two ways. The first was a *direct* experience, by certain individuals, of an underlying reality behind the physical world, the second, a formalized theology concerning this experience. Such theology exteriorized itself in the ritual and ceremonial worship of the tribe.

Since this direct experience did not come to everyone, it tended to be withdrawn; to persist as an inner grouping behind the outer religious form. So, through the ages, all the great religions developed this two-fold aspect, and in their "Mysteries" the man who was prepared and ready, was initiated into a method of direct experience of the hidden realities.

In the early days of Christianity, the "Mysteries of Jesus" withdrew into the background, while, at the same time, the whole vast movement of Gnosticism was expelled from the church. It is true that many of the gnostic schools were aberrant in both teaching and moral conduct; but whether any real good was gained by ignoring the implication of our Lord's parable of the wheat and the tares is a debatable point. It is clear, however, that as a result of this wholesale expulsion, any manifestation of direct experience tended to be either suppressed or twisted to fit into an already existing

**theology.** This attitude has persisted up to the present day.

In modern times this field of direct experience has, under the name of "extra-sensory-perception" (or E.S.P.), been studied from an objective and scientific point of view, and a new branch of research, entitled "parapsychology", has been started and now flourishes in many parts of the world. These powers of extra-sensory-perception, usually known as the psychic faculties, are sometimes referred to by American writers as "wild talents", and at first sight they seem to have little relevance to normal life. They emerge unexpectedly, and in many cases do not seem to be under the control of their possessor.

In Victorian days it was customary to attribute them to the unscientific observations of uneducated or primitive people, to mental unbalance, or even to simple fraud. This point of view has gradually been modified in many respects, and there now exists a group of scientifically minded people who are prepared to admit the possibility of such supernormal powers. Humanity in general, however, has not waited for their permission to go ahead in its growing belief in the existence of these powers and faculties. In the lives of the great religious teachers their followers have noted the use of such powers by both the teachers themselves and by their immediate disciples, though they usually claimed that the supernormal phenomena produced by their own particular teacher were superior to those produced by other teachers. They have even asserted that the wonders exhibited by the others were either fraudulent, or the work of evil beings attempting to deceive the faithful.

This idea was common in the early days of Christianity and it still persists in many denominations of the church. But quite apart from the specific phenomena associated with the teachers and their immediate disciples, there has always existed a belief, based on experience, that powers of this kind were possessed by people who were not of the orthodox persuasion, people who were indeed active in their opposition to it. Such supernormally gifted people became, what might be termed, a psychic "Cave of Adullam",\* and

\* I Samuel, xxii, 1 and 2.

to them resorted all who were in opposition to the established orthodoxy of the day.

So the "Camp of the Gifted Ones", came to include some very questionable characters: thus giving the orthodox a good excuse for persecution. But persecution only tends to strengthen any belief, and these natural psychics and seers persisted through the centuries, sometimes as solitary "wise men" and "wise women", and sometimes as members of the witch-cult, a cult which was simply the remnant of the old pre-Christian religion. With the advent of Christianity the non-Christian religions were reduced to scattered groups of worshippers in remote country places, hence the name "pagan" which was applied to them.

However, a considerable period of time was to pass before the church became seriously worried by these vestiges of the old religions, but with the growth and secularization of Christianity, it entered into a persecuting phase and began the attempt to root out these obstinate people. The two classes of the persecuted, the psychics and the pagans, found it helpful to join forces against the common enemy, and their gain in strength was such that they became a real threat to the interests of the church. Then there set in the era of persecution which constitutes such a dark page of Christian history. With the Reformation, it might have been thought that these unfortunate people would have had some respite from their troubles. The very godly reformed churches, however, here and elsewhere, continued to be just as bitter in their attempts to stamp out these heresies. A new outlook arose in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and belief in supernormal powers began to wane; concurrently the persecution of witches and wizards began to lessen, though it had a sharp recurrence in the Salem witchcraft trials in the New England States in America.

In the nineteenth century, however, modern spiritualism, both in America and on the continent of Europe, began to revive the belief in the existence of supernormal powers,—and the extreme fringe of the new psychic movements began to link up with the surviving remnants of the witch-cult.

These remnants were, as a rule, no more than a degraded expression of the old non-Christian religion. The witches had, generally speaking, reverted to the roles they had played in classical times, as fortune tellers, poisoners and abortionists. Even today, in most large towns they are still to be found telling fortunes by greasy packs of Tarot cards, casting spells with the use of "dragon's blood" and mercury, and very often acting as the means by which unfortunate girls can be put in touch with the abortionists.

Let us add that true witch-cult still flourishes free from this sordid element: it is simply a body of people who worship under the old non-Christian forms. In varying degrees it still uses the psychic abilities of those of its members who can be trained along this line, but in the main it has nothing to do with the parody which existed in the Middle Ages; a parody due to the ruthless persecution it endured.

We have, therefore, several lines of unorthodox belief all acknowledging the existence of supernormal faculties, and making use of them in varying degrees. The fortune-teller we have always with us, and the spiritualists have formed a religious cult based, in the main, upon the revelations which they have received from the "other side", whilst the Theosophical movement has brought to the western world some of the wisdom of the Orient. This has found a considerable measure of acceptance, since there has always existed a tradition that others, apart from the witches and wizards, possessed a wisdom and power hidden from the generality of mankind.

In the West, in pre-Christian times, this wisdom was thought to be in the possession of the initiated priests and leaders of what we now term the "Mystery-Religions", which sprang up in the Mediterranean lands some time before the advent of Christianity. More particularly the Egyptian and Chaldean Mystery Schools were thought to possess this hidden knowledge in its fullness, and many great philosophers of the ancient world sought initiation in their assemblies.

When, in the early Christian days, the emperor Justinian closed down the pagan philosophical schools, it was

commonly thought that the hidden teachings had been finally suppressed, and this opinion has been generally held by the majority of European scholars who have considered the subject. However, an unbiassed study of the matter soon suggests that the hidden wisdom not only survived the destruction of the Roman Empire, but also that it exists today.

Side by side with the tremendous advances in scientific knowledge which are so characteristic of these modern days, there has been a parallel increase in the number of organisations which claim to possess some part of what has come to be known as the "ancient" or "ageless" wisdom. Much of what is taught in these modern schools of esoteric thought is a re-hash of certain teachings derived from the East where the indigenous Mystery-tradition has never been suppressed. Much that is being exported from the Orient is, however, but a superficial presentation of the true eastern wisdom. Not every "swami" or "rishi" is worthy of these venerable titles.

This eager acceptance of oriental teachings is characteristic of many of the modern esoteric movements; human nature being what it is (and not what we might wish it to be) the demand has created a corresponding supply. However, as the great psychologist, Jung, has pointed out in his writings, the eastern systems are unsuited to most western peoples.

There is, of course, no reason at all why the oriental philosophies should not be *studied* in conjunction with the western systems of thought, and some philosophers and theologians (mainly in the Roman Catholic Church), are doing this with profitable results. It is a matter not merely of understanding the deeper aspects of these eastern teachings, but also of following the methods of training which have been developed in connection with them. It is here that the possibility of trouble arises. These methods, usually summed up under the general title of "yoga", have been developed for oriental outlooks and requirements, and for the particular physical make-up of eastern peoples. In spite of the earnest endeavours being made at the present time to assure

us that there is no difference between East and West, it remains true, at least in the field of esoteric training, that differences do exist and have to be reckoned with. There is, of course, much common ground, but yoga, to be really helpful to the *occidental* student, has to be considerably modified.

However, just as the East has its own characteristic methods of esoteric teaching and training, based upon certain sacred writings and the accumulated experiences of its trained initiates through many centuries; so in the West there is a similar method of training, adapted for the psychological and physical make-up of western peoples, based upon the Jewish and Christian Scriptures, and possessing, also, a deposit of the recorded experiences of generations of seers and students, together with the fragmentary records of wisdom derived from times long past.

This basic body of pre-historic teaching and practice has been enriched during historic times through contacts made by the Hebrew nation with the various Mystery Schools, which sprang up, as we have said, in the Mediterranean lands during the classical era. The enforced contacts of the Hebrews with other nations during their sojourns in Egypt and Assyria and, still further afield, with other elements of value, such as, for instance, the native philosophy usually associated with the Celtic Druids (*but deriving from pre-Celtic times*), all these contributed valuable material to this composite tradition of the West.

In all esoteric systems worthy of the name, much use is made of symbols and symbol-systems, and in the East, certain composite symbols, termed "mandalas", have been developed and used. So also, similar composite symbols, which are known as "glyphs" are used in the western schools of esoteric training, and the key glyph, around which all the other associated symbolism of the western training is centred, is the "mighty all-embracing glyph of the universe and the soul of man", known as *Ōṭz Chiim*, the "Tree of Life".

The symbolism of the Tree of Life is basically derived from the esoteric teachings of the past, but has been added

to in all the centuries of its existence by those who have used it as an instrument of training. For it is more than a diagram; it is the result of many centuries of training and experience gathered into pictorial form; it is also an instrument through which certain energies and forces may be contacted by successive generations of students.

This glyph comes to us down the centuries and is a part, indeed the most important part, of the system of teaching known as the Qabalah which was evolved by the Hebrew nation. This name, QBL, may be translated as "from mouth to ear", and, though written records have also been used to supplement it, the main body of esoteric knowledge has always been handed down by oral instruction.

Such written records were, and still are, kept secret, and it was not until the eleventh century of our era that any part of the secret teaching was put into print for general use. Even then, the Qabalists reserved the inner teaching and did not allow it to be given out to all and sundry.

Much of this pre-Christian teaching was carried over from Jewry in the early Christian Church, and there, mixed with Egyptian, Persian and Grecian elements, it formed the basis of the great Gnostic movement in the early days of the church. Then for various reasons, the church expelled the Gnostics from its fellowship, and threw away, at the same time, most of the keys to the inner teaching, so that the Qabalistic tradition was handed on, in the main, in purely Jewish circles; though certain Muslim teachers used it in a modified form.

With the increasing power of the church, the arcane schools became subject to varying degrees of persecution, and with the abolition by Justinian of the schools of philosophy, the tradition went into hiding, though, every now and then, fragmentary gleams of its presence shone out amid the deepening gloom of the Dark Ages in Europe.

In the tenth and eleventh centuries, some of the Qabalistic circles in Spain published, for the first time, part of their teachings, and on these, as a parallel movement, there sprang up a school of Christian Qabalism.

Unfortunately, an attempt was made to use the Qaba-

listic teaching as an instrument for the conversion of the Jews to the Roman Catholic faith. This caused the study of the Qabalah to be condemned by the strictly orthodox rabbis of that time, resulting in an antipathy which persisted down the years, and exists today, except perhaps, in the Liberal Synagogues of the Jewish faith.

The Qabalah has been used by several schools of thought since the days of Moses de Leon and his school, among them being an unorthodox sect of Jews known as the "Chasidim", whose chief exponents in the early nineteenth century were the "wonder-working rabbis" of Poland. Some of these men attempted to use their wonder-working powers in connection with the Napoleonic wars in Europe. A fine account of this is to be found in Martin Buber's *Sons of Heaven*. The Chasidim still exist as a sect, and are strong in certain American circles.

The Qabalah was also used by two other schools of unorthodox thought, the Alchemists and the Rosicrucians. Both these schools used it as the framework of their philosophy, and incorporated into it the esoteric tradition they had received from their predecessors. The Arabs had brought much of the learning of the Egyptian lands into Western Europe, where it was received under the name of "alchemy", a word based upon the old name for Egypt: "Khem". Thus alchemy was "the Egyptian matter": the secret teaching of Egypt.

Again, in the story of the putative founder of the Rosicrucians, Christian Rosencreutz, it is said that he journeyed to "Damcar" (probably Damascus) and later to Fez, where, it is stated, he studied "their Qabalah".

The Western esoteric tradition is generally identified with the Rosicrucian order, most of its teaching being based upon the Rosicrucian adaption of the Qabalah, interwoven with the strands of tradition which have been handed down from both pagan and Christian gnosis.

All esoteric schools have a central symbol system, around which their teaching is organized, and the Western "mandala", as these symbol-systems are named in the orient, is, as we have said, *Otz Chium*, the Tree of Life. In the more

extravagant claims made by some of its exponents, the Qabalah is said to have been taught to Adam in Paradise, by the Arch-angel, Metratron, and the Tree of Life is identified as that tree which the Scriptures tell us grew in the Garden of Eden. This, of course, is only a way of saying that this particular body of teaching and practice comes from a remote antiquity, and is therefore worthy of consideration. However, claims to such ancient lineage are really beside the point (many teachings and practices that are far from edifying can also claim remote ancestry) so it is advisable to be guarded in making such claims on behalf of any system of thought, unless the objective proof can be given of such early origins.

In the world of "occult" philosophies, it is common to find the most outrageous statements being made along these lines, causing the general public, or at least its more intelligent section, to regard the occult teachings with a certain amount of contempt. Of course, many uncritical followers of such teachings regard this contempt as something which must be borne by those who are different in their outlook from the uninstructed and prejudiced outer world. It is true that such criticism is very often both vituperative and superficial, a mental defence-weapon used by the critic to avoid the possibility of his having to revise the whole of his mental outlook; a task which we none of us care about! In matters like this it is fatally easy to allow such a bias to creep unnoticed into our thinking, and the manifest animosity and the unfairness so often displayed by the hostile critic, evoke a similar response from the believer. A very interesting example of this is to be found in the contents of the many books which have been written in connection with what have come to be known as "The Dead Sea Scrolls". At the same time, of course, it is quite possible that a perfectly true claim to an ancient origin might be made by an esoteric school, for many of these schools, at least in the West, were forced by persecution to "go underground" and to transmit their teachings in secret.

It is necessary that we should make a clear distinction between mystery-mongering secrecy on the one hand, and

legitimate reserve in communicating training and teaching to the outside world on the other. It is interesting to note that certain knowledge once held by the occult schools alone, is now being extensively used by American advertising agencies. More and more the new psychological practice is being misused and perverted by unscrupulous people, and the esotericist can point to this as a vindication of his practice of reserve in communication.

If the enquiring student should join any of the true occult schools, he will in all probability find that in the "Mythos" of the lodge, certain claims to the antiquity of its teachings will be made, but such claims, substantiated in some cases by good documentary evidence, are not put forward to the general public.

*The esoteric lodges, insofar as they are working efficiently, and producing results, do so by virtue of function, rather than charter.*

A teaching or philosophy, if it is to be of any real service must, by its very nature, conform to the description given by Jesus to the Kingdom, "The Kingdom of Heaven," He said, "is likened unto a wise householder, who bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old."

A teaching is no less worthy of respect because it was formulated today, than is a traditional teaching going back two thousand years or more. The body of teaching is constantly being re-interpreted and illuminated by the work of the present time.

There is a *Corpus Hermeticus*, a body of teaching "once for all delivered" to the followers of the esoteric tradition by teachers from another evolutionary scheme than our own, or so it is declared in the lodges, but this foundation has been built upon and modified by generations of initiates. Like some of the great abbeys and cathedrals of this country, it shows the marks of its composite building. If we may continue to use the analogy of ecclesiastical architecture, we may say that we find in the esoteric tradition portions which suggest the first "wattle and daub" churches alongside the rough axe-hewn wooden structures of the Saxon "house-church", the heavy squat buildings of the later Saxon and early Norman periods; the soaring Gothic of the early

Middle Ages (and the various modifications thereof), till we come to the banal Victorian "Gothic" reconstruction, and the experiments in steel and concrete of the present day.

It remains to be seen, of course, how much of the modern expression can be blended into the more traditional teachings which reflect the modes of thought of ancient times still forming part of the tradition, whilst, at the same time, an intense effort is being made to re-interpret tradition in terms of the present day.

Now this is typical of any living organism, this power to adapt to new conditions whilst retaining its own individuality, and it is certainly in line with the Qabalistic teaching as we have received it. *For the Qabalah is not only a body of teaching derived from the "Masters in Israel"; it is a method of using the mind in a practical and constantly widening consideration of the nature of the universe and the soul of man.*

We may say that the Qabalah was first deliberately *in-folded* into the Hebrew Scriptures by the heirs of the esoteric tradition, whence, strengthened and modified by the tributary streams of Egyptian, Chaldean and Hellenic esoteric teachings, it became the Secret Wisdom of Israel, handed down from initiate to pupil through the ages.

It was the task of the "Master in Israel", the initiate of the Hebrew Mysteries, to receive and transmit the keys of this hidden wisdom in such a way that the pupil, reading in the orthodox Scriptures of his race, might unfold from their depths the secret teachings which had been folded within them. By meditation upon these teachings, and by the use of the prescribed technique, the initiate worked with this hidden wisdom, adding to it the results of his own researches, and in turn transmitting it, enlarged and enriched, to his own pupils.

Sometimes, of course, such individual work was faulty and out of line with the main tradition, but this the pupil could correct by using the glyph of the Tree of Life in the prescribed manner.

It will be seen from the foregoing that the Qabalistic system is not merely a body of knowledge, though of course it is that in part, neither is the Tree of Life a diagram in the

ordinary sense of the word. Although both knowledge and diagrammatic representation are important and integral parts of the Qabalah, it is primarily, as we have already pointed out, *a method of using the mind* in such a way that the initiate comes into direct contact with the living powers and forces of the universe, and through them with the eternal source of all manifestation.

So the system of the Qabalah, though primarily an "occult" system, culminates in an exalted mysticism, and in so doing becomes a true and living theosophy.

In the same way, by the use of the sacred Scriptures of the old and new Testaments alike, the Qabalist maintains contact with the group-souls of the western races, and becomes able to influence the destinies of the West, not, it should be observed, by external political means, but by infusing into the racial unconscious seed-atoms of thought which will bear fruit in the future.

The true initiate influences the world not only by what he *says*, but, in a far more important way, by what he *is*.

It remains now to conclude this chapter by a brief account of the history of the Qabalah as far as it has become known to the scholars of the western world. The word QBL, from which the name "Qabalah" is formed, signifies "from mouth to ear", that is to say, it was an unwritten tradition passed down from one generation of initiates to another in an unbroken line. Contrary to the generally accepted opinion of Western scholars, such oral transmission can be very accurate indeed, as the present writer found when studying these matters in India. But there always comes a time when some part of the oral teaching is written down either in the form of private manuscripts which are circulated amongst the brethren, or else as an attempt to interest and attract the general public.

Scholars who have studied this question of the historical, written Qabalah, have come to certain general conclusions, though, as in all scholarly assessments of history, they disagree considerably amongst themselves! A general pattern emerges, however, and it is this pattern which we will now briefly discuss.

