

ETHERIC VISION
AND
WHAT IT REVEALS

BY

A STUDENT

Second Edition

THE ROSICRUCIAN FELLOWSHIP

Mount Ecclesia

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Max Heindel, spiritual Initiate and messenger of the Rosicrucian Brotherhood, was born in Denmark on July 23, 1865. He became a shipping engineer and eventually immigrated to the United States. By 1905 he had become seriously interested in the study of metaphysics and spent the next few years consciously working and searching for spiritual Truths. When he was visiting Germany in 1907, the Elder Brother of the Rose Cross who became his Teacher made contact with him on the inner planes. He was instructed in the etheric Temple of the Rose Cross, receiving the occult Teachings that he eventually incorporated into *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception*, published in November 1909. He founded *The Rosicrucian Fellowship* in August 1909, and spent his remaining years, until January 6, 1919, writing, lecturing, establishing Fellowship Headquarters in Oceanside, California, and generally spreading the Teachings of Esoteric Christianity—the pioneer spiritual Teachings which will prepare all humanity for the New Age of Aquarius, when all nations will join in Universal Brotherhood.



ROSICRUCIAN SYMBOLISM

“Divine symbols which have been given to mankind from time to time speak to that forum of truth which is within our hearts, and waken our consciousness to divine ideas entirely beyond words.”—Max Heindel. The Emblem of the Western Mystery School of the Rosicrucians is one such symbol: in its entirety it represents God in manifestation. It expresses the key to man’s past evolution, his present constitution, his future development, and the method of attainment.

The blue background represents God the Father; the golden star symbolizes Christ born within the spiritual aspirant and radiating from the five points—the head and four limbs; the red roses indicate the purification of the human desire nature on the cross of matter—the blood of the aspirant cleansed from passion. The white rose symbolizes purity of heart and also the larynx with which, once purified, humanity will speak the Creative Word. The white cross represents the physical body. The golden star represents the “Golden Wedding Garment”—the etheric vehicle which the Spirit builds during lifetimes of purity and service.

Another reading shows that the cross also indicates plant, animal and human life-waves. The lower limb is the plant nourished through the roots with spiritual currents from the Earth; man, the upper limb, receives spiritual influences from the Sun through the head; animals are sustained by spiritual currents horizontally surrounding the Earth.

The lamp of wisdom and the heart show the two streams of evolving humanity: those following the path of intellect (occult) and those following the path of love (mystic). There can be no contradiction in Nature, therefore the heart and the mind must be capable of uniting. Eventual union of head and heart will signify the Perfected Man.

At the foot of the page is the *fleur-de-lis*, the emblem of the Trinity—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—but as only the Father and Holy Spirit were active at the time here represented, we find but two of the petals colored with red, thus showing energy.

The beings created we see as a stream flowing upwards, provided with two bodies, the dense and the vital, but after a time the desire body is added and is shown by the red appearing in the ascending stream.

Although each stream looks alike outwardly, they are vastly different. The one on the left is known in our literature as the Sons of Cain. They are full of positive energy and are the *craftsmen* of the world, the *phree-messen*, who carve their way through life, rather enjoying the

obstacles which they know strengthen the character; they work through the intellect, as is shown by the lamp from the flame of which proceed *nine* rays, showing the positive path chosen by the esoteric student.

The other stream develops the heart side of life, and the divine flame proceeding from it shows but *eight* rays, a negative path; those following it desiring that they should have a leader; someone to follow, someone to worship; they are the *churchmen* of the world who obey the teachings of their leaders.

Each stream of life flows onward side by side till a time comes when the wise and loving ones guiding the evolution decide that to hasten progress it is necessary that the two unite, and plan that this shall be accomplished by the building of a temple for the worshippers by the craftsmen and that both streams would unite in a Mystical Molten Sea. We can see the wonderful impulse by the chalice raised from each and filled with the red wine of life. You will read the story of this in the building of Solomon's Temple. This plan was frustrated by the treachery of the Sons of Seth—those on the right. And after this each swung further away from the other than before.

A serious condition now is shown in which some appear to fall away entirely through materialism. But still the race lives on, the churchman and the scientist, the mystic and the occultist, each pursuing their own path independent of the other, till a stage of such materialism is reached that the spiritual guiders see grave dangers ahead. To prevent the plan of evolution being defeated, a great destruction of the human bodies is permitted which for a time looks as if it would wipe humanity off the earth. See the break in each stream. But this calamity has the desired effect: we now see again great force and each stream turned directly toward the other, where they may shortly unite as one. At the foot of the page we find another symbol, so small that you may have overlooked it. Here is a small black cross that represents the physical body. In the enlarged head of the cross is seen the heart. Heart and head have united and the result is shown in the spreading ray—the resultant soul body.

FOREWORD

THE material in this booklet is a reprint (with some revisions and additions) of monthly lessons sent out by The Rosicrucian Fellowship to its members, and is a summary of studies and researches conducted by the students in the Esoteric Section of the Fellowship. The conclusions reached, as is often the case in scientific investigations, may have to be revised in the light of future development and work.