The two books which are the chief Qabalistic publications, are the *Sepher Yetzirah*, or Book of Formation, and the *Zohar*, or Book of Splendour. Of these the *Sepher Yetzirah* is the older, and its authorship has been attributed to Rabbi Akiba ben Joseph, a pupil of one of the contemporaries of Rabbi Gamaliel, of whom we read in the Acts of the Apostles. How far any prior esoteric teaching is embodied in the *Sepher Yetzirah* is a matter of opinion amongst scholars; but from other sources than the purely exoteric, historical ones, we are inclined to think that the author, whoever he may have been, *did* incorporate to some extent in the *Sepher Yetzirah* a very considerable amount of tradition which was coloured by Egyptian and Chaldean esoteric teachings assimilated during the Captivities.

However, as far as the *Sepher Yetzirah* is concerned, it did not appear in a published form until the sixteenth century, and it was the *Sepher Zohar*, the Book of Splendour, which first attracted attention in the West. Hostile critics have said that Rabbi Moses Shem Tov de Leon wrote this book in the thirteenth century. On the other hand, over-zealous occultists have claimed that the Book of Splendour descends from an unknown antiquity. The truth probably lies, as usual, between the two extremes.

The personal view of the present writer is that Moses de Leon edited a large number of floating manuscripts, some of which originated long before the Christian era, while others were elaborated during the most fertile Talmudic period, and that the core of this collection had been formed, (again from pre-existing and ancient sources) by Rabbi ben Jochai in the reign of the Roman Emperor Antoninus, A.D. 86-161.

There is much in the *Zohar* which is evidently the result of the working of its editor's mind, a mind coloured by the accepted ideas and theories of his day, and this, of course, allows his hostile critics a good deal of scope for their attacks.

But even in our modern world, the influence of an editor still shows itself in that which he edits, and it is difficult to see how this can be entirely avoided.

Some critics have maintained that de Leon gained a living by transcribing large numbers of the *Zohar*, and squandered the profits so obtained in riotous living. However, as Waite points out, if he transcribed this large book very frequently, he would have needed a number of copyists, and the profits thereby obtained would have been so considerably reduced, that he would not have had much to squander. On the other hand, if he transcribed it by his own efforts, he would not have had time to squander the profits.

In all probability he *did* gain some profit from his editorial work (perhaps an unknown patron was behind the work) but profit may not have been his sole motive. As for the alleged neglect of his family, there may have been a certain spice of truth in this; considerably enlarged upon by his ill-wishers. It does happen in similar circles today!

It is, however, well to remember that in the time of Moses de Leon, there were in existence many other related traditions which had come down from antiquity. The *Zohar* is not the only source. How much of the wisdom of the hidden sanctuaries of the ancient world is embodied in the Qabalistic works is something which, in the nature of things, we cannot determine, but it is certain that some of that wisdom has been so transmitted.

In this connection the writer learned from a friend, an initiate of a Scottish Rosicrucian fraternity, that some very definite eleventh-century Portuguese elements existed in its ritual and teaching. Certain Phoenician influences are also to be found in other Qabalistic fraternities.

It would appear, therefore, that the body of knowledge and tradition which comes to us down the ages from some of the earliest experiences and speculations of the Hebrew race, has been augmented by many tributaries. In its Jewish aspect it still expresses some of the orthodox Jewish concepts of its eleventh century recension, but it also brings with it immemorial traditions which have come to us from the Night of Time; from times long past, and, we may also suggest, from a land now lost.

This composite tradition is that with which we are concerned in this book.

## CHAPTER II

### Psychism, Illumination and Seership

**I**N the previous pages, reference has been made to what were termed "wild talents": the apparently random appearance of certain powers and faculties which are beginning to be studied by an increasing number of psychologists. True to type, these investigators have given new names to these powers and faculties, such as "Extra-sensory-perception" and "P.K." or "Psycho-Kinesis". The parapsychologists all over the world are now working on these random powers, and at least one Chair of Parapsychology has been set up in a continental university.

The subject matter for their research is obtained by working through large batches of people, usually university students, until they find those who have some wild talent. The process rather resembles the proverbial search for a needle in a haystack, and the seers of the esoteric schools, together with the psychics and mediums of the spiritualist movement, tend to regard it with a critical eye. Nevertheless, it is bringing the methods of modern science to bear upon the subject, and whatever survives that very efficient process may be regarded as being established. This is not to say, however, that the hypotheses built up on these researches necessarily give complete and satisfactory explanations of the phenomena studied. It is necessary to take into account the personal subjective bias of the investigator, and this is a more difficult task.

From the mass of information which has been obtained by the parapsychologists, one definite fact has emerged: somewhere in the mental make-up of the individual there is, what we may describe as, a "dormer window", "a casement looking out upon "perilous seas, and fairy lands forlorn", as well as upon scenes of glory and light.

The question which now arises in the minds of some

parapsychologists is whether these talents belong to the past or the future of the race. Are they the remnants of a primitive faculty which was superseded by the use of the more dependable method of communication by the spoken word, or are they faculties which are latent in all and are now being gradually evolved into active use?

The esoteric schools say that this question can be answered either way, all depending upon the part of the machinery of the mind which is being used. The faculties and powers usually termed "psychic" are, and always have been, part of the content of the mind; but their mode of manifestation at any time depends upon the conditions under which it takes place. All sense impressions, whether physical or super-physical, come into the waking consciousness *through* those levels of the mind which are usually known as the "subconscious" or "unconscious", and they are always coloured and altered by their journey through those levels.

This "stained-glass" effect takes place in all cases, even when the observer prides himself upon his "objective" approach to the subject of his study. Sometimes the distortion is fairly obvious, and scientific workers recognize what they call the "personal equation" in the results of their observations. But the real stained-glass distortion usually takes place in the deeper levels of the mind, and is not apparent to the observer himself.

If we apply this to the emergence of the superphysical faculties, we see that their appearance and functioning will be altered and coloured very considerably by their passage through the subconscious levels of the mind, and as they come through much deeper levels than the ordinary physical sense impressions, they will be capable of much greater distortion.

The physical mechanism through which these subtle psychic impressions reach the level of the waking self is twofold. First, there is what is known as the involuntary nerve system, or, as it is sometimes called, the sympathetic nerve system. Then there is the voluntary or cerebro-spinal nerve system, which in terms of evolution is a much newer

development than the involuntary system. Now the relative activities of these two interlocking systems vary over very wide limits, but they are always involved together in all mental activity.

Some schools of thought attempt to make a sharp line of demarcation between them, but it is found that in actual practice they are always working together; only their proportions vary. One of the chief characteristics of the involuntary nerve system is that it is closely connected with the emotional nature, and is affected by alteration of the emotional tone of the individual. On the other hand, the cerebro-spinal system is directly affected by the thoughts generated by the waking consciousness. Under normal conditions the voluntary cerebro-spinal system should be master, and the involuntary system should be the servant, but this is a counsel of perfection, for in the majority of humanity, the emotional energies tend, in varying degree, to dominate the decisions of consciousness. There is a minority in which the mental processes have, as it were, been cut off from the emotions, but this leads to the arid and sterile mentality which is so characteristic of that minority.

It will be seen, therefore, that any psychic impressions coming into consciousness will be distorted and coloured in a varying degree by the composite emotional-mental nature. Where the emotional nature predominates, the psychic processes will be largely channelled through the involuntary system, and will be haphazard and fluctuating and not under the control of the will. This is the so-called "negative" psychism, characteristic of savages, uneducated people and animals. The type of psychism associated with the voluntary nerve system is known as the "positive" psychism and in order that this type may function, its possessor must have a degree of mental development and control.

This control over its manifestations is the point which is stressed by those who have adopted a somewhat doctrinaire attitude to the development of the psychic faculties. There are, however, varying degrees of control (no psychic is always capable of full control) and even the so-called "positive" psychic can, under certain conditions, move towards

the negative end of the scale. The degree of this shift will depend upon the workings of the sub-conscious levels of the mind of the psychic.

At the other end of the scale, the negative psychic is directly affected by the subconscious content of his mind, and his observations on the inner levels will always be strongly affected by the contents of his subconscious.

If allowance is made for this distortion, he may be able to do quite good work along these lines, and be of considerable assistance to his fellow men. Unfortunately however, there is a tendency for the negative psychic to become the focal point of an admiring group of people, and any criticism of his powers is regarded by that group as a heresy, a falling away from the wonderful teachings which are being received through the psychic oracle. This tends to suppress that healthy self-criticism which is the best safeguard in these subjective regions.

It does happen, occasionally, that such a negative psychic determines to change over to the more positive form of his powers, and, if he can escape from the mental grip which is exerted on him by his group, he may proceed to take the training which is necessary for this change.

His first test comes when, to his dismay, his psychic powers disappear entirely, and, as one such person told the writer, "I was as psychic as a brick wall for over two years". Because of this temporary loss of power, many negative psychics attempting to move over to the positive use of their powers are daunted and fall back to their old way of working. This is to be understood, but if they *had* persevered, they would have found that their powers would have returned, but in a new and improved form.

It is the rule of the esoteric schools to require their initiates to strive toward the positive control of the incarnationary personality, and this control includes control over the inherent psychic faculties. For this reason they do not welcome into their ranks those psychics who are the product of the ordinary "developing circle" where the habitual use of the negative forms of psychism has been firmly established. If such people are admitted, then two things tend to happen.

The increased mental activity consequent upon the training which is received tends to focus the consciousness on the mental levels, and the cerebro-spinal machinery; the psychism, which has been working through the involuntary nerve system, then tends to die away; this process is deliberately accelerated by the special exercises which such initiates receive. In the Eastern schools, such negative psychics are usually not admitted, but much depends upon the individual circumstances.

Psychism, in both its positive and negative ranges, is very largely a *pictorial* consciousness, since the subconscious levels of the mind through which it works were developed in a period of evolution when language, as we understand it, did not exist. By the term "pictorial" we understand not only the visual, but also the auditory and other sense images. Now these images, or rather the stock of them which exists in the subconscious mind, are used by the psychic machinery, and, as we have said, they distort and falsify the information which is received from supernormal sources. Unless there exists a better set of images in the psychic's mind, this state of affairs will persist.

Whatever psychic impressions are received will be referred to corresponding images in the mind, in exactly the same way as, when something familiar is mentioned in ordinary conversation, the tendency is to relate the idea to our own already established knowledge of the subject in question. So, for instance, when in the course of conversation someone refers to his dog, the dog is immediately linked up in the listener's mind with the memory of his own dog. The first dog may be different in every way from the second, but until further information is supplied the listener will tend to think of it under the terms of his own memory picture.

This action of the mind is still more apparent when the subject under discussion is of a more abstract nature, especially when it is entirely new to the person concerned. Then corresponding images arise which may, or may not, correctly represent the actual subject of discussion. Such images tend, with practice, to become stereotyped, and are

built into a system of thought reaction which may be flexible or the reverse. Now, this same mental machinery is used when the knowledge is being received through the operation of the psychic senses, and here difficulties begin. The incoming psychic impressions are twisted by this rigid reference-frame of the mind, and the result is a distorted and inaccurate perception. But because, when the psychic senses are working in the conscious mind, there comes, with the psychic impressions, a rush of energy from the deeper levels, such perception tends to be regarded as sacrosanct, something which must not be questioned, and this often leads to considerable trouble. The psychic feels that the energy which comes with the perception is a proof that such perception is true, *in the form under which he perceives it*, and strongly resents any attempt to criticize it.

As previously indicated, such a psychic tends to become the focusing point of a group which is attracted and held by the teachings, and there is built up a body of knowledge heavily coloured by the mental reference-frame of the psychic concerned. This effectually prevents any new knowledge, which may appear to alter the teaching, from getting through the psychic's mind. Also, by a curious telepathic compulsion, emanating from the group-mind concerned, the psychic is prevented from rising to any greater heights of perception than those already gained by him.

Since this use of *some* sort of reference-frame would appear to be inescapable, the esoteric schools have devised a frame which has the advantage of being sufficiently flexible to allow for the reception of new knowledge. This particular reference also has the virtue of disciplining the minds of group members, and therefore lessens the grip of the group-mind upon the psychic who is its focal point. This flexible reference-frame is the glyph of the Tree of Life with its associated philosophy, and it is around this "mighty all-embracing glyph of the universe and the soul of man" that both the theory and practice of the Western tradition is arranged. It is true that there are elements in the Western tradition which do not derive from the Qabalah of the Hebrews (Celtic and Iberian contacts amongst others) but it

is the glory of the Tree of Life that it may be used as a kind of occult Rosetta Stone. When it is so used, then the symbols and glyphs of these other systems may be interpreted and, in fact, incorporated into the general Qabalistic picture.

By this flexible pattern of images and symbols it becomes possible to avoid, to a great extent, the distortion of the psychic perception. When the incoming psychic impressions reach this mental sieve, they are able to illuminate the symbols and so convey the essential nature of that which is being perceived on the inner levels of consciousness. This process of picking up and utilising suitable symbol forms is technically termed "illumination", and leads on to a true, but formless, direct perception in physical consciousness. This is known as "seership". There is a world of difference between the vague "sensings" of the negative psychism and the clearcut, but formless, perception of the well-developed and trained insight of the positive seer. It is only fair to say, however, that this direct perception is a rare thing. Under adverse conditions most seers tend at times to descend to the level of "illumination" or even, if these conditions are very disturbed, to descend still further and function on the "sensing" levels of the negative psychism.

All that can be done by anyone working in these higher reaches is to keep the mind directed towards the ideal of true seership, and in the meantime to work at the task of so training his mind that he becomes increasingly independent of external conditions.

From what has already been said, it will be seen that the lower psychism, when not merely "impressional", is a state of consciousness characterized by images. It is a pictorial type of perception. This is because it relates, as we have seen, to that period in evolution when the subconsciousness was predominant, this aspect of the mind being a simple picture consciousness.

Man is essentially creative, and his thought activities, in the main pictorial, have built innumerable picture-images in the collective unconscious of the human race. It is these images, the "creations of the created", as they are called, which are first observed when the psychic faculties become

active, and it is only later in his training that the psychic begins to work without them. Even then, the great archetypal images of the collective unconscious influence and colour his vision, and it requires a great deal of hard work to attain to the relatively formless vision of the seer.

Here again, the glyph of the Tree comes to his aid. The picture-consciousness of the emerging faculty is brought through and conditioned by the inter-related symbol system of the Tree. Even when the psychic perceptions are inaccurate, this will be indicated by the fact that the symbolism does not agree with the basic symbolism of the Tree. The psychic will then know that the vision is inaccurate, and will take steps accordingly.

It will be clear, from the foregoing, that definite and regular meditation on the Tree of Life is an essential part of the training of the initiate of the Western tradition.

Finally, it may be said, that in the high formless perception of the true seer, common ground is reached with those who follow the mystic way, the difference being that the seer is still working in the form worlds, even though employing a formless type of perception.

In the next chapter we will discuss that great level of life and manifestation, known to many as the "astral plane", and see the working of psychic perception at that level.

## CHAPTER III

### The Astral Plane

WHEN the phenomena of psychism are studied, it becomes apparent that, quite apart from their manifestation in the physical world, they are working in other levels of substance, and it is with these other "inner" levels that we are concerned in this chapter.

During the centuries, the vision of both trained and untrained seers and psychics has given a picture of these inner worlds. It is difficult to compress into a brief survey all that has been observed, but it may suffice if we consider the general outline.

Observations have revealed the existence of a form of substance which is extremely fluidic and mobile, having no *direct* connection with the physical world, yet present in every atom of physical matter. It has been known by many names, but the most common name in the Western tradition is "the astral light", or, in Theosophical terminology, the "astral plane". In the Orient it is usually referred to as the *Kamic* or "Desire World". In both these traditions, however, it is associated with what is known as the "mental" or *Manasic* world, and it is held that both these two attributes of sentient consciousness, desire and mind, are woven into a common world which is usually known as the "astro-mental" or *Kama-manasic* world.

We have, therefore, to picture this astro-mental world as a plane or level of fluidic mobile substance, through which currents of energy flow. In it there dwell intelligences of many kinds and grades, ranging from the lowliest types of consciousness up, through many intervening grades, to the mighty Intelligences who, from these inner levels, bear rule over all earthly manifestations, and beyond them to the indwelling life and consciousness of the planet itself.

Furthermore, it is held, again from what has been

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obtained through the use of exalted seership, that the emotional and mental aspects of all life on this planet are part of the corresponding aspects of these inner plane intelligences, and behind them, permeating, and indeed maintaining in existence all these lives and forms, is the Immanent Logos, the "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world", by whose enduring sacrifice the world is nourished and sustained.

It is sometimes stated, by critics who apparently know very little about it, that the esoteric philosophy is one of "pantheism", identifying the Creator with His creation. This is not so, for in the Western tradition the Deity is always thought of as being both Immanent: sacrificed in His Universe, and Transcendent: reigning supreme over all.

Esoteric teaching declares that the astro-mental realms interpenetrate the physical world and also extend spatially far beyond it. At the same time, it is stated (and this has been verified by many seers), the substance of that plane is not physical substance as we know it, but one which exists in that space-time continuum which has been given the popular name of the "fourth-dimension". This means that the matter of the inner planes is not governed by the same natural laws as the dense physical world, for, like every other level of existence, it has its own definite laws of being: if it is studied from the standpoint of these laws, then all its manifestations and phenomena are seen to be as orderly as those of the physical world. For this reason the esotericist does not speak of the "supernatural", for he holds that there is but one supernatural aspect of all manifestation: the Logos from whom all Nature on all planes has its origin, and in whom all the observed sequences which we term "natural law" eternally subsist. From this standpoint, it is usual to refer to all manifestations of inner plane activity as being "supernormal" but *not* "supernatural". It will be observed that as evolution proceeds, much that is at present supernormal will come into the category of *normal* whilst, at the same time, the questing soul of man will reach out into the infinite immensities of creation and discover

much more which will be studied and brought into the realms of the *normal*. There is no limit set to the range of man's mind except its inability to go beyond a certain point at any given time, and this, as it will be seen, is a constantly receding horizon.

One of the most striking qualities of this super-physical realm is the amazing mobility of its substance, and it is because of this that the practical work of the esoteric schools becomes possible. The tenuous substance of the astral light will take any form which is impressed on it by the thought of sentient beings of whatever grade; so there are built up in this realm myriads of images of all kinds. They divide naturally into two distinct groups according to their background. One group has as its background the physical world and its phenomena, whilst the other has the background of the spiritual realms beyond the astro-mental levels.

It is one of the common jeers at spiritualism that the descriptions of the "other side" which are given through mediums are so "earthly" and commonplace, and one critic has gone so far as to say that the spiritualists are "suburbanizing the cosmos".

This statement is true, but does not necessarily prove the unreliability of the seance room communicators. According to the seers "suburbanization" happens because the subconsciousness of the person who has left the physical, and now become a dweller on the astro-mental levels, automatically builds up the images of the conditions of physical life. Immediately the astral substance takes shape around these thought forms, and the man finds himself among scenery very similar to that which was around him in earth life. But since the subconsciousness has been built up according to the habitual thoughts and desires over many years, it will automatically build surrounding images which will reflect accurately the character of the man. In this way the "summerland" and the "dark spheres" and the "grey worlds", so common in spiritualist communications are built up in these finer levels.

But not only are these relatively lower levels of the astral

light built up into the paradises and hells of the discarnate dwellers therein, but they are also full of the swarming images built up by the thoughts of people still in the physical body, and in this way there exists on these inner levels a great body of linked thought both consciously, and unconsciously expressed by humanity. The "collective unconscious" of the Jungian psychologists is located here, and the whole of human thinking is done in the atmosphere and under the influence of this great thought-form. Now, because man has "bodies" of the substance of the astro-mental levels, it is found by observation that there is a very real unity of the race on these levels, and that, in very fact, no man is an island.

The energy and life which is continually pouring into these inner realms, and from them into the physical world, comes from much higher levels, but manifests in these lower worlds as that energy which is known as the "libido". So, for all life on both the astro-mental and physical worlds, this driving energy is affected and conditioned by the collective subconsciousness of the race. This applies also to the animal, vegetable and mineral kingdoms, as well as to the curious halfway state which lies between the gross physical world and the levels of the astral light. This linking level, the so-called "etheric plane" of the theosophists, is of the greatest importance as we shall see when we come to deal with it. Here we are concerned with the astro-mental levels which, in their higher aspects, are its controlling factors.

The instinctive life of all the kingdoms of Nature is part of, and is controlled by, the energies of the inner levels directed by intelligences of all grades; intelligences which are themselves subject to the guiding direction of higher beings whose natural home is in the higher levels of the astro-mental world; those levels which are peopled from the spiritual realms which lie beyond them. These "group-spirits" as they are termed, form part of another aspect of the inner worlds. There is a curious pride and self-sufficiency which causes modern man to think of himself as being the only truly intelligent being in the universe, and

even when considering the possibility of sentient life on other planets, he seems sure that such life will be human in form, or, if the conditions of such other worlds preclude this, will be inferior in some way or other to *homo sapiens*. However, with regard to the inner planes man is only one of several other lines of evolving life, and the great group-spirits of the various kingdoms of Nature belong to one or another of these independent lines of life. But because all things in this concourse of forces are linked most closely together, the intelligences of these supermundane worlds are closely linked with the whole collective thought of humanity, and inevitably act and react upon it.

It must be emphasized that the astral light is not, in itself, a plane of "form". The forms and images are derived from the mental levels which interpenetrate it. The astral light itself is a level of mobile astral substance, obeying the laws of its own nature, and is plastic in an amazing degree to the formative influence of mental activity, whether these influences proceed from incarnate or from discarnate minds. On the one hand, as the "collective unconscious" of the Jungian psychologists, it is intimately linked with the whole of life, incarnate in its varying degree on earth, and on the other it is the plastic medium through which higher intelligences fulfil the will of the Logos for the world.

It is comparatively easy to develop the power to see some of the images in the astral light, indeed, many of the brilliant little pictures which are seen by many people just before they fall asleep, or just as they awaken, the pictures termed by psychologists "hypnogogic" and "hypnopompic", are in fact the images of the astral light. It is in this region that the untrained psychic usually works, and the visions he discerns are in fact, *not* the actual astral levels, but what have been termed the "creations of the created".

In much the same way, the city dweller, if he were to live entirely in the centre of a large town, and never leave it, would see only the purely artificial urban scenery, and would know nothing of the forests and mountains, lakes and seas of the great world around, and his ideas of the world would be very inaccurate.

So it is with the untrained psychic, and therefore the esoteric schools have always insisted upon a lengthy training which would lead from psychic perception to an illuminated seership. This "higher psychism", as it has been called, works without images, but for the practical work of the schools it has been associated with the great symbol system of the Tree of Life. As we have written elsewhere, the Tree is not only a great glyph or compound symbol, *it is in essence a chart of relationships*, and, though the seer trained upon it ceases to use the symbols themselves when he reaches a certain point in his training, *the symbol-relationships still remain in his mind* and form a foundation for all his subsequent work. Other esoteric schools use other glyphs and who are we to judge. ... Sufficient for us that in the Western tradition this is our foundation.

In the higher stages of seership "perception of" becomes "identification with" the object which is being observed, and here again, the symbol-relationship of the Tree enables the seer to bring back from those exalted regions something of what has been experienced.

In the lower astral levels, the rolling billows of the light contain the myriad images projected by the minds of both incarnate and discarnate beings, and the astral currents energise them. In this way rhythmic influences are brought to bear upon all life, and these influences, working through the collective unconscious of the race, cause those tides in the affairs of men which are the real mainsprings of human effort for good and for bad. In very truth, the astral levels are the steering and directing levels for the race. From the lower levels come those impulses which work for the evil and unbalanced forces in human life, whilst from the higher astral come those influences which work ever towards the establishment of harmony, truth and love upon this planet.

A knowledge of these currents of energy which flow constantly behind the scenes gives the power to control and direct them, and this is part of the practical work of the esoteric craftsman. Here again, the method of the Tree is unsurpassed in its power to build up in the mind a true reference frame and a directing channel for these great

energies which are constantly affecting mankind and, indeed, the myriad lives of the whole planet.

We have said that the power to control and direct the cosmic energies which are to be found in the inner planes is one which must be employed in the practical work of the occultist, but it is here that we encounter a very important pitfall. It is a commonly accepted idea that the magician has this control at his disposal and may use it in any particular way that suits his fancy or that his immediate needs may direct. Nevertheless, this is utterly false, at least as far as the brethren of the true esoteric orders are concerned. It is true that many who attempt this path *do* use the powers they obtain in order to satisfy their own personal desires and ambitions. The true esotericist, however is always mindful of the question which was put to him at the commencement of his training in the Mysteries: "Why do you desire to enter our brotherhood?" At that time he gave the answer "I desire to know in order to serve", and it is this which he must constantly remember.

But this statement, true though it is, needs some analysis. "Service" is one of those words which, like valuable currency, can be, and often is, debased. As the late Dr Joad would have said, "It all depends on what you mean by 'service'." The word has come to have several different meanings, and it is essential that we consider what it means in the context of esoteric training. Service may be given to our fellow men, to the master Craftsmen of the Order and to the Eternal. It may also be given to ourselves. Which is the true service? In point of fact, all are legitimate ways of service; it is the priorities which really matter. In what order do we place our respective services? Let us start by considering the last one I have named, the service of the self.

It is usual in many esoteric schools, more particularly those which are inclined towards the mystical rather than the true esoteric path, to despise and attempt to disregard the personal self and its requirements in a mistaken following of certain mystical teachings. The trouble with so many people is that they *will* wrench from their context certain statements made by the great teachers of the spiritual way.

This is a case in point. It is quite true that at a certain point in the esoteric training, the "flyer", which is the personal self, must be immersed in the "sea" of the deep self, but this is not until a certain level of true spiritual development has been reached. It is this attempt to mortify the personality which can so easily become one of the greatest stumbling blocks on the way, so it may be as well if we consider it fairly carefully.

What is this personal self with which we mostly identify ourselves? And what is its purpose? The name itself comes from a root which means "a mask", and this recalls the actors of classic times, who represented their part in the play by wearing a mask. So they spoke "through the mask".

In the same way, so the esotericists claim, the deep self of everyone speaks and acts through the *persona*, the mask of the personal self. But this mask is not something which can be put on at leisure and dispensed with at will. It is far more than that. It is the true expression of the deep self working in the conditions of earthly time and space, and with the innumerable influences of race, heredity and custom, all of which tend to distort and alter this wonderful instrument of the self. So we may say, that this personality has what the psychologists term a "false ego", a centre around which it has been built up, but which must at a certain point be given up. *This* is the "life" which must be given up and lost in order that the Aeonian life may be gained. But all things in their order. Before the personality can be given up in this way, it must first have been developed to its utmost. Only the best is to be offered to the Lord, and many so-called "mystics" would do well to follow the teaching of one of the characters in the Bible: "We will not offer to the Lord that which has cost us nothing."\* Let us now consider the service which the esotericist should give to his fellow men. What kind of service should this be? It is commonly thought that the more obvious ways of social service are the ways through which the race can be helped: such as lecturing to, or perhaps teaching those who are interested is what is required? Now all this is true: these are all ways of

\* II Samuel, xxiv, 24.

service, and for those who are capable of doing whatever is involved in them, they are true and legitimate methods of service. However, as Christ said so long ago, although these things should not be left undone, there is something else which comes first. The esotericist has always to remember that very truly, "no man is an island". He is linked with the whole of his race in the deeper aspects of his nature, and all he says, thinks or does influences the group mind of humanity. So everyone by simply being himself affects all men, but, in the case of the dedicated and trained occultist, this influence is more definite and potent for good. So the occultist helps humanity by simply being himself, and acting as it were, as a ferment which, unseen but very potent, can cause a vital change in conditions around.

We now come to that aspect of service which has gathered so much that is foolish and puerile in human thought: the service given to the adepts and masters of the esoteric way. In modern occult writings this idea of the "masters" and adepts has been so bowdlerized that it has become unacceptable to serious thinkers. "Humanity dearly loves a lord", and we have seen, in the appearance of Fascism and the National Socialism of Hitler's Germany, how a great number of people are prepared to allow others to do their thinking for them. They appear to be afraid of attempting to direct their own lives, gladly leaning upon those who will do their thinking for them, who will show them, and if needs be, drive them along the path which they must follow.

When this attitude of mind is brought to the work of esoteric science, it can easily become a form of spiritual slavery every whit as evil as any material bondage. This is the last thing that is desired by the adepts. They require mature men and women (though it is well to notice that maturity is not always a matter of age) who will stand upon their own feet, and not depend in a pathological manner upon their superiors. It is here that the terms which are in popular use encourage such dependence. The words *chela* and *guru*, which are so often used in the eastern esoteric systems are usually translated as "pupil" and "teacher".

This of course would be quite a legitimate translation if the pupil-teacher relationship of the oriental systems and the pupil-teacher relationship of western education, meant the same thing to the understanding of the average person. But much of the oriental esoteric training is based upon a system of discipleship which is foreign to the psychological approach of the western mind, and, it is only fair to add, the methods of training of the true esoteric schools of the East do not encourage the servile subservience which is characteristic of so many Hindu aspirants.

However, though the true esoteric teachers do not desire any slavish obedience from their followers, they *do* require that the aspirant should "obey the rule". Here we come to something which will be familiar to those of my readers who have any knowledge of the monastic orders in the Christian church. The communities of monks or nuns live and work "under obedience", and many Protestant critics of the system seem to imagine that the members of these communities vow implicit obedience to the head of the particular monastery or convent in which they happen to be. This is not true. Obviously, there must be a system of discipline, no community can be run without some form of control, but the obedience which is demanded of the novice when taking his final vows is obedience to the "Rule of the Order", and by this Rule all the community, from the highest to the lowest, are bound.

If we take one of the orders, the Benedictines, as an example, we find that the whole life of the community is regulated by the Rule which was first laid down by the founder of the Order, St Benedict, and this rule is administered by a willing collaboration between all the brethren. Any arbitrary action by the head of the community can be challenged without fear by any brother who feels that in this instance the Rule was not being obeyed.

So in the esoteric schools the true obedience is given to the Rule of the Order which is behind the outer school. For the esoteric schools are pendant from the great orders which exist behind the scenes. Some may think that this makes membership of an esoteric school still more doubtful

than they had already thought, but as the Order Rule is always taught, and can thus be compared with the general moral and ethical outlooks, the individual is always in a position to judge its validity, as far as his own capacity permits.

But any arbitrary alteration in the training methods is not permitted by his superiors. The disciplines laid down must be carried out, they are part of the training, and the individual has to realize this. At the same time, his teachers are always willing to help him in any difficult points, and he, in his turn, is expected to use his own mind in endeavouring to understand such difficulties. It must always be realized that discipline implies following the Rule freely and willingly, not in the spirit of a recalcitrant mule!

Finally we come to the greatest form of service: the service of the Eternal. Here there are two distinct stages, both of which are essential. In the first stage there is a steady endeavour to lift the personal consciousness to some measure of contact, however slight, with the eternal power, love and wisdom. From the very beginning of his training the esoteric apprentice is taught to make this effort, and to offer himself "spirit, soul and body as a living and continual sacrifice". In the ritual of the Qabalistic Cross he says with gesture and word *Ateh, Malkuth, ve Geburah, ve Gedulah le Olam*: "To Thee is the Kingdom, the Power and the Glory, for ever and ever".

Persisting in this, there come, in the course of his training and the development of the inner faculties, "illuminations" on "the mount" and in the light of these he learns to look at all life from another point of view, *sub species eternitas*, and so discern, on the tracing board of the Architect of the Universe, the plan which is the basis of all evolutionary existence. Now he must learn to descend the mount, and coming into the field of ordinary life, endeavour to live and work under the precepts of the Will which ordered that plan. Only then can the aspirant find true happiness and rest. As the blessed souls told Dante "In His will is our peace". So in the end, the path of esoteric science merges into the path which is common to mystic, occultist and

Nature-mystic alike. And as, in the Holy Mysteries, the gifts of bread and wine which are the representations of the offerings and sacrifice of the people are mystically offered on the heavenly altar and thence returned to the earthly altar as the means whereby the faithful may receive the very life and power of the eternal, so in this personal offering of the self, and the illumination and power which results therefrom, the aspirant begins to work with true power and right knowledge of the lower worlds. Only then is the service of the eternal realized and fulfilled by him, and in that service he finds that "perfect freedom" which is referred to in the old Anglican collect.

## Modern Psychology

IT is not proposed to discuss the details of modern psychological theory, since, unlike ancient Gaul, it is divided into many more parts than three. The many schools of psychology stem, in the main, from the three systems identified with the names of Freud, Adler and Jung.

The chief way in which these modern psychological theories differ from the academic psychology of the nineteenth century is that they immensely extend the concept of the self of man. The older psychology dealt with man as an entirely conscious being, an "encapsuled entity", whose conscious thoughts, emotions and aspirations constituted his entire psychological make-up.

With the rise of many unorthodox philosophical and religious movements, and more particularly modern spiritualism and theosophy, it became necessary, once the facts had been established, to try to fit them into the existing psychological framework. It was then found that the framework itself would need much alteration and adjustment if it were to cover all the new aspects of the mind of man which were now being revealed.

It is to the scholar and investigator of psychic happenings, F. W. H. Myers, that we owe the concept of what he named the "subliminal mind". The word comes from "limen" meaning a threshold. To Myers, and those associated with him, the conscious mind was pictured, not as the whole mind, but merely as a part of it. To them it seemed to be only the ground floor of the mental structure; the threshold, as it were, of the whole edifice. Above it, and below it were other levels of mental activity, and with these, so far as mental control was concerned, the conscious mind had very little to do. Nevertheless, the influence and direction from these levels was constant, so Myers spoke of the

"subliminal" and "supraliminal", and, although at first this latter term was used simply to refer to the waking conscious self, it came to be regarded in another way at a later date.

Myers did not, at first, attempt to differentiate between the levels of the subliminal mind, but others began to work with his ideas and evolved the concept of the "subconscious" aspects of the mind.

Much of the general body of new psychological theory, bitterly opposed, as it was, by the conservative "psychologists" of his day, was expanded and given a new look by the pioneering work of the great psychologist Freud. When his theories first burst upon the world they received so lopsided a welcome that they became suspect to many people; to explain why this should have happened it will be necessary to discuss briefly some of his main ideas.

Freud was a medical psychologist and during his work with his patients he began to formulate certain ideas in order that he might explain to them the abnormal workings of the minds of mental sufferers; at the same time he saw that much of the behaviour of the minds of normal people could be accounted for in this way. He found, as Myers and many others had done, that the region of the mind which lay below the threshold of consciousness, the subliminal or "subconscious", was affected by every impression received by way of the five senses. All such impressions, *and the emotions and thoughts evoked by them*, were registered in the depths of this mental level.

Since, however, there exists a certain code of conduct, many of these emotions and thoughts were not acceptable to the conscious mind, and there came into existence, what was termed the "endo-psychic censor". The function of this censor was to prevent unacceptable expressions of this nature from rising up from the subliminal realms, and so affecting the conscious self. It was a kind of one-way sieve which, while it allowed all impressions to pass down into the depths of the subconscious, prevented the return of those thoughts and emotions that were not acceptable to the personal consciousness.

But "out of sight" was very definitely *not* "out of mind",

for Freud discovered that these unwanted emotions and thoughts were very much alive and active in the subliminal depths, and (a most important point), that they were constantly affecting the waking consciousness. Working with his patients, he found that all such subconscious impressions were under a constant pressure from forces which were entering the mind at its deepest levels. These forces were differentiations of a dynamic energy which was the sustaining power of the whole personality, the *elan vitale* of Bergson. This primary "thrust of life", was named "libido", and it was here that Freud made his most valuable and spectacular discoveries. He claimed that the inflowing energy split up into three main streams, and that these streams were the forces behind the three "instincts" of self-preservation, sex, and herd.

It was in the realm of the second instinct, sex, that his main contribution lay, and, of course, it was this bias which gave his ideas a notoriety that, to some extent, was not deserved. Sex, in the popular mind, means something very definite and limited, but Freud used the term to cover a much wider field, embracing, as it did, all the manifold expressions of the creative instinct of which physical sex is only one part.

He evolved a technique which he found made it possible to gain admission to the depths of the subconscious and to study its workings. This technique ("psycho-analysis"), by word association tests and the study of the patient's dreams, enabled him to penetrate behind the "censor" and bring hidden mental material into consciousness. When this was done, he found that a great deal of emotional energy, which had been locked up in these hidden thought complexes, was released with beneficial results to the patient. Freud also discovered that certain hidden thought complexes tended to split off from the main mental stream and become semi-independent. Such "dissociation" was liable to have very serious consequences, for these dissociated complexes could radically alter the whole of the sufferer's personality. Classic cases such as "The Watseka Wonder" and the "Sally Beauchamp" multiple personality case (and, in more recent times,

that of Evelyn Lancaster whose history has been given to the public in the books entitled *The Three Faces of Eve* and *Strangers in My Body*), show to what lengths "schizophrenia" can go.\*

It became evident to Freud and his co-workers that one of the factors which cause dissociation in its various forms was the repression into the subliminal depths of much that offended the normal standards of the waking self. Rather than admit that certain thoughts and emotions were self originated and natural, the waking self refused to acknowledge them, or to allow them to pass into the conscious mind. Instead they were repressed into the subconscious limbo, where they locked up the inflowing nervous energy or deflected it into abnormal channels. When the complexes were uncovered, it was held by Freud that the mind would revert to normality, and in many cases this did occur.

However, two of Freud's associates, Alfred Adler and Carl Gustav Jung, felt that Freud's insistence on sex as the chief factor in mental illness was not entirely justified, and they began to move away from that standpoint and to form their own schools of thought. Adler laid great stress upon the "power complex", teaching that this manifestation of the self-preservation instinct was responsible for a great deal of mental disturbance attributed by Freud to sex. If results are a criterion, they have proved him to be correct, and the psychologists of his school have done a great deal of very good work.

However, Jung, in the present writer's opinion, stands out from his two illustrious confrères by the magnificent sweep of his system of psychology; he also comes nearer than either of the others to the viewpoint of the Qabalists. Briefly, it may be said that Jung recognizes the existence of what has been termed the "libido", a force of which all physical, or life forces, are manifestations. This living energy flows between the two poles: the "conscious" and the "unconscious" aspects of the personality. If, for any reason, the conscious self fails to hold its requisite amount of

\* *The Three Faces of Eve*—Drs Thigpen & Cleckley—Published 1957. *Strangers in my body*—Evelyn Lancaster—Published 1958 Secker & Warburg, London.

this libido, then at whatever point this deficiency occurs, there will be found an excess of energy in the unconscious. Whenever the living energy projects itself from the unconscious depths, (the matrix or primal source from which, or through which, it flows into the human personality), it is to be found expressing itself as a grouping of opposites. Here we have in another form that which is expressed in the Qabalistic conception of the two pillars of the Tree of Life, headed by the *Sephiroth Chokmah* and *Binah*.

Freud regarded the unconscious levels of the mind as the limbo into which were jettisoned emotions, thoughts and memories which were objectionable to the conscious self.

This Jung was ready to admit, but from his own researches he came to the conclusion that there were other things in the unconscious. One of these was the deposit of the experiences of our ancestors, and he called this the racial or collective unconscious. The conscious mind is held to be the outcropping of the unconscious, just as the visible portion of the iceberg is the outcropping of the greater mass of ice which lies below. An even better analogy is that of the mountain range. The individual pinnacles can be held to represent individual consciousnesses, the peaks would then represent the racial consciousness of the various nations and human groupings, whilst the great body of the range would represent the animal and vegetable life of the planet. All these are joined together by their common base and origin: the earth itself.

If the conscious mind is an outgrowing from the underlying unconscious, then the springs of life are to be found in it, and the "libido" is seen to be not only an inflowing energy, blindly thrusting up into consciousness, but also a *directive* force which has certain characteristics.

This directive energy is a steady pressure in the direction of progression, here defined as the feeling that "things are moving", indicating that the conscious self has opportunities and possibilities which may be brought into manifestation. But such a feeling can produce a one-sided attitude towards life. The everchanging circumstances of the world around demand a flexible approach by the mind; when a

rigid one-sided outlook prevents this, the individual "gets into a groove", as we say. Somewhere, in *The Professor at the Breakfast Table*, Oliver Wendell Holmes remarks that the only difference between a groove and a grave is their respective depth.

In the psychological field this certainly holds good, for the inflowing life is so constricted by this mental attitude that its course is deflected and various forms of mental illness appear. The most spectacular of these is extreme mental dissociation such as that already referred to in the case of Evelyn Lancaster, but very many lesser forms of mental ill-health abound on every side of us.

One of the ways in which the libido reacts to such inner conflicts is to withdraw into the depths of the personality. This means that the conscious self is deprived of much of the vital force which it needs, and becomes impotent in the affairs of life; fighting where it should be diplomatic, being diplomatic where it should be fighting, and at the same time unable to carry any such attitude to the point where it could really be of use. But the regression of the libido into the unconscious depths causes it to bring certain healing power to bear, and when the latent energies become sufficiently strong, they may emerge into the field of the conscious mind. Such an eruption of the unconscious can, when properly directed, break down much of the rigidity of the conscious self, and enable the person concerned to make new adjustments to outside circumstances. So it will be seen that there is a certain rhythm in the working of the life-force. There is a period of progression, then a period of regression, and this *enantiodromia*, as it was termed by Heraclitus, is a normal action of the mind. But trouble begins when the mind sticks too strongly to either pole of activity.

Now there are many things in the unconscious levels which relate to the early primitive attitudes to life, and there are very many experiences in conscious life which are distasteful and repugnant to the individual. These tend to be thrust down by the "censor" beneath the threshold of consciousness, and so are prevented from being manifested in conscious thought, word and deed.

Such inhibition is a normal and necessary activity of the mind. The trouble arises when the conscious self adopts an attitude of "*All these things are below me, and I am not responsible for them.*" Neither do I allow such thoughts and feelings in myself, I have put them out of my mind." Unfortunately, although such primitive outlooks may have been put out of sight, they are anything but "out of mind". They attract to themselves some of the inflowing psychical energy and are, as it were, a "resistance pocket" in the personality, constantly at war with the waking self, and constantly attempting to rise up into, and influence, the waking consciousness. In the waking life these attempts usually show themselves as irrational words or actions, for which there appears to be no apparent reason.

But it is in the sleep state that these buried complexes are able to emerge more fully, just as, in our "resistance pocket" analogy, its members were able to operate more freely in the night. So in the dream-life of the individual these imprisoned "things" emerge into the waking consciousness in the symbolic form of dreams. In their true form they are unable to pass the censor, but in symbolic disguise they can get by and so emerge on to the conscious levels. Both Freud and Jung developed a technique of dream analysis which would enable them to discover the nature of the hidden complexes which were causing the neurotic troubles of their patients. This, together with the method of "free association," was held by many of the early psycho-analysts to be sufficient to effect a cure. Jung, however, not satisfied with this, held that it was not sufficient to relieve the blocked waters of the emotional complex by breaking down the psychic dam which had confined them. It was also necessary to cut new channels and redirect the incoming libido in such a way that further trouble of that kind could be avoided.

Another characteristic teaching of Jung is that men and women may be classified with two main types, the outward-turning and the inward-turning, the extrovert and the introvert. Pure types are rare and human personalities can generally be classified under one or other of these headings. Both types are representative of normal attitudes to life, but

both can develop a form of mental disease when they are carried to extremes by a desire to escape from the stress and strain of the realities of life.

In the dreams of both types there occur certain symbols which, on investigation, turn out to be symbols which were consciously employed in the childhood of mankind, or even, for that matter, in comparatively recent human history, though to the average person they are usually unknown. Such symbols appear to be very real sources of energy within the self. They are termed "archetypes", and are held to be of the greatest importance, since they indicate the direction in which the libido is attempting to flow. When such symbols appear in a composite form, then we have a glyph, or "mandala". A glyph has been defined as the coat of arms of the forces being dealt with, and it is a normal activity of the human personality to build up such glyphs. In neurotic and psychopathic subjects, such glyphs appear in the dream state, or arise spontaneously in the waking life, and they indicate the nature of the forces which are concerned in the neurosis.

When we study the Tree of Life, which is a very ancient mandala, we find that it conforms very closely to the Jungian concepts, or should we rather say that the teachings of the school of Jung are very close to the ancient teachings?

There are other teachings of the Zurich psychologist which cannot be touched upon here, since they would take up too much of our space, but it may be said that they are capable of being "placed on the Tree", i.e., they fit into the scheme of the mighty glyph.

There is, however, one point in the teachings of Jung which we should mention, and that is his concept of the "self". We mostly tend to identify ourselves with the ego-sense, with the "I am"; the conscious waking self. But this empiric, or false ego, is held by Jung to be something which must ultimately be discarded, or, to be more accurate, must be superseded by a new centre of consciousness which will form a point of equilibrium between the conscious and unconscious aspects of the personality.

Here again, the teaching associated with the Tree of Life

insists upon this same necessity; the necessity of losing the life of the false ego in order that a fuller life may be experienced.

From all that has been said it will appear that the system of "analytical psychology" which C. G. Jung devised is very near to the teachings and practices of the arcane schools, and more particularly to those of the Qabalistic tradition.

It is obvious that such an integrated system of teaching cannot adequately be summarized in a few paragraphs, but it is hoped that sufficient will have been given to enable the reader to get some idea of the system. Perhaps we may summarize what has been written here by saying that Jung does not regard the unconscious as being only the rubbish heap of the mind, contaminating the pure waters of instinctive life as they endeavour to flow through it, and erecting all kinds of obstacles to their passage. Rather does he look to it as being also the ground and root of the conscious waking self, constantly engaged in an attempt to bring the forces of life into those channels which will allow them to fertilize and render fruitful *all* the aspects of the self. So, as Jung claimed, his system is primarily one which is concerned with the establishment of balance and reintegration in the personality.

This is also claimed to be the aim of the system of philosophy which is based upon the Tree of Life—the mighty, all-embracing glyph of the universe and the soul of man.

## CHAPTER V

### Direct Experience

IT was said by them of old time, that the Mysteries gave their initiates a supreme boon: freedom from the fear of death, and although this might be somewhat doubtful in the case of the semi-public Elusinian Mysteries of Grace, it was certainly true of the deeper sanctuaries of initiation.

Of course it is equally true that a debased spiritualism, combined with a certain amount of astrology also existed in those days, and for many of those who partook in its seances it provided an intellectual proof of the existence of other realms of being apart from the purely physical. Indeed for some of its adherents it provided the same certainty of continuing life as did the more august Mysteries.

In both these cases, the operative factor which enabled this certainty to be attained was that which we have here termed "wild talent", though there was a considerable difference in its application and control as far as these two movements were concerned. But the essence of both was *direct experience*. To deduce the underlying laws from intellectual study, based upon what was observed, was one aspect which bulked largely in the true mysteries, whilst the same aspect in the public cult tended to become a *cthonie* or "underworld" cult, and became debased and contaminated by many alien elements. But common to both was this factor of direct experience of supernormal things; an experience which resulted in freedom from the fear of death. However, it is possible to lose sight of the wood because of the trees, and it was certainly so in both cases. For the over elaboration of the purely intellectual aspect often tended to eclipse this direct experience in the Mysteries, whilst the emotional cult of the underworld, with all its doubtful associations also tended to lose its power to give its followers direct experience, and so in official Mystery school

and underworld seance cult alike, reliance began to be concentrated upon that which was received through the supernatural faculties of certain people who were known as seers and, in the case of the female psychics, pythonesses or oracles.

At the level of the Mysteries, the oracles of Apollo at Delphi and that of Dodona were possibly the most famous in the ancient world, whilst on the level of the cthonic cults there emerged the "wise man" and "wise woman", who, because of their psychic faculty, were regarded as sources of information beyond the normal. In both cases, however, it can be seen how great was the loss of the more general direct experience. In the official Mysteries it led to a sterile philosophizing, whilst in the underworld cults it led to internal dissensions, the followers of one psychic against the followers of another, and to the encouragement of the worst elements of human nature.

It was one of the great attractions of Christianity that it offered to all its followers some form of direct experience. Its supreme message was the work of the atoning Son of God, and the possibility of making a direct living contact with Him. Its second message was the proclamation of the Resurrection with its accompanying proof of survival beyond bodily death, and the proclamation of a new order. The powers of evil had been vanquished, and man was rescued from their thrall. This was the *kerygma*, the good news which Christianity was proclaiming throughout the world, and together with this there was an intense living faith in the presence and power of the Master.

In this atmosphere of positive faith, the small Christian communities found that the power which He had promised them, and which they held to be the Spirit of wisdom and consolation, was enabling them to have some measure of direct experience of the "things not seen". So St Paul, writing to his Corinthian converts enumerates the "gifts" or *charismata* which were being unfolded and used by the brethren, pointing out at the same time something which all great religious teachers have stressed, namely that the "spiritual gifts", as the Authorized Version of the Bible

terms them, are more properly called "psychic gifts". They are not in themselves *spiritual* in what we may term the ethical meaning of that word, and as St Paul points out, they are secondary to the real thing, which is an attitude of heart and mind directed to the service, in the true sense, of God and mankind. "The greatest of these is Love" says the Apostle.

At the same time, however, this direct experience was of the greatest help to the infant church, since it afforded to all alike the possibility of some measure of individual contact with the unseen things, and as long as this possibility was recognized, the church went from strength.

With the influx into Christianity of those who had been trained in the Mysteries of the older religions, there grew up an inner teaching which, based as it was upon the Hebrew traditions and upon the inner teaching given by Christ to His Apostles, enlarged again by Grecian, Persian and Egyptian outlooks, developed into the composite movement which is known as Christian Gnosticism. This Gnostic movement has always had more than its fair share of adverse criticism. Some of this was justified (not all the Gnostic schools came up to the standard set by Christ) but others were far different and hardly deserved the venomous attacks of "Saint" Ireneus and others.

Clement of Alexandria and Origen both represent another strand in the complex web of the early Church; careful study of their writings reveals the presence in the church of an inner core of people, who not only had direct experience of inner, supernormal things, but were also heirs to that wisdom which had been transmitted through the ages from times out of mind.

With the increasing secularization of the church, and the beginnings of its entry into the political field, direct experience began to be subordinated to outer organization, and, concurrently, those who held the deeper teachings were expelled from the church, though the charismata still continued to manifest sporadically. Indeed the Venerable Bede, writing in the ninth century, though lamenting the loss of most of the "gifts" was able to say that the gifts of healing

still remained. In point of fact, as we have said, the "gifts" were manifested throughout the ages, though sporadically and usually in an unregulated fashion. This applies not only to the great Catholic communions of East and West, but also to many of the heretical and schismatic sects which "hived off" from them throughout the years. Many of these, in their inception at least, had such direct experience of the inner realities. But this experience was usually without any definite framework, and was regarded as either a sign of the truth of their particular heresy or else as a sign of divine approval of the individuals who experienced it. In the great Orthodox and Roman communions, such direct experience was discouraged since the mystic temperament has a definite bias against it when received through psychical means. The mystic, whether of the East or West, seeking union with the Supreme Reality, has little time to spare in the "Vanity Fair" of either the mundane or the psychical world.

But with the rise of the scientific and enquiring "age of reason", the direct experiences of the mystics, together with the records of similar experiences given in the Scriptures, began to be subjected to the criticism of what was proudly described as the "rational" mind. It was held, erroneously, as we believe, that it was possible for human thinkers *at the present stage of their evolution*, to be able to make correct *objective* judgements of these subjective experiences. Disregarding the scriptural injunction that "He who judgeth a matter without knowledge, it is a shame and a folly unto him", the Victorian scientists regarded all records of direct experience as simply due to human credulity and self-deception.

Curiously enough, in view of the hostility of official science to the claims of Christianity, the leaders of the Anglican Church joined the rationalists in an unholy alliance against those who in any way manifested the very gifts which they should themselves been showing forth. "Enthusiasm" in any form was abhorrent to them, as instanced by the rebuke given to Wesley by an Anglican bishop.

But the clock cannot be turned back by mere suppression, and the psychical energies cannot be extinguished by the

fiat of scientist or prelate. So there arose movements which were centred upon the direct experience of supernormal things. Modern Theosophy, modern spiritualism and the loosely knit organizations of the New Thought Movement all began to teach that direct experience of the inner side of things was possible.

Bitterly opposed by church and science, they have increased and established themselves, until now, in at least one instance, they are conforming to the ancient pattern, and attempting, as far as possible, to ostracize and reject those of their members who do not see eye to eye with the leaders.

But the wheel has brought to them the fruits of the seeds sown by their obscure brethren in the past: the alchemists, the Rosicrucians and many others who preserved the golden thread of direct experience. "Where there is no vision the people perish", for without direct experience the old Nature-worship degenerates into orgiastic rites; the church becomes impotent and unable to obey her Lord's command as she should, and rational philosophy and science become sterile and unable to minister to the deeper needs of the soul of man. It will be seen that there are three main paths of development which lie before the enquirer. Two of them, nature-mysticism and mysticism, are paths of the emotions, whilst the third is a path of the mind.

It is impossible, of course, to make a clear-cut distinction in actual practice, for even in the most intellectual appraisal of the universe and the soul of man it is easy to recognize the emotional undertones which lie beneath it, whilst even the most emotional of the mystics shows some elementary use of the intellect. However, these are the three main paths. They are studied in the East under the titles of *Raj Yoga*, *Bhakti Yoga* and *Gnani Yoga*. There are, of course other lines of activity, such as *mantra yoga*, *laya yoga*, *karma yoga*, etc., but these are all subsidiary methods of training which lead to one or other of the three main paths.

We are fully aware that this division of the yoga paths will be regarded by some students as "not according to Cocker", but it is based upon the author's own experience in India

when working with a group of Hindu occultists, and it agrees very well with the Western system.

These paths are acknowledged and trodden by those who follow the Western Mysteries, though the path of the mind, the Hermetic Path, is held by us to be the most important. For though a man may make a living contact with the elemental powers behind Nature, and another may achieve a mystical contact with deep spiritual reality, yet, unless the mind has been trained, all the results of such contact will inevitably be distorted and misapplied on the physical plane.

On all of these ways to God, the psychic faculties show themselves, but in the Hermetic Path they are trained and developed, whereas in both the others they tend to work in a random way, and, indeed, on the mystic way they are usually regarded as hindrances rather than helps. Emotion has been regarded as something which should be reduced to a minimum as far as possible, but as modern psychology has shown, emotion is the driving force behind all human effort and development, and without it the mind of man becomes sterile and ineffective.

At the same time, of course, its unregulated manifestations can be equally disastrous. A land may become waste and uninhabitable if its water is allowed to flood all the land. True use of the source of water is made when it is controlled and directed by sluice and dam and irrigation channel. Then will the desert blossom as the rose.

It is this method of engineering, applied in the sphere of the self, which is the basis of the great glyph of the Tree of Life, the underlying principles of which we are studying. As we shall be devoting most of our time to the consideration of the Hermetic Way, it may be well if we deal briefly with the other two paths.

The path of Nature-Mysticism, the Green Ray, as it is sometimes termed, has, like the other two ways, both its advantages and its dangers. It is a path of direct experience, the experience of God made manifest in Nature. It is a living contact with the informing life of the planet and is a vitalizing element in all human life. Unless the elemental energies are contacted, to some extent at least, man is

sterile and ineffective on the physical plane. Fortunately, we are compelled to make a minimal contact with these forces because of the automatic functioning of our physical bodies, but more than this is needed if we wish to live more fully.

During periods of social repression and inhibition the elemental forces tend to be throttled down and banked up behind the conscious selves of men. It is then that the repressed energy begins to seek fresh outlets, and, finding a weak point may wear the barrier away, bursting its restraints and flooding the racial consciousness, thus bringing destruction to the orderly work of the race. To prevent this, the initiates of the Green Ray open up certain channels in the racial unconscious (concerning which the great psychologist Jung wrote so eloquently), and through these channels the elemental forces, controlled and directed, pour into the soul of man. This gives a vital illumination and energy which spurs the race to new endeavours. In this country such an elemental contact was made during the reign of the first Elizabeth and there have been others of a similar kind. One outstanding example, of course, is the classical Renaissance in Europe.

Where the restraining barriers are too strong, however, it may happen that this elemental force begins to energize anew the old forms of Nature Mysticism, and the witch-cult again begins to attract its devotees. Any nation which allows these suppressions and checks on the elemental forces is a nation with a neurosis, and, such a condition, lying as it does below the conscious levels of the mind, can be a potential source of danger.

It is necessary to point out, however, that in this, as in all manifestation, there is a natural rhythm and there will be times when the elemental forces thrust forward into manifestation in the souls of men, just as there will be periods when they ebb and recede. The true initiate of the Green Ray learns to work with these tides and to control and direct them for the good of the race, but there are many people outside the ranks of the nature mystics for whom this contact is unregulated and spasmodic. This is largely true of the Celtic races and accounts for some of the inconsist-

culture in this way, but, at the same time, there was an appalling amount of evil which was part of the very warp and woof of Roman life. More particularly was this evident in the arena, where spectacles were exhibited in which some of the myths of the gods and goddesses and their relations with human beings, were enacted with absolute realism. There was no pretence, what the myth set forth was literally enacted before the thousands of spectators. Pasiphae and the Bull, the slaying of the Titans, and others of the same kind were so enacted, as the Roman writer Martial records.\* In *The Golden Ass*, Apuleius, writing many years later, refers to similar spectacles. It is important to remember that these things were done in full public view, not in the brothels and stews of Port Said or modern Alexandria for the attraction of European tourists of the baser class.

Because these things were so, the Christian Church reacted strongly against the whole pagan system, and in the process threw away several babies with the dirty water! Our chief difficulty in judging the early Christian period is that we tend to look through twentieth century spectacles at the pagan scene, and this attitude can be very misleading.

However, the abuse does not preclude the right use of anything, and there are aspects of sex, or, to use a more correct term "polarity", which have a very great value. It is these which are the content of some of the teachings of the Green Ray. In themselves they are of great importance and are, in a true sense, moral; their misuse however, can, and does, produce something very horrible, approximating to the spectacles of the pagan days. This is evident in some of the records of medieval witchcraft. At the same time it should be kept in mind that the methods used to extort the truth from the supposed witches were so very drastic as to invalidate much that was recorded as their "confessions", though a sufficient residue remains to show that not all the witches and wizards were the harmless natural psychics many spiritualists suppose them to have been.

However, these things are the pathologies of the Green Ray, and must not be taken as any criterion of the character

\* *De Spectaculis Liber*, v. cp. Suetonius, Nero. XII 2.

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and work of those who follow this Path which leads to the Light as surely as any other.

Many of its initiates have been in the forefront of artistic revival, and a renewal of aesthetic values, such as the Celtic renaissance in Ireland at the end of the last century and the beginning of this, owed much to the presence in its midst of those who followed the path of the Green Ray.

In more recent times the work of psychologists of both the Freudian and Jungian schools of thought has shown the very great importance of this contact with the elemental forces of life, and has justified the work of the Green Ray initiates in the Kingdom of *Adonai ha aretz*, God made manifest in Nature.

It remains to consider very briefly the path of the Purple Ray: the path of mysticism. Here we have to remember that its followers are to be found in all the great religions of the world, even as are the followers of the other ways, though the orthodox Christian churches have always tended to regard the mystical traditions of other faiths as outside the pale, so to speak, and only in recent times has there been any attempt made to study the mystical teachings of non-Christian religions. To their credit be it said that this attempt has, in the main, been made by theologians of the Roman Catholic Church.

However, the church itself has always been somewhat suspicious of the activities of the mystics in its own fold, suspecting them of leanings towards monism or pantheism, and indeed, some of the utterances of some of the mystics have encouraged this suspicion.

But on the whole the Catholic churches of both Western and Eastern obediences have been the nursing ground for the development of a definite Christian mystical tradition and practice. Islam has its mystical side in the Sufi sects, whilst in the Hindu religion the path of *Bhakti* Yoga is the path pre-eminent of its own mystics.

In the Christian churches, the path of the mystic has sometimes been known as the Threefold Way of Purgation, Illumination and Union, and there is a very considerable body of writings based upon this classification, some of

which are mentioned in the bibliography at the end of this book.

Contrary to popular belief the path of the mystic is anything but a sentimental idealism and escapism. The mystic does indeed turn away from the multiplicity of things and seek the unity, but, and this is most important, it is not through any desire to escape from the difficulties and troubles of the world in order that he may himself find peace. Rather does he tread a path of high aspiration and severe discipline, seeking the unity in a passion of love and adoration in order that through him the whole world may be helped. "Selfish salvation there is none," is an old Catholic saying, and the true mystic does not seek personal salvation but rather that he may, through love and adoration, be attuned to that Will in whose service is perfect freedom.

Such an attitude is far removed from the pseudo-mysticism so current at the present time in both East and West. If any should doubt this, let them read the writings of St Teresa d'Avila, of Ruysbroek and of St John of the Cross. Therein will be found something of the spirit of the true mystic quest.

## CHAPTER VI

### Aspects of the Qabalah

THERE are several different aspects of the Qabalah, and each student will be drawn to select from these the one most suited to his temperamental bias. It is essential to remember, however, that although one aspect may be the natural line of work for one particular student, it is very necessary that he should have a fair knowledge of the others in order that his studies may be balanced. It is usual to divide the Qabalah under the following heads:

- (1) The dogmatic Qabalah.
- (2) The literal Qabalah.
- (3) The practical Qabalah.
- (4) The unwritten Qabalah.

We will now discuss these four in the order given, and, as we proceed, it will be seen that we are working from the outer presentation of the Qabalistic philosophy back to its inner essence. This has been done for two reasons. The student starts from known terms and concepts and then begins to deal with those which are different, in many ways, from his normal thinking; he will find, however, that by the time he reaches the later stages of this classification, he has begun to acquire a new set of concepts *and* a new vocabulary with which to deal with them.

Let us then begin with the dogmatic Qabalah. This is the outer doctrine which is embodied in the classical written sources of which we spoke in the first chapter of this book. It is well to remember however, that the *Zohar* and the *Sepher Yetzirah* are not single works, but are made up of several works gathered together under those heads.

There are certain problems which any philosophy worthy

of the name must attempt to solve such as the Nature and attributes of the Supreme Being, the mysteries of creation, the nature of life, and the being and destiny of man. In the dogmatic or written Qabalah these ideas are considered within a definite system of relationships and concepts known as the Tree of Life, and it is this basic relationship diagram or "mandala" (as the Easterns term such figures), which is the key to all Qabalistic teaching.

It may be helpful if we here give a fundamental principle which lies behind all Qabalistic teaching and thought: the principle of "balance". As the student proceeds in his work with the Qabalah, he will find this principle a key which unlocks many closed doors. In fact the basic Qabalistic treatise starts with the words "The Book of the Concealed Mystery is the book of the equilibrium of balance".

We come now to the second head in our classification, the "literal" Qabalah; here we enter a world of thought where the fixed landmarks of logical thought are superseded by a method which in many ways resembles the dictum of the Red Queen in *Alice Through the Looking Glass*: "When I say a thing is so three times, then it *is* so." (I quote from memory, but that is the general idea).

The methods of the literal Qabalah have been described by one occultist, Dion Fortune, as being akin to doing mensuration with the aid of an elastic ruler, and from the ordinary point of view, this is a very apt description. These peculiar ways of mental working depend upon the fact that every letter of the Hebrew alphabet has a numerical value. This is also the case with the Greek alphabet, and the same curious method of thought can be used with that also.

There are three main methods for the deciphering of the literal Qabalah. The first with which we will deal is known as the Gematria. Here the principle is that words of a similar numerical value explain one another. Thus, the word *Achad*, meaning unity has for its number value 13, and this is also true of *Abeba*, which means Love. So Unity and Love express the same idea.

It is obvious that there are infinite possibilities in this

method, but to anyone who is acquainted with modern psychological work it will also appear that there is method in the apparent madness of the ancient rabbis. This is even more apparent when we come to the next division of the literal Qabalah—*Notarikon*. Here a word is taken and each of its letters is used as the initial letter of the new word. Thus if we use our own English language, and take as an illustration the word "Man", we can by this method form the sentence "Many are near". Some of the applications of this method caused the medieval rabbis to reject the Qabalah: it was being used to convert Jews to Christianity, and, as we have said, in another place, this enmity still persists in many quarters.

The third method of the literal Qabalah is *Temurah*. This is a method of permutation, where one letter is substituted for another letter which either follows or precedes it in the alphabet, and an entirely different word is formed as a result. There are twenty-two sets of such letter permutations, including the most important one known as the "Qabalah of the Nine Chambers", but except for those who have devoted a very great amount of study to this method, it is of general interest only.

There is a second form of *Notarikon*, in which the initials of a sentence are taken to form a word or words. One of the most famous of such words is *Agla*, one of the Names of Power used in ceremonial magic, and having the meaning "Mighty art Thou, O Lord".

All these methods of the literal Qabalah are obviously akin to the methods of dream analysis used by psychologists today, and they provide a way by which many subconscious thought complexes may be brought into the waking consciousness. Herein lies their value. Also, because of the correlation of number and letter in the Hebrew alphabet, such artificial words and sentences are in the nature of formulae similar to the chemical formulae, which show, by their component letters, the elements from which certain compounds are built. Because of this, although this field of the literal Qabalah is full of traps for the unwary, it should be studied to some extent by the enquirer, in order that he

may begin to understand something of the psychology which underlies the secret wisdom of the Hebrews.

The next division of our subject is the one which has made the greatest appeal to the ordinary public right down the ages. The practical Qabalah is that part of the Qabalistic work which deals with the magic of "woven paces and waving hands": Ceremonial and Talismanic Magic. Unfortunately this aspect of the Qabalah has become the heir to many of the most superstitious and degraded ideas and practices of both classical and medieval times, and has been chiefly studied from the baser motives of mankind. But beneath all the fraud and filth and folly of so many of its practitioners in times past, there lies a true and high doctrine and practice, which in the hands of those who are prepared to train and purify themselves, can be used for high spiritual purposes. In another chapter we shall deal more fully with this subject.

The last division of the Qabalah is what is known as "the unwritten Qabalah". This is a body of knowledge and practice which has been handed down from time immemorial, and is not in itself of Hebrew origin. The Qabalah has been used to act as a carrier for this deep esoteric teaching, but the teaching itself has been derived from many other sources. At various times men have claimed to have divulged the unwritten Qabalah, but, although teachings which have hitherto been reserved for the few *have* been made public, the true mysteries have not been betrayed—for the very good and sufficient reason that by their intrinsic nature they cannot be so divulged.

The true mysteries are experienced, not taught, and cannot be communicated to others by words. Only by inducing such a realization in those who are capable of being affected by it, can any communication of this arcane knowledge be attempted, and, even then, it is necessary that there should be some common language which may be used as a means whereby it may be discussed, and checked. The unwritten Qabalah uses the concepts and symbol-forms of the Qabalah as the alphabetical forms of a new language, and this new language can only be taught to those who are

capable of receiving such "illuminations" as they are technically termed.

So the Mysteries are divided by a line of natural cleavage into the Lesser and the Greater Mysteries. In the Lesser Mysteries, information and teaching is given which can be understood by the reasoning mind, and the right use of this teaching will bring the aspirant to the point where it is possible for those who are his teachers to arouse in him a "realization" which will enable him to understand the language of the Greater Mysteries.

Because this is so, the Mysteries have been organized in a series of grades or steps, and in the Lesser Mysteries such grades can be taken irrespective of the moral or ethical standing of the person concerned. At the same time, however, they who bear rule therein usually see to it that unsuitable people are not automatically advanced because of their intellectual qualifications. Of course it does sometimes happen that such unsuitable ones do approach the Door of the Greater Mysteries, but by reason of their inability to *experience* the realities of that realm they are unable to proceed further and must perforce fall back.

To use a homely simile, a man may have spent much time in acquiring a full and detailed understanding of the principles of action of a motor cycle and of its parts; but, however much he may know of these things, if he attempts to ride that machine *before he has learnt to balance and control it*, he will be unable to do so. On the other hand, should he acquire the ability to ride it, he could get into serious trouble if he rode it without any knowledge of its parts and principles. To be a good motor-cyclist both knowledge and ability are necessary. This is also the case in the training and work of an initiate.

In the Lesser Mysteries he gains the basic information and begins to fit himself for the reception of those realizations which are the modes of experience in the Greater Mysteries.

If this were better understood by would-be apprentices to the Mysteries, they would save themselves much time and energy, and would be less liable to be deceived by

unscrupulous "teachers" who arrogate to themselves lofty titles and pretensions.

It is to be noted that, although a man may attain to the grades of the Greater Mysteries, he cannot rest assured that he is safe from any retrogression. He holds his grade in those Mysteries by virtue of his functioning therein. As a tight-rope walker holds his position on the rope by a continued act of balancing, so the initiate holds his grade by effort and function. Only when he can worship "in the empty shrine" can he feel that he is relatively secure.

These Greater Mysteries, which are the core of the unwritten Qabalah are the centre around which all the Lesser Mystery Schools are organized. The initiates of these Greater Mysteries form a brotherhood known variously as "The Great White Lodge" or "The College of the Holy Spirit". It is dual in its work, dealing with the nations in accordance with their general cultural differences. So there is an Eastern Tradition, "they of the Ganges", and a Western Tradition, "they of the Andes". These two titles come from an old Rosicrucian source, for the true Order is one of the manifestations of the Western tradition.\*

Also, although alchemy has had its followers in both East and West, it appeared in the West as a movement which had this same inspiration behind it.

In the latter half of the nineteenth century, a resurgence of the activities of the Western tradition brought into being new movements which, based on more ancient foundations, began to teach something of the ageless wisdom. Foremost among these was the movement known as "The Hermetic Order of Golden Dawn", and it is from this order that most of the Western esoteric movements stem.

At the same time, a corresponding impulse from the Eastern tradition had brought a new movement: "The Theosophical Society", to the attention of the world. This movement, by maintaining a public presentation of its teachings has acted as a leaven which has affected much of that part of twentieth century life which has been seeking,

\* Not to be identified with any advertising Fraternity.

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albeit unconsciously perhaps, for deeper teachings on life and destiny.

The original Order of the Golden Dawn foundered upon the rocks of personal jealousies and ambition, but the various split-off portions still survive and work with varying degrees of efficiency, and behind and through them work the masters of the Western tradition.

## CHAPTER VII

### The Tree of Life

THE focal point around which the whole of the philosophy of the Qabalah is centred is the diagram or "mandala" known as the Tree of Life. In this chapter we will consider it purely as a diagram, reserving consideration of its component parts for later chapters.

The Tree consists of ten stations or *Sephiroth*, which are shown in a definite pattern. They are all connected by lines, twenty-two in number, and these ten circles and their connecting lines represent, in diagrammatic form, the Thirty-two Paths.

The general scheme of the Tree is that of a filing system, for it is held by the Qabalists that all manifestation can be classified under the ten headings of the *Sephiroth*, whilst the subjective reactions of all life and consciousness can be represented in the twenty-two connecting Paths.\*

The Tree can be considered from several angles, and the first of these is its division into what are known as the Three Pillars. In certain organizations the Pillars of the Temple are said to be two, Jachin and Boaz, but the Qabalah teaches that there are three. It is held that whereas the two Pillars represent cosmic force and form respectively, the Middle Pillar deals with the element of consciousness in the manifest universe. It is taught that the inflowing energy of creation flows from a central point which is known as *Kether*, and thence to the *Sephiroth* of both the outer Pillars in an alternative path which is known as the Lightning Flash. The first station to which it proceeds is that termed *Chokmah*, and from thence it passes over the *Sephirath Binah* which is at the head of the opposite Pillar of Form. It then crosses over again to the *Sephiroth Gedula*, or *Chesed*, as it is also called,

\* Though it is taught that certain other "Secret Paths" exist.

back again to *Geburah*, or *Pachad* on the Pillar of Form. So the creative life proceeds until it finally manifests itself in the basic *Sephirah*, *Malkuth*.

Thus is the tree established in each of what are known as the Four Worlds. These are dealt with more fully elsewhere, and will only be mentioned briefly in this chapter.

Whilst this creative activity is taking place, the Middle Pillar is being established as the result of the balance attained between the two opposite pillars. Through this Middle Pillar manifests the emergent consciousness, the life-wave, for which the manifest universe, in all its aspects, visible and invisible, is the mighty stage upon which life plays its part. At the same time, the structure of this cosmic stage conditions and directs the play which is being produced upon it. In other words, life is not something apart from the universe, but an integral part of it. All manifestation is but the means whereby the life-wave, proceeding from the unmanifest, may in an emergent evolution become perfect in all its degrees.

So it is that the process of creation is symbolized by the glyph of the Tree, and the *Sephiroth* may be held to symbolize the points where the objective universe is held in manifestation, and the evolving life, as it emerges therefrom, partakes of all their qualities.

Wherever manifestation takes place, there is life coloured by the particular aspect of the universe in which that manifestation is taking place. So the relationship values symbolized in the Tree of Life are to be found also in every evolving consciousness. There is, therefore a microcosmic Tree within each human being, and between the personal consciousness and the universal self there is the same relationship as that which exists between the tidal waters of an almost landlocked bay and the ocean of which they are an integral part. So we recall that St Paul, quoting a Greek poet, says "For we are also His offspring"; and again, "In Him we live and move and have our being".

If we now turn to the lines which connect the ten *Sephiroth* with each other, we find that they represent the *modes of consciousness* both in the universe and the soul of man.

When we are using the Tree in meditation work, we learn to tread these twenty-two paths in our inner consciousness, for it is in the region of consciousness that the application of the Tree takes place. The Qabalist (and we do not refer to the dry-as-dust pedant who has made the outer form of the Qabalah his field of study, but to the sincere follower of the tradition which has been handed down from one generation to another in the esoteric schools of the West) makes use of the Tree for the purposes of his own interior spiritual development.

To continue with our survey of the glyph as it is used in meditation work, it will be noted that each *Sephirah* has a colour. Here we touch upon certain teachings into which we cannot go at the moment, but it is sufficient to say that the colour plan which runs throughout the whole of the Qabalistic scheme, is not there merely to give the Tree a festive appearance. It has a very definite part to play in any practical work upon it. There are four such colour scales, one for each of the Four Worlds of *Atziluth*, *Briah*, *Yetzirah* and *Assiah*, and it is usual to portray the Tree in one of these, usually as indicated in our diagram.

It will be seen that the *Sephirah Chokmah*, *Chesed*, and *Netzach* form one line or "pillar", whilst on the opposite side we find *Binah*, *Pachad* and *Hod*, forming the other pillar. The stations of *Kether*, *Daath*, *Tipareth*, *Yesod* and *Malkuth* are located on the Middle Pillar. It will be noticed that in this last *Sephirah*, *Malkuth*, is the base of the entire Tree, and that it is linked up with all the other *Sephiroth*.

This is the furthest point of manifestation. The emerging consciousnesses who are playing their parts on the cosmic stage here turn from their outgoing activities and begin to return to their source. But whereas they emerged as a "life-wave", they return as individualized consciousnesses. It is this growth of individualized being which is the particular work that is being done in the material world, and for this reason this world is of the greatest importance. In the words of a great Qabalist, it is the marking-buoy of manifestation, and evolving human life must reach and pass round it before turning back on the return journey to the source

from which it proceeded in the morning of manifestation.

Any attempt to by-pass the physical plane is foolish, for its lessons must be learnt, its battles essayed and its limitations accepted and used. Here we have again the same emphasis which recurs throughout the Qabalah: the importance of the physical world, and, because of that, the importance of the physical body which is our instrument for dealing with this world. The Qabalist, like the true Christian is enjoined to play his full part in the world, and not to attempt to flee from it. "Escapism" has never been the teaching of either Qabalism or Christianity, though throughout the years both systems of teaching have been contaminated by the erroneous doctrines of Manicheanism.

These doctrines regard the physical world and the physical body as evil in themselves, being the creations of an imperfect lesser god. The only way to salvation is, therefore, to repudiate all material things and attempt by ascetic living and by the practice of philosophy, to endeavour to return to the realms of light. There is a good deal of this kind of teaching to be found in the teachings of the Gnostics of early Christianity, and it is also present in the "doctrine of the two ways" which is found in two early Christian documents, the "Didache" and the "Epistle of Barnabas". But since Christianity developed in the matrix of Jewish thought, it took from it some of its basic ideas, and so we find this doctrine of the two ways in the manual of discipline of the Qumran Community on the shores of the Dead Sea, and even in the Old Testament itself; indeed, St Paul's remarks concerning the two laws he finds in himself have something of the same idea. This, as far as we can see, is chiefly due to the incorporation in both Jewish and Christian religious thought of certain Persian teachings.

It is easy to see that, for those who are for some reason or other pre-disposed to retreat from the world, this teaching holds great charm for it gives them chapter and verse for such retreat. However, from the point of view of the schools of esoteric Qabalism, it is an erroneous teaching. Indeed, in its developed gnostic form it was repudiated by

the church in the opening words of the Nicene Creed where God is described as the "Maker of heaven and earth and of *all things visible and invisible*".

If we have laboured this point it is because it is necessary to show how far this teaching is from the "woolly" and escapist philosophies of many modern esoteric schools,—but we are not claiming here that the teachings of the Qabalists have always been free from the dualistic heresy. The secret tradition has always been influenced by the temper of thought around it, and during certain periods, the Calvinistic ideas, which contain a large measure of dualism, have influenced what may be termed the top layers of the tradition; underneath the surface, however, the real teaching has remained unaffected by it.

Again, if we seem to have laboured the point of the extreme importance of the *Sephirah Malkuth*, it is in order that the very different attitude of many esoteric students towards the physical plane may be contrasted with the sane and balanced outlook of the Qabalistic teachings.

We now come to one of the most important aspects of the Tree of Life. There are two ways of storing goods. In one, everything is thrown indiscriminately into the store, and in the other each item is carefully packed and disposed of in such a way that it may the more easily be found when necessary. Most of the time, we follow method number one, and the only reason that our thoughts are not muddled far more than they are, is that the natural structure of the mind forces us to place them in some kind of order, just as the shape of our store-room would force us to dispose of the more bulky items of furniture in a certain way if we would get them in. So, as we have seen in a former chapter, the mind is built up in a very different pattern, and the best way in which we can store the knowledge we have gained is to pack it away in accordance with the mental architecture.

This the Tree of Life teaches us to do, since it conforms to that architecture very closely indeed. We may, therefore, now consider the Tree as a great "filing cabinet", by means of which we may sort out and store the knowledge we receive. We have, then a filing system of ten main headings:

the ten *Sephiroth*, and a further twenty-two lesser ones: the interconnecting paths on the Tree.

For the time being we will concentrate on the primary headings of our system, and consider how they may be used. Each *Sephirah* has a certain primary "virtue" which is its keynote, and all persons, conditions and influences can be divided between one or other of these ten. But every good thing can be overdone in these lower worlds, and we find, therefore that the "vices" which are the unbalanced aspects of the virtues, also go to their own place: in this case to the ten stations of the *Qliphothic* Tree. As an illustration let us take one *Sephirah*, and work it out in some detail.

Let us take *Chesed* on the right hand pillar of the Tree. Here we find the main heading which we must use is *Constructive Activity*. (The student is advised to make a card index system and to work on this classification.) Under this heading let us place on the appropriate index card the symbol of *Chesed*. This is a geometrical figure: the square. It should be coloured a clear blue, and if we have the necessary ability, we may place within the square a drawing of a majestic bearded king, seated on his throne. This gives the keynote of protective organization and preservation.

Now let us continue to use this method of classification. Looking around us, we find certain activities which come under the heading of protective control and preservation, and we therefore file these items under this head. For instance we may include the town and country planning authorities, wild-life preservation societies and so on—not forgetting the Civil Service. We often refer to these activities as "paternal" and this is also one aspect of *Chesed*. We may also profitably consider the building up processes of our physical bodies as coming under this heading. There will be people in our daily life who seem to portray this quality and we can file them accordingly. In this way we build up an organized complex of ideas all relating to one particular aspect of life.

This process is repeated with each *Sephirah* until there is built up an automatic subconscious habit of classification.

It must be repeated here that the Qabalah is not only a system of philosophy, but that it is also, essentially, a method of using the mind in a certain way. The dry-as-dust pedant may occupy himself with the outer history or philosophic validity of the Qabalah, but the sincere student of esoteric tradition *uses* the system, and in the using obtains a far more balanced and objective view of the possibilities than the other.

One very important point in this respect is that no station on the Tree can ever be dealt with singly; always it is linked with all the others, and in particular with its opposite station; in the case of the *Sephiroth* on the two side pillars.

Thus, in the example we have just used, it is necessary that we now proceed to study the *Sephirah Pachad*. Here we have the concept of Severity, the geometric symbol in this case is a pentagon, within which we may place the image of a mighty warrior in his chariot. Here, in place of the beneficent organizing activities of *Chesed*, we have the violent disruption of existing conditions which so many people regard as the last evil. In truth this is not so, for the disintegrating activities of *Pachad* are the necessary balance to the organizing activities of *Chesed*.

We may again consider this in the same way that we have done with the other station. Let us imagine that we are going down the street on our way to work, and we catch sight of a row of buildings which are, we know, condemned as slums. We see that bulldozers and cranes are at work and the buildings are rapidly being demolished. This is an activity of *Geburah* or *Pachad*. There are those who would equate *good* with building up and organizing, and *evil* with breaking down and destroying, but it is clear that, in this present instance, the activities of *Pachad* are beneficent. There is a line in one of Tennyson's poems, King Arthur's dying speech, "The old order changeth, yielding place to new, and God fulfils Himself in many ways, *lest one good custom should corrupt the world*".

The existence of the slum property is an example of the conserving activity of *Chesed* having become unbalanced,

and the activity of *Pachad* is needed to break these conditions down and correct the balance.

But *Pachad* may also become unbalanced in the same way, and here we may again use a similar instance. On our daily walk to the station, we have seen that for some time a rather well-built house in obviously good condition has been empty. Now, as we pass it we see that hooligans, young and old, have begun to break down the fences, to smash the windows and to deface the building. Soon it will no longer be habitable, or even safe, for someone has been breaking down the walls themselves for purposes of their own. Here is an example of the unbalanced working of *Pachad*, and we would see, in the sudden irruption of council officials and building squads, the compensating activities of *Chesed*, making good the wanton destruction and so balancing the out-of-balance activities of *Pachad*.

If the Tree is used as a meditation system, then this is the kind of thing which must be done with each of the *Sephiroth* in turn. It is important to remember that the opposed *Sephiroth* together form a working unit, and it is this unit which must be dealt with in all practical work upon the Tree. Thus we have certain "functional triangles" as they are termed. The first of these is known as the Supernal Triangle, and is made up of the *Sephiroth Kether*, *Chokmah* and *Binah*. This is the root and basis upon which all manifestation is grounded, and between it and the rest of the *Sephiroth* there is a gulf fixed, known as the "abyss". This means that all subsequent manifestation is of a different quality to these three, and to understand the supernals fully an entire change of consciousness is necessary. These three, the source which is *Kether*, the father which is *Chokmah* and the mother which is *Binah*, are the governing factors for the rest of the Tree. The station *Chokmah* is regarded as the positive masculine potency of manifestation, and the station, *Binah*, as the passive feminine potency thereof. As will be seen from the diagram, these three supernals stand at the head of each of the three pillars of the Tree.

Now here we come to the mysterious station known as *Daath*. This seems to have no connection with the rest of

the Tree, and is apparently an eleventh station, yet the Qabalistic texts are emphatic that there are only ten *Sephiroth*. Herein lies a mystery, but it may be suggested that *Daath* has to do with dimensions of consciousness. There is a Qabalistic saying that *Kether* is the *Malkuth* of the unmanifest, that is, that in each of the Four Worlds, the last phase of manifestation of each world is the source and beginning of the next.

We may then conceive of *Daath* as being, amongst other things, the connecting link of *consciousness* between the Worlds. Thus, *Daath* in *Atziluth* links directly with *Daath* in *Briah*, and that with *Daath* in *Yetzirah* until the world of *Assiah* is reached. This linking station in all the worlds would appear to be the apex of a pyramid whose base is made up of *Kether*, *Chokmah* and *Binah*, and this apex exists or subsists in another dimension.

The next triangle is that of *Pachad* and *Chesed* which finds its point in *Tiphareth*, and the third is that composed of *Netzach*, *Hod* and *Yesod*.

The tenth *Sephirah*, *Malkuth* is the point where all the influences of the Tree are received and dealt with, and the evolving lives in the manifested universe begin their return to the source from which they came.

It will be seen that the Middle Pillar contains the stations which are the equilibrated energies of the two outer pillars, and any consideration of either of these must take into account not only the polarizing opposite of the station concerned, but also the equilibrating third station of that functional triangle.

In fact, whenever we are dealing with the Tree, either as a meditation symbol or as a general diagram of the disposition of manifest things, we are always to remember that the Tree must, in the last resort, be considered as a whole, even though we may be concentrating upon some particular aspect of it at a given time.

## CHAPTER VIII

### The Four Worlds of the Qabalists

THE philosophy of the Qabalists is an "emanation" philosophy, and here it comes into direct opposition to the ideas of orthodox Christianity. This opposition is, however, based upon certain misconceptions and is in point of fact gradually changing under the impact of modern knowledge. The old idea of the Eternal as the personal artificer in creation is changing as the immensities of creation are unveiled.

In the last analysis, of course, it is very true to say that God created all things, but the way in which this was done, as set forth by the Qabalah, is different to the ideas of exoteric Judaism which have been taken over into orthodox Christianity. The great objection of Christian theologians to the emanationist philosophy is that it tends towards pantheism, which can be equated so easily with the idea that "God" is simply the totality of Nature. But this the Qabalah does not teach. Quite rightly it teaches that God is made manifest in Nature, and is immanent in it: but it also teaches that all manifestation, on whatever plane, is only one expression of the eternal being who reigns transcendent over all. It should be noted here that in this philosophy there is no rigid dichotomy; no hard and fast division between Spirit and Matter. Matter is regarded as "the luminous garment of the Eternal", indeed as being an expression of that Being, and therefore all things are holy in their intrinsic nature. This idea, as will be seen, cuts right across the Manichaean strain which still persists in some parts of Christianity, one of its manifestations being what is commonly known as puritanism.

Assuming that the emanationist philosophy is correct how then is creation effected? Here we come to the idea of the "agents" through whom creation takes place, and also to

the modes of that creation. It must be clearly understood that these realms of creation which are called "worlds", are not spacial planets or anything of that kind. We say this because even those who should have known better have sometimes fallen into this error. Let us then define what is meant by the term. *A "world" in this connection refers to a particular mode of activity of the Deity*".

The first of these modes is known as the world of *Atziluth*, or the archetypal world. It is the field of the divine ideas which are behind all manifestation. Here the divine mind manifests those abstract concepts which will later be worked out in increasing complexity in all the fields of manifestation. The glyph of the Tree of Life is held by the Qabalists to be established in all the "worlds" and here it is understood to be present in its most refined form. It is a spiritual "blue-print" in the divine mind. This is not to say that the figure which we draw and describe as the Tree is present in the world of *Atziluth* as a figure, but rather that the *relationships* figured in the Tree have here their origins.

We come next to the world of *Briah*. In the Qabalah this world of *Briah* is also called the World of Thrones and is held to emanate from the world of *Atziluth*. It is, as it were, a step nearer to the objectivity of matter, and is sometimes known as the Creative World, since it is here that the archetypes of the *Atziluthic* World begin to be objectified, and it is here that the "archangels" are held to be actively engaged in formulating the divine archetypes. It is a "world" in which the primal energy of manifestation begins its work.

It is to be understood that the "Archangels" are not in any way to be thought of as superhuman beings having a human form and possessing wings such as popular piety would have us believe. The same may also be said of the angelic and subhuman orders of life.

The third world is the world of *Yetzirah*, the world of formation. Here the substance of manifestation is still without any *material* expression, and it is here that those beings known as the angels have their true abode. Here the universe builders are, as it were, making their arrangements for the materialization of the divine archetypes in physical

expression, and this physical expression takes place in the fourth world, that of *Assiah*.

*Assiah* is said to be made up of the grosser elements of the preceding three worlds. By this we understand that there is a gradation of complexity of substance in these worlds (which, it must be kept in mind, are non-material), and this gradation results in a similar gradation of material physical matter. As we shall see, the Tree of Life is implicit in all the four worlds, and the relationships it portrays show a similar gradation. Since, as we have said, all the four worlds are interpenetrating "states", the finer and grosser aspects of them all are to be found in the last world to be emanated, and the grossest of them all is the *Sephirah* at the foot of the Tree of Life, the *Sephirah* known as *Malkuth*.

It is here, in the world of *Assiah*, that we come to another Qabalistic concept which is of real importance. Below *Assiah* is said to be formulated the kingdom of the *Qliphoth*. Briefly, it may be said that the *Qliphoth* are the unbalanced aspects of the Tree of Life formulated in the waters of chaos in an averse Tree of ten stations. Thus there appears an infernal Tree of ten stations, corresponding to the ten Holy *Sephiroth*.

The origin of this realm of the *Qlipoth* is to be found in the processes of manifestation by which the universe came into being. This was begun by the outpouring of the primal power from the unmanifest through the *Sephirah Kether*, and this power in turn expressed itself through the other *Sephiroth* until *Malkuth* was reached. But, as we have already pointed out, the essence of the Tree is *balance*, and in the beginning of the outpouring of Cosmic Life through each *Sephirah* there is no balance; not until the corresponding station is emanated does such a balance become possible. It follows, then, that during the establishment of each *Sephirah* there is an overplus of differentiated energy, and this goes into what may be termed "the waters under the earth". Thus there exists in the universe this realm of unbalanced force; the realm of "the Kings of Edom, who reigned before there was a King in Israel". Now, all manifested life has been, and still is to a very great extent indeed,

out of harmony, at least here in *Malkuth* of *Assiah*, and this unbalance means that there are built up organized centres of unbalance in the chaotic world of unorganized energy which is the kingdom of the *Qlipboth*, and as the positive evil of the world is an expression of the unbalance of the doers of evil, so each disharmony goes to its own place, linking up with that aspect of the *Qlipboth* which is of its own nature. Thus, in the course of the ages, are built up the mighty unbalanced complexes of positive evil, complexes which are energized by the terrible energies of the waters under the earth.

It is possible to obtain power in three ways. The first way is that of approach to the fountain-head of all power and the endeavour to become a channel of that power; the second way is, as it were, an attempt to "rob Peter to pay Paul" by juggling with the energies of manifestation; and the third way is that of reversion to the waters of chaos, and of becoming the channel through which the unbalanced power of that kingdom may emerge in terrible action.

In the terms of Jungian psychology, we may regard the *Qlipoth* as the unbalanced aspects of the archetypes of the collective unconsciousness of the race. Always there is a pressure from the waters under the earth, and this pressure will find release through any channel which is open to it. So the fanatical dictator, whether of the right or the left finds himself buoyed up by some apparently irresistible power, and everything seems possible to him. However, as the *Qlipbothic* energies begin to flow through him in an increasing stream, he finds that they are beginning to take control. No longer can he exert the authority which was his and direct his activities in accordance with reason. The energies are commencing to become inner dictators and to drive him whither, in his reasonable moments, he would not wish to go. Now he begins to make mistakes, his strategy becomes faulty, and the unbalanced forces which he has released in those who blindly follow him, now begin to work upon them in such a way as to bring about disloyalty and disruption within the nation. Finally, the whole system of dictatorial power crumbles, and his reign is over.

It is held by one school of esoteric training that, when

Christ hung on the Cross, it was not in the agony of death by crucifixion, there are more terrible forms of torture, but in the taking unto Himself the accumulated unbalanced force and abreacting it, that His real work was accomplished. Then, by a stupendous alchemy He transmuted it into balanced power, available for the helping of the world, and, whilst a great change was affected in the psychic atmosphere of this planet, a new and living way was opened up through which man could approach the eternal.

We have been speaking of "positive evil", and this may perhaps need some explanation. In this system of thought evil is not regarded in quite the same way as it is in popular thought. It is held that there is, what is termed "negative evil", and this is simply the reaction to the energies of the creative logos. Friction, which engineers and motorists attempt to keep as low as possible when they apply it to their machinery, is nevertheless one of the most important factors in its operation. If a road surface were entirely without frictional qualities, if such a thing were possible, the energy of the motor would make the wheels go round, but they would not be able to get any purchase on the road and would spin uselessly. Any motorist who has had to get his car out of a snowdrift or out of a piece of marshy land will appreciate this, as will, also, any skater who, at the beginning of his career, appreciated the truth of the saying that skates should be sold in sets of three! Thus negative evil is regarded as the necessary reaction to the application of the creative forces, without which any creation would be impossible.

This brings us back to the opening statement of the *Book of the Concealed Mystery*. The *Book of the Concealed Mystery* is "the book of the equilibrium of balance". As the *Sephiroth* are established in each "world", they appear in balanced form, one pulling against the other, as it were, in order to achieve the equilibrium which is the ideal of manifestation. Here we have the source of what is known as "dualism", for if we think only of the opposition of the *Sephiroth*, we shall tend to regard some of them as "evil", but if we regard this "push-pull" as the establishment of a dynamic balance, we

shall see that the apparent antagonism is illusory, and that it springs from a mistaken view of manifestation. However, during the period in which this dynamic balance is being established, there will be unbalanced power at large in the universe, and this will, as we have said, gravitate to its appropriate centre in the regions of the *Qliphoth*: the "Habitations of Hell", as they are sometimes termed.

If we regard the whole process of manifestation as being a mighty flow of power from a creative centre, and its ultimate return thereto, then we may think of negative evil as being the resistance of the field of manifestation to the organizing principle in that emanation of power, the friction and opposition which enables that principle to formulate therein. This, then, is part of the mechanism of creation, and is necessary in order that manifestation may take place. There will also be that opposition which is due to the fact that pressure of creation in one direction has not fully ceased before a new phase of activity begins to take place, and thus the initial activity of the new phase is impeded in its beginnings. But all this is comprehended within the cosmic scheme.

What is not included in the cosmic scheme is what we have termed "positive evil", that is to say, it has no intrinsic function to perform therein, as is the case with negative evil. Rather is it a failure arising from the unbalanced actions of the life-units of the scheme, for implicit in the whole universe (and, according to the Qabalists, in the whole of creation), is the principle of "free will", and it is here that positive evil has its roots. Thus the freewill of the units of life tends to organize the unbalanced forces for its own purpose; in this way organized positive evil becomes a foreign body of the Heavenly Man (as the whole field of manifestation is termed by the Qabalists) and two courses are possible in order to deal with this positive evil, just as in the physical body an effort is made to absorb or reject a foreign substance: so in Macroprosopos a similar effort is made. Where it is possible, the positive organized energy of positive evil is absorbed into the general circulation of power in the universe by a process which is equivalent to

the "abreaction" used in modern psychiatric treatment. This process, which must always take place in and through the densest level of manifestation if it is to be effective, works through the developed and dedicated beings who find in this work their natural line of action, and throughout the ages of evolution such cosmic abreaction has been effected by them. According to certain Qabalists the outflowing stream of manifestation reached its lowest point on the physical level some two thousand years ago, and at this point it should have been possible for the Logos of Light so to enter into the evolving life, that henceforth it would have been possible for it to evolve to its perfection and return to its source in a balanced and orderly manner. However, the power of positive evil was such that, despite the efforts of previous dedicated beings, there was a danger that the whole scheme might be temporarily "bogged down" and retarded in such a way that the whole of evolving life would fail to turn the corner, and, passing beyond the point of return for aeonian time, cause the entire cosmic scheme to be thrown out of balance.

So the incarnation of the Logos had to be devoted to the restoration of the balance, and this He did by drawing to himself the unbalanced forces, and, by a supreme alchemy, transmuting them in such a way that the evolving life was able to pass the nadir and begin, *en masse*, to tread the path of return. That which before was limited to the few became an opportunity for the many, for He opened up a new and living way whereby mankind might be able to surge ahead towards the spiritual home, and, not only mankind alone, for by His cleansing of the psychic sphere of the planet, all the lives thereon, subhuman and elemental alike shared in this liberation.

This also was the belief of the early Christian church before the legalistic Roman mind began to formulate the Christian Good News in legal terms. It was held quite simply that Christ had fought and conquered the powers of evil, and released the whole cosmic order from its bondage to the Lords of Unbalanced Force, so that all might now be able to return safely home to the eternal. This view of the

atonement is one which can be held by anyone, for *no official definition of the Atonement has been formulated by any of the great councils of the Catholic Church.*

This whole question of the Atonement is ably worked out in Aulen's *Christus Victor*. It is mentioned here in order to show how the Qabalistic concepts were used and still are, by Christian Qabalists.

It may seem that this consideration of the *Qliphoth* has little to do with the Four Worlds, but it is because it concerns them by virtue of the fact that, on every one of them, with the exception of the world of *Atziluth*, the shadowy waters under the Earth are to be found. The archangel of *Briah* has his counterpart in the Devil in the Habitations of Hell, and the angels their counterpart in the demons of the Habitations.

Now the unbalanced forces in the worlds of *Briah* and *Yetzirah* were passive and unorganized, but with the evolution of consciousness and self-consciousness in the world of *Assiah*, they began to be organized into a force of positive evil, warring against the light, and so the Habitations of Hell came into existence.

Though the victory over the powers of evil has been won on aeonian levels, man has still to apply that victory in his own personal realm, and to "fight manfully against the world the flesh and the devil", as the Anglican Catechism puts it. This warfare must be fought in the dust and turmoil of everyday life. This world is the battlefield of *Kurukshetra*, as the great Hindu epic of the Gita terms it.

Here the teachings of the Qabalah can be usefully applied, and although in some cases battles may be won by retreating, after the manner of Fabius Cunctator, yet for the great bulk of humanity it is here, on the physical plane, in the grind of mundane life, that the victory must be gained. It is because of this that the Qabalists lay such great stress upon the station of *Malkuth* in *Assiah*, and it is also the reason why we have devoted this space to the consideration of the *Qlipoth*, for it is here in the world of matter that they must be met and overcome.

## CHAPTER IX

### Concerning Adam Kadmon

IN several ancient philosophies the eternal source of all manifestation is imaged under the form of a great Man. This idea, in the hands of the primitive type of mind produces what has been termed "anthropomorphism", and this has been a fruitful source of trouble in most of the religious systems of the world.

For it is quite justifiable to think of God in some kind of earth imagery—in fact it is almost impossible to do otherwise. Even the strictest monotheist and metaphysician must use *some* earth terms if he is to convey anything to his followers, and though, following Eastern precedent he may attempt to define the Eternal by using negative terms *Neti, neti* "Not this, not that", nevertheless he cannot avoid the employment of positive terms, even though he uses them in a negative way.

Thus, if he says, "God is Love, He is more than that, for our earthly concept of love is only the shadow of a shadow of the reality," he has had to use the positive term, and to some extent define it in order to express the idea which he is trying to convey.

We have said that the anthropomorphic tendency has caused much trouble in the religious world. This is because the multitudes usually employ a subconscious mental mechanism known as "projection". This means that we tend to give to an outer image the emotions and instinctive values which are in ourselves. This projection takes place in varying degrees, but very few people entirely escape its employment. This mechanism, when it is employed in religious work, can give rise to some very queer ideas as to the nature of the Supreme Being. I think it was Dean Swift who remarked on one occasion that God made man in His own Image, and man had replied by making God in *his* image,

"complete with shovel hat". This is true of the majority of people. A man with a strong streak of cruelty in his nature will conceive of God as a great figure of terror ruling over the affairs of men, and he will find in the sacred scriptures of his religion "proof-texts" which, when wrenched from their context will justify him in thinking of the Supreme in this way. What is more, and this is the most important point, he will be able to justify his own use of cruelty to others by pointing to similar action by the God he worships.

Some of the worst excesses of the Christian churches throughout the centuries have been condoned and "justified" by such use of the Old Testament, and this is not peculiar to Christianity. All religious movements have been affected by it, for projection is not something which is purely western and Christian; it is a psychological mechanism common to the whole of humanity.

The genius of the Qabalah has been to take this universal tendency and turn it to service by boldly using anthropomorphic images, but using them in a certain definite way, so that instead of being a source of trouble, they will help the mind to reach up to concepts which seem to lie far beyond the mental horizon.

It may be noted in passing, that the idea of the Heavenly Man is not peculiar to the Qabalists. It is to be found in the Hindu esoteric teachings, and reappeared in the West in the teachings and revelations of the great Swedish seer Swedenborg. In his teaching every form of life has its appropriate place in the body of the Heavenly Man, and this too, is to be found in another guise in the teachings of the Western tradition.

The Heavenly Man of the Qabalah is held to be the manifestation of what is termed *Arik Anpin*, the Great Countenance, which is the *Sephirah Kether* expanded in *Chokmah* and *Binah*. Now these three are the three supernals between whom and the rest of the Tree is placed the abyss to signify that they differ from the others in a special way. *Chokmah*, which is the positive, male principle, and *Binah* the negative female principle unite in *Daath*, or to put it in another way, the equilibrium of these two enable the emerging conscious-

ness to begin to manifest in the other *Sephiroth*. The root of *Arik Anpin*, or Macroposopos is to be found in *Kether*, just as the root of the Heavenly Man, Microposopos, is to be found in *Tiphareth*.

The Microposopos is also known as *Zaur Anpin*, or the Lesser Countenance, and is made up of *Chesed*, *Pachad*, *Netzach*, *Hod* and *Yesod*, centred in *Tiphareth*. It will be seen that this leaves out the *Sephirah Malkuth*. This *Sephirah*, is sometimes called "The Bride of Microposopos", or else *Kellab*, the queen, in which case Microposopos is known as the king.

It is also said that *Malkuth* "is exalted above every head, and sits upon the throne of *Binah*". Now *Binah* is also termed the Superior Mother, and *Malkuth* therefore becomes the Inferior Mother.

In the *Greater Holy Assembly*, one of the books of the *Zohar*, Rabbi Schimeon is stated to have said to his co-workers "Now take your places to describe how the parts of Microposopos are confirmed ... from the forms of the Ancient of Days, the Holy of the Holy Ones, the Withdrawn of the Withdrawn Ones, the Concealed One of All. But the conformations of Microposopos are disposed from the forms of Macroposopos;—and His constituent parts are expanded on this side and on that, *under a human form*, so that there may be manifest in Him the Spirit of the Concealed One in every part."

We may interpret this as a declaration that the Heavenly Man is the field in which all manifestation takes place, and He is also the Pleroma or fullness of all the powers, forces and forms to be found therein, whilst His consciousness is the root and ground of all consciousness in creation. This is the Cosmic Christ of modern esoteric thought, and in Him we truly live and move and have our being.

In this mighty figure of the Heavenly Man, the Qabalah is placing before us the concept of a living universe, in contradistinction to the arid lifeless concept of modern materialistic science, or, to be more accurate, of that section of science which still thinks in terms of the Victorian period. For many scientists are nowadays beginning to

visualize all manifestation as the working of a mighty consciousness.

Again, a word of warning is necessary. The great glyph of the Heavenly Man is valuable as indicating an actual series of relationships between the various factors in the universe, but it is these *relationships* which are of the essence of the matter. It is so easy to use the glyph as a substitute for the reality it expresses.

There is yet another doctrine of the Heavenly Man which claims attention. There is a teaching that there exist certain men who have, through repeated incarnations, attained perfection *within this planetary scheme*. They are variously known as the brothers, the masters, the holy ones, the mahatmas, according to the various schools of West and East. It is held that each of these masters represents the perfection of one type of consciousness, and is, as it were, the centre around which the evolving consciousnesses of men group themselves, each according to his type of "ray".

So, in each cycle of cosmic history, there is built up a Heavenly Man after the manner of the Swedenborgian revelations, each evolving consciousness gravitating to that position in the Heavenly Man which is the position for his type. At the same time all the lives are interdependent and form one consciousness; as emergent evolution proceeds, so all lives begin to become conscious of position in the cosmic scheme, a position which they have always held, but of which they were not aware. So Microposopos becomes realized in the reciprocal Heavenly Man which is evolved. This process is repeated, so says the tradition, through seven great epochs of evolution, until at the end there is to be found one Heavenly Man which consciously mirrors the mind and consciousness of the Eternal, that mind and consciousness which is immanent in all manifestation, and which in the Qabalah is known as Adam Kadmon.

All of this may be expressed in the symbols used by a modern writer, and with them we may profitably conclude this chapter.

"... there appeared in the Rose of Light, at the diamond point where being enters into manifestation, the perfect

form of a Man; androgyne, if the expression may be allowed, at which the whole concourse of adorants swept to their knees, Thrones, Powers, Dominions themselves, for in all Heaven there is no Power that is not a form of the Light, and Beyond Light, and no Power has power that does not know this."

"I remember ... we all have in ourselves the power of cognition by symbol, which next to silence is most eloquent; and I have not forgotten the symbol which Venus held out, the symbol which speaks with power in all worlds. We were to see it again ... the Cross on which, if I may so express myself, Light dies; the Rose, if I may venture, in which Light is born."\*

\* *A Visit from Venus*, p. 155. Also *Troust's Testament*, p. 179. Both books by Sir Ronald Fraser. Published by Jonathan Cape.

## CHAPTER X

### Concerning the Veils

WHEN we study the glyph of the Tree of Life we find that the first *Sephirah*, *Kether*, appears to have a background shown as three concentric arcs and named *Ain*, *Ain Soph* and *Ain Soph Aur* respectively. If *Kether* is the source of all manifestation what then are these Veils, as they are termed?

The answer is that they are the symbols of the unmanifest, from which *Kether* proceeds. For, of course, all manifestation must have some root in that which, in itself is unmanifest. The philosopher Herbert Spencer regarded this as not only The Unknown, but as The Unknowable; this is true, of course, if we regard the mind as a finished product. But, as evolution of both life and consciousness proceeds, many things which once were unknowable, become knowable for the instrument we are using is becoming more efficient.

At the same time it must be remembered that, although the instrument may be more efficient, this will not avail unless a development also takes place in the consciousness. This latter is not merely a quantitative advancement; it also concerns the unfolding of a new quality.

Dion Fortune likens the use of the veils in practical esotericism to the employment of algebraic symbols in the calculations of the higher mathematics. In themselves the symbols are meaningless, but they enable the mind to deal with problems which would otherwise be impossible of solution. So with the whole of the inter-related symbolism of the Tree of Life; it is a system of mathematics dealing with cosmic unknowns.

But, it may be asked, why should these highly abstruse ideas be considered; why not leave them in a decent obscurity, and get on with the practical side of esotericism?

There are several reasons for the establishment of the

symbolic veils in the student's mind, and the most important of these is that it roots all esoteric work in a source which cannot in any way be used as a mental finality. Whenever the esotericist is dealing with any manifested appearance, he must always regard it against the background of the veils, and in this way he is taught to avoid the establishment of a mental fixed point. Always beyond lies the unmanifest, and it is against this background that all his life and work is set.

Another use of the veils is to express in symbolic terms the fact that manifestation is not only a "being", but also that it is a "becoming". So the Name of God, which is given to *Kether*, is *Ehieh Asher Ehieh*, translated in our Bible as "I am that I am". A friend of the writer, a notable Qabalist, suggests that a better translation would be "I am the Ever-becoming One". Here we have the idea of an out-flowing form, the unmanifest, this resulting in all manifestation. So, in this name of the Eternal, we are given the concept of a rhythmic unfoldment of the activity of God, with no absolute finality: always a becoming, never an absolute ending. Many followers of the orthodox religions, both Christian and non-Christian, would dissent from this idea, but this is, in the main, due to the normal desire for completion of work and "refreshment after labour". That there is such a satisfying completion of the evolutionary journey of the spirit of man is true, but this philosophy teaches that the completion of one phase of manifestation is followed, after a period of bliss and happiness beyond earthly imagining, by a fresh adventure of the spirit, as the activity of the ever-becoming One again opens out the starry ways. So, again and again, the divine life surges into manifestation; again and again it "rests from its labours" and withdraws itself into the fruits of its activity; and again and again, in new aspects of its fathomless being, are conceived new and exciting adventures of manifestation.

Here we have the Qabalistic equivalent of what is known in the East as the cycle of the "Days and Nights of Brahma". In the East, it is true that this divine activity is thought of, more or less entirely, as the working out of inevitable law,

but in the schools of the Western tradition such a concept is associated with the idea of the working-out, by a supreme artist, of a vision of beauty which is part of its nature. So, aeon after aeon the plans of God are worked out, the cosmic picture is completed, and the Artist rests; whilst all the beings who have been the actors upon His stage, parts of His cosmic masterpiece, enter into the "joy of the Lord", until, after what in temporal terms are untold ages, once more the divine fiat goes forth, and the sons and daughters of God shout aloud for joy in that fair morning of a new creation. So from eternity unto eternity the ever-becoming One expresses Himself, and all this is symbolized by the veils.

Now since the veils portray "negative existence", any earthly image we may make of them is, of course, entirely misleading. We cannot predicate of "that which is" anything which can be expressed in earth terms. This is taught both in Eastern philosophies and in Christian theology. *Neti, neti*, "Not this, not that" says the Eastern sage, and the mystical theology of the pseudo-Dionysius, and the mysterious author of that wonderful treatise *The Cloud of Unknowing*, say the same thing.

But although we cannot give "a local habitation and a name" to the underlying realities symbolized by the veils, we can use the veils as a background against which we may judge all manifestation, or that part of it which we are able to understand at any given time. For the mind of man, as it grows, becomes able to understand more and more of manifestation, and so the veils recede as man progresses.

It is evident, therefore, that some set these veils in one position, whilst others go far beyond their fellows, and penetrate deeply into the mystery. But although we may, in this way, suggest the idea of "negative existence", we must be careful not to *define* it too closely. For whatever we define comes within the compass of our mind, and therefore ceases to be infinite. Only when we have experienced in our spiritual self something of that infinity can we be said to comprehend it.

"If God can be understood, then He is no longer God,"

said one philosopher, and this simply means that the use of the rational faculty cannot, *of itself*, define the infinite. But by a mystical comprehension, we may understand something of that which is the root and foundation of all.

Fawcett, in one of his books\* goes into this matter in some detail, and although we would not agree with all his conclusions, we would strongly recommend his writings to those who find metaphysics a congenial field of study.

We have, therefore, two modes or ideas, negative and positive existence, which in themselves are irreconcilable, and here the graded symbol of the veils helps us. McGregor Mathers, in *The Kabbalah Unveiled*, says, "between these two ideas, a certain connecting link is required, and hence we arrive at the form which is called *potential existence*, which, while more nearly approaching positive existence, will still scarcely admit of clear definition. It is existence in its *possible* form. For example, in a seed, the tree which may spring forth from it is hidden: it is in a condition of potential existence; it is there; but it will not admit of definition. How much less, then, will those seeds which that tree in its turn may yield be defined, for these latter are in a condition which, while it is somewhat analogous to potential existence, is at a stage even less advanced, that is, they are negatively existent. On the other hand, positive existence is always capable of definition; it is dynamic; it has certain evident powers, and it is therefore the antithesis of negative existence. It is the tree, no longer hidden in the seed, but outwardly developed and manifested.

Positive existence has a beginning and an end, and it therefore requires another form from which to depend, for without this other concealed negative ideal behind it, it is unstable and unsatisfactory.

Thus, then, have I faintly and with all reverence, endeavoured to foreshadow in the minds of my readers, the idea of the Illimitable One; and before that idea, and of that idea, I can only say, in the words of an ancient oracle "In Him is an illimitable abyss of glory, and from it there goeth forth one little spark which maketh all the glory of the sun and of

\* *Divine Imagining*, Douglas Fawcett (MacMillan & Co., London, 1921).

the moon and of the stars. Mortal! behold how little I know of God; seek not to know more of Him, for this is far beyond thy comprehension, however wise thou art; as for us, who are His ministers, how small a part we are of Him!"

There is yet another "veil" in Qabalistic philosophy. It is termed *Paroketh*, and is drawn across the diagram of the Tree of Life through the *Sephirah Tiphareth*. Beyond this veil *Paroketh* there lies the *abyss* as it is named—the level of consciousness and manifestation which is of an entirely different quality to the lower personal self.

There is a tendency, common to many aspirants to esoteric knowledge, to attempt to soar in the rarified air of abstract ideas to the neglect of what are erroneously thought to be inferior states and conditions of being. Veil *Paroketh* is intended to warn the Qabalist that he must not lose himself in a labyrinth of abstract speculation, but work within the present limits of his mental capacity. By so doing he avoids becoming "woolly-minded", and, this very limitation of thought will develop his consciousness to the point where he can effect that change of consciousness which will take him across the abyss into an entirely new world of being. He has then become reborn in eternity, to use a phrase which was used in the old mystery schools.

But until he has so developed, it is a wise policy for him to concentrate upon the levels of the Tree which lie below *Tiphareth*. He must "tarry in Jerusalem until his beard is grown".

This device of the veil *Paroketh* may be applied to the study of every part of the Tree. It is a very useful method of limiting the field of mental vision and endeavour, and corresponds, in the mental field, to the artist's device of screening off the area of vision by his hands, so that he sees only a part of the total scene, but sees that with greater clarity.

Here it is as well to remember that there is yet another check on the tendency to soar in mental pride. It is said in this philosophy "A Tree in every *Sephirah*". We live on the planet Earth, and we have a consciousness which has been furnished with earth images and concepts. Within this

sphere of Earth, *Malkuth* on the Tree, we must realize that there is the reflection of that, which in its true nature, lies far beyond. "As above, so below", runs the Hermetic axiom. So all the aspects of the Tree are present in *Malkuth*, and it is on this level that we must first contact them. So always we must remember that when we begin to have mystical and occult experience, we are working within the rainbow aura of Earth; we are contacting *Tiphareth* or *Binah* or *Kether* under the veil of earthly things.

## CHAPTER XI

### The New Occultism

I HAVE tried in this book to give some idea of the nature of modern esoteric lore, and to indicate some of its sources. I have purposely written in a way which will probably irritate some of my readers. I am sorry if this is the case, but I have written not only to instruct but to affect the deeper levels of the mind; this has meant that the subject matter has been presented in what may appear to be an irrational way. Those who, having read this book, use its chapters as food for meditation practice will find therein something which will, I believe, be helpful in the work of producing those changes in consciousness which are the goals of magical art.

"Of the making of books there is no end," and certainly there have been many published works which deal with the secret wisdom of Israel, the Qabalah, and with the esoteric schools which derive their power and inspiration from that particular presentation of the ageless wisdom. Unfortunately, so much of what has been published by one person, or group of persons, appears to be but a rehash of what someone else has already written. To some extent this must be true. We build upon the foundations laid by others, and our own work, if valid, serves in its turn as the level from which others build. What is new in our work, is not the scheme which we outline, but rather that particular form in which we present it. It is here that the unique contribution of any new writer lies, and it is here that the growing point of esoteric science is to be found. Most of the published material dealing with the Western Esoteric Tradition has been drawn from the rituals and knowledge papers of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn as they were revealed by Aleister Crowley, Dr Israel Regardie and other members of that order, or of similar Orders, such as *Argentum Astris*

and *Stella Matutina*. The rituals once revealed lose their power, although they can be used as subjects for meditation and can, under these circumstances, be of very great help to the earnest student.

It may be as well if I indicate, at this point, what is my own position in this matter. In my early days I was fortunate in making contact with one who taught with authority in this field, and my debt to this man (known to his students as "R.K.") is very great indeed. Later, in the East, I came into contact with a group of Indian occultists, and by a most curious concatenation of circumstances, I found, on my return to this country, another teacher, the late "Dion Fortune", and I made my esoteric home in the Fraternity she founded. Dion Fortune was at first a member of the Order of the Golden Dawn, under Mrs McGregor Mathers, and later transferred to the Order Stella Matutina. Because of this, her general outlook was that of the G.D.

An extensive contact with psychic and occult matters through my work with my first teacher, together with a great deal of independent personal experience in the psychic and occult fields, enabled me to make use of the material given me in the Fraternity in a distinct way. Based upon my own personal psychism, plus the body of teaching received from these several sources, my books have been written to help others to attain to some of the glimpses of reality which it has been my good fortune to have received myself.

In the new age which we are now entering, revolutionary changes are taking place, and the esoteric schools must, to some extent at least, adjust themselves to the new tempo of life if they are to be of service to humanity. It has to be recognized that, like many other venerable institutions, the esoteric fraternities have accumulated much unnecessary lumber in their passage through the centuries. Some of this lumber is to be found embedded in the rituals of the Fraternities (like the fossil in the rock), and it has a certain secondary value, since it links the present-day consciousness with the primitive levels of the archetypes in the collective unconscious of the race. However, there is much which could be jettisoned with advantage, and those who

rule in the lodges must needs grasp this nettle if they are to deal effectively with the people and conditions of the changing world.

Bread and wine and a validly ordained priest are all that are necessary to the offering of the Catholic Oblation. In a similar way, the essentials of esoteric science are far fewer than many would have us realize. It should not be forgotten that just as Our Lord likened the Kingdom of Heaven to a wise householder who brings forth from his treasures things *old and new*, so must the esoteric schools achieve balance in this new age by developing a new approach. This must be done by building upon the true foundations which were shown them in olden times "in the mount", a structure which may be integrated into the life and work of today.

With one such endeavour I am myself associated, and it remains to be seen how successful we may be in presenting this new image of the Mysteries to the world. To this end I have written and lectured on the subject of "magic" in order that some of the distortions of the medieval days may be removed and the light of the ageless wisdom shine more clearly in these days of change and turmoil.

The continuity of family, social and national life has been disrupted by two great world wars, and the shadow of nuclear war hangs over all the world today. Under these conditions it is natural for many people to attempt to find stability by joining one or another of the arcane schools; particularly those schools which claim an ancient lineage. These fraternities, by their venerable ancestry, give to these people a feeling of security which they do not find in the outer world. This, however, is "escapism" and although we may withdraw from the world in this way, our only justification (apart from a relatively few special cases) is that in such a retreat we may contact energies which will enable us to resume the struggle with renewed vigour. It is well to remember, however, that "refreshment" follows upon "labour", and it is only those who have fulfilled their rightful service who receive their just dues.

In the new presentation of the esoteric philosophy this point is being strongly emphasized, for it is in what an

initiate of the Mysteries *is*, rather than in what he *says*, that he really serves humanity. I believe the idea of the collective unconscious of the race, so carefully outlined by the psychologist C. G. Jung, to be a true concept, and, if we look at the esoteric schools from this standpoint, I think we can see how the initiate works. "No man is an island." Whether we talk of the "collective unconscious", or the *Anima Mundi*, or the "astral light", we are compelled to view each individual as being intrinsically linked with all his fellows, and indeed with all evolving life. Under these conditions he is constantly affecting, and being affected by, all other individuals and he lives in this great "group soul", if we may so describe it. One of the virtues of an esoteric school is that it forms a separate group within the greater group. Because it is linked with the collective unconscious on the one hand, and on the other is in touch with the collective super-consciousness (what the mystics have defined as the divine ground within the soul) its members are enabled to modify the tainted unconscious of the race by means of the divine energies which they can, and must, contact and direct if they are to be occultists in any real sense.

That this might be understood has been the underlying theme of all my writing, and will continue so to be in whatever I may write in the future.

"New Mansions for New Men." The age demands them and they will be built. However, it must also be remembered that the "mansions" referred to in Bible lore were the *mansioni*, the road stations of the Roman world, places where rest and refreshment could be obtained before one set out once more upon the way. In the end, it is eternally true that, as an Eastern saying (attributed to the Lord Jesus) has it:—"This world is a Bridge; pass over it, but build no House thereon".

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I AM not giving an extensive bibliography in connection with the subject of this book. The published books dealing with it fall into two main classes: those written to attack the philosophy of the Qabalah, and those written to defend it. The former are usually characterized by a pedantic dry-as-dust approach, and the latter by a credulous enthusiasm which defeats its own ends. A few books have appeared which were free from these distortions. These were, in the main, written by members of the esoteric fraternities. The first of these, in order of time and importance is, of course, *The Kabbalah Unveiled* by MacGregor Mathers. It is still in print, and although in many respects it needs revision, it is still a very useful book. The second book, which is still in print, is *The Mystical Kabbalah* by Dion Fortune, published by Williams & Norgate. This book contains the teaching which was received by those who were taught by Dion Fortune herself, and it is of the greatest value. Since its original publication, however, much water has passed under the bridges, and some of the teaching of *The Mystical Qabalah* is due for restatement. This has been done in two volumes entitled *A Practical Guide to Occult Symbolism* by Gareth Knight.

There are several other books on the Qabalah, but they are mostly written from the aloof intellectual angle, and are generally antagonistic to any esoteric ideas. For this reason I have not referred to them. Those who are interested can locate them through the usual channels.

The writings of Dr F. I. Regardie contain a very great deal of information on the Qabalah, as also do the four volumes of *The Golden Dawn*, published by the Aries Press, Chicago. These latter need to be read with discrimination, however.

A very interesting little book, *The Sepher Yetzirah*, by one of the founders of the Golden Dawn, the late Dr Wynn Westcott, is much deeper than its size suggests, and is best tackled after some preliminary work on more elementary expositions of the Qabalistic philosophy.

A word on esoteric publications may not be out of place here. They fall into three classes; those which are, in the main the results of direct personal experience on the part of their writers, those which are the result of much careful "scissors and paste" work, and which smell much more of the library atmosphere than the incense of the Lodge, and the greater number which are fiction of various grades. Cynics, of course, would lump the first and third classes together, and, indeed, much of what is claimed to be true teaching is so adulterated by the fictional element as to partially justify the critics.

A great deal of the material which has been regarded as the peculiar property of the "arcane" societies is, in point of fact, "public domain",

as a series of visits to the British Museum Reading Room will prove. In this connection it may be noted that the word "arcane", which is applied to the esoteric fraternities, has the meaning of something deposited in a chest, and this is what has been done by very many esoteric brotherhoods. The available material has been treated as very, very secret, and doled out to the brethren as a special revelation. It is to the credit of the Society of the Inner Light, which was founded on a Golden Dawn contact by "Dion Fortune", that it has released much of its teaching for incorporation in Gareth Knight's two volumes. This includes not only the basic esoteric concepts, but the results obtained by their practice.

We are, as it were, working with a kaleidoscope, where, in addition to the usual number of coloured fragments, new pieces are introduced as the result of that working. The resultant patterns produced by this state of affairs are the justification for our practice. For all our writings are but as approximate symbols of that to which they point; they are indeed signposts on the way. By their use, we may make direct contact with the realities which now we perceive only "as in a glass, darkly", or, as the New English Bible has it, as "puzzling reflections in a mirror".

Many of us have been brought by vision and experience to the realization of the invisible concourse of forces; the field in which all life is working out its destiny, and it is with these forces and with Those who direct them that mankind, consciously or otherwise is directly concerned.

It remains to indicate some of the books which have been written on the subject of mysticism, and here I have decided to include works which are characteristic of both Christian and non-Christian mysticism.

Foremost in the list of books which deal with specific Christian mysticism are the works of that great Anglican writer Evelyn Underhill. Of these, the best is possibly her *Mysticism*. One who follows her very closely in point of value is Fr Poulaine, the Roman Catholic, whose book *The Graces of Interior Prayer* is of the greatest value to the student of the mystical tradition. That great work by Baron F. Von Hugel, who was one of the greatest of Roman Catholic lay theologians, *The Mystical Element in Religion*, as displayed in the lines of St Catherine of Genoa and her friends, is also a work of real value. We then come to *Studies in Mysticism* by A. E. Waite, a fine book, though marred somewhat by the peculiar style of its author. At the same time it ascends to the heights of poetic expression and, indeed, sublimity.

We now come to non-Christian mysticism, and one of the best, serving as a bridge between the two traditions is *Rational Mysticism* by W. Kingsland. Selections from the works of the Sufi mystic Jalāh al-Dīn Rūmī are to be found in one of the books entitled "The Wisdom of the East" series. It is a compilation by F. Hadland Davis. Another Sufi mystic, Al Ghazālī is also included in "The Wisdom of the East" series of books. *The Secret of the Golden Flower*, a Chinese classic on the

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mystical life translated by Wilhelm and Jung, gives an excellent idea of one of the classic Chinese systems, whilst the various books on Zen Buddhism which are appearing at the present day will give a fair outline of basic Buddhist belief.

What is really required is a work which approaches this subject from a sympathetic but unbiased point of view, but for this I am afraid we shall have to wait for some time.

**Other books by W. E. Butler . . .**

# **APPRENTICED TO MAGIC**

**The Path to Magical Attainment**

Designed to liberate the latent magical powers *we all possess*, this book takes the form of a series of personal instructions from a *guru* to his *chela*. The author claims that if his advice is read properly, meditated upon, and followed up, it will bring those who are ready to the Doors of the Mysteries.

W. E. Butler was a noted exponent of the Western Magical Tradition and readers will not find any yogic feats or oriental marvels in these pages. What they will experience, however, is exhilarating contact with the mind of an esoteric craftsman, an inestimable privilege for anyone who aspires to initiation into Western magical practice.

All magic starts from within, so the paraphernalia of ritual and accessories are aids whereby the inner powers may be summoned forth. In the Western Tradition these things are imparted by an age-old technique. Butler promises: "If you follow this technique in its entirety, then at a certain stage the key to your own inner kingdom will be placed in your hand, and you will be able to change the gears of consciousness at will."

The opening lessons are basic exercises in meditation and the training of one's visualizing power. Then follows teaching on The Tree of Life, "the mighty, all-embracing glyph of the universe and the soul of man." Behind the Tree is a great body of philosophic and theosophic doctrine known as the Qabalah.

*Other contents include:* The art of projecting thought images; How to make and use a magic mirror or 'speculum'; The two forms of astral projection; How to project the 'body of light'; How to contact and assimilate the energies for lodge working through the *Kether* and *Malkuth* centres; How to bring these forces into the etheric body; Ritual and ceremonial in lodge working; The work of the fraternities.

# MAGIC

## Its Ritual, Power and Purpose

The aim of the genuine magician, says W. E. Butler, is to realize that True Self of which his earthly personality is but the mask.

In this book is to be found a remarkably concise explanation of the ancient uses, ritual and true aims of Magic. The author sweeps away the confusion caused by the many misconceptions, and surveys the history of Magic from the 'old religion' of pre-Christian times through to the discoveries of modern psychology. And it is, he declares, with the modern school of psychology, particularly Jungian, that the magician finds his closest link with modern thought.

Although repressed and persecuted throughout the ages, magic never ceased to exist in the Western World. Behind the scenes the magical tradition ran like one of the underground rivers of the Peak district, emerging now and then into the light of day, and then disappearing again beneath the surface.

One such emergence was the Order of the Temple, whose members, the Knights Templar, have been cleared of much of the odium cast upon them by their persecutors; the Albigenses in France were another; the Brethren of the Golden and Rosy Cross, the Illuminati, the Magnetists, the Theosophists, and the numerous magical Orders and Fraternities which appeared in the latter half of the nineteenth century, were others. Of these, the most famous is the 'Order of the Golden Dawn'. Built upon an alleged Rosicrucian foundation, it brought into one magnificent synthesis all the floating magical threads and, in spite of many vicissitudes and divisions, it still remains the fountain-head of the Western magical tradition.

Magic, far from being an irrational superstition, is based upon profound psychological laws, and possesses its own special technique. Here is a most useful preliminary guide to any study 'in depth' of an admittedly vast subject.

# **AN INTRODUCTION TO TELEPATHY**

**Experiences and Experiments**

Reveals the fascinating truth about an amazing human faculty. W. E. Butler describes the physical, psychical and psychological conditions necessary for successful experimentation in thought transference; gives clear instructions for senders and receivers; and explains the telepathic aspect of superphysical healing and thought-forms. Special breathing and relaxing exercises are provided for beginners in telepathic experiments.

In this remarkable book, W. E. Butler has endeavoured to present, in simpler form, the results obtained by some of the foremost investigators of telepathy, but mainly it contains the result of his own experiences and experiments into the hidden powers of human beings.

## **HOW TO DEVELOP CLAIRVOYANCE**

**Everybody's Guide to Supernormal  
Sense Perception**

Provides training techniques for developing the clairvoyant powers we all possess, but which have become dormant after centuries of neglect. The book includes detailed instructions for scrying (crystal-gazing), and author reveals how to construct four satisfactory substitutes for a crystal, as crystals are expensive to purchase—but not essential in order to experience the fascinating psychic 'vision' described in these pages.

*Part contents:* The voluntary and involuntary nervous system; Extension of physical sight; Psychological clairvoyance; Three levels of perception; Atmospheres, Clairvoyance in space and time; Astral clairvoyance; Non-human intelligences.

# **HOW TO READ THE AURA**

**Its Character and Function in Everyday Life**

It is said that the spiritual aura of Buddha extended for two hundred miles. In this unusual book W. E. Butler explains ways by which auric sight may be developed, including a method of viewing the aura by direct vision. The aura is usually seen as a luminous atmosphere around all living things and inanimate matter; a composite emanation from several electrical 'fields of force' circulating throughout the etheric body and its dense material counterpart.

*Part contents:* The field of force; The etheric aura; The spiritual aura; Etheric leakage; Psychic vampirism and etheric parasites; Western classification of the chakras.

# **HOW TO DEVELOP PSYCHOMETRY**

**The Power to Interpret 'the Soul of Things'**

Just as the magnetic tape of a cassette player has imprinted upon itself words or music which may be heard again and again, so objects have recorded upon them the emotions, passions and thoughts generated by their owners. This book reveals psychic techniques for 'sensing' the records impressed on such objects as necklaces, letters, talismans and charms.

W. E. Butler had over fifty years of practical experience in the field of psychometry. The many aspects of the subject he discusses in this book include: Evidential statements; The Akashic Records; The ability to observe; Presentation of the evidence; Controlling emotional reactions; Psychometrical sensings; The two 'memories'; Techniques of sensing; Colour symbolism; Experiments for greater proficiency.