Although Max Heindel had not completed his researches in the ethers at the time of his passing in January 1919, he left a substantial foundation and what he gave is standing up well under the impact of even the latest scientific findings. He stated many times that the Brothers of the Rose Cross work through scientists and with science; they do not limit their activities to students and probationers of The Rosicrucian Fellowship, nor to any other specific group. Theirs is an endeavor for *all* humanity, pointing toward the actual establishment of universal brotherhood on our earth.

The Western Wisdom Teachings were given in a basic form through Max Heindel; a basic physical science comes forth through academic representatives. Mankind, consciously and unconsciously, are preparing the Aquarian Age, when science will be religious and religion scientific. Meanwhile each aspirant must add his small bit to the ever-extending coral reef of knowledge.

Max Heindel has intimated that when the Aquarian Age dawns, some six hundred years from now or perhaps before that, a new Teacher will appear who will sum up in himself and his Teachings the composite wisdom of our entire past evolution. This great Teacher of the Aquarian Age, he intimates again, will be the reappearance of that Ego who was known in Europe as Christian Rosenkreuz, and again as the Count St. Germain who, he believes, may have been one of his public incarnations.

In addition to the Teacher of the Aeon however, a messenger is also sent out once in each century from the “Invisible Government of the World,” called in occultism “The Great White Lodge.” Occultists everywhere now agree that between the present year, 1965, and the year 2000, or shortly thereafter, one of these teachers will come forward. The direction of these teachings we may know by the trend of our time universalism in science and religion, preparing for the “One World” of Aquaria, under the banner of Christ; and the thrust outward into interstellar space and new cosmic adventures for the human Spirit, and a truly cosmic philosophy to go with it.

Man’s immediate Utopia is no mere city on earth’s surface, nor any of earth’s lands, but the whole living universe, through which the mystic hears the rushing of the Wings of God and the unceasing Song of His World.

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PART I—THE CHEMICAL ETHER

1—The Nature of Etheric Sight

In 1918 Max Heindel wrote: “The process of preparation for the Aquarian Age has already commenced; and as Aquarius is an airy, scientific, intellectual sign, it is a foregone conclusion that the new faith must be rooted in reason and able to solve the riddle of life and death in a manner that will satisfy both the mind and the religious instinct.” As we have in the past evolved five senses by means of which we contact the present visible world, so shall we in the far distant future evolve another sense which will enable us to see the denizens of the Etheric Region, including those of our dear ones who have left the physical body and inhabit the ether and lower Desire World during the first stage of their career in the spiritual realms.

“Aquarius is an airy sign having special rule over the ethers.” The flood which sank the ancient continent of Atlantis, which is the Noachian Deluge of the Bible, dried the air to a degree “by depositing most of the moisture it held into the sea; but when the Sun enters Aquarius by precession, still more of the moisture will be eliminated and the visual vibrations which are most easily transmitted by the dry etheric atmosphere will become more intense, thus conditions will be more particularly conducive to production of the slight extension of our present sight

necessary to open our eyes to the etheric region. California's production of psychics is an instance of this effect of a dry, electric atmosphere, although of course it is not nearly so dry as the air of the Aquarian Age will be."

"But it is well to realize that through *aspiration* and *meditation* those who are longingly looking for that day are taking time by the forelock, and may quite easily outstrip their fellows who are unaware of what is in store. The latter, on the other hand, may delay development of the extended vision by the belief that they are suffering from hallucinations when they begin to get their first glimpse of the etheric entities, and the fear that if they tell others what they see they will be judged insane.

"Therefore The Rosicrucian Fellowship has been charged by the Elder Brothers with the mission of promulgating the Gospel of the Aquarian Age, to conduct a campaign of education and enlightenment so that the world may be prepared for what is in store. The world must be leavened with these ideas:

"(1) Conditions in the land of the living dead are not shrouded in mystery, but knowledge of them is as available as knowledge concerning foreign countries from the tales of travelers. (2) We stand close to the threshold where we shall know these truths; and (3), most important of all, we shall hasten the day in our own case by acquiring knowledge of the facts concerning the postmortem existence and the things we may expect to see; for then we shall know what to look for and will be neither frightened, astonished, nor incredulous when we commence to obtain glimpses of these things."

However, wonderful as these developments are—and because they are wonderful—a responsibility attends them. “Students should realize that a serious responsibility goes with the possession of knowledge, for to whom much is given, of him much shall be required; and if we bury our talent, may we not expect a merited condemnation? The Rosicrucian Fellowship can fulfill its mission only in so far as each member does his duty in spreading the Teachings [*and in living the life*], and therefore it is to be hoped that this may serve to call attention of students to the fact of their individual duty.”

But let there be no misunderstanding on the nature of this duty. We are not appointed to build up a powerful organization, with great wealth, imposing buildings, and hundreds of thousands of dues-paying members. Our duty is simply to spread the truths pertaining to the New Age, in such ways as circumstances may determine. We do not have to mention the word “Rosicrucian” nor “The Rosicrucian Fellowship;” but if we are asked as to the source of our knowledge then it is our privilege, as well as our duty, to speak the truth, and to give our spiritual background. And of course we should not force our views upon unwilling ears.

Mental hospitals today are full of cases of so-called nervous and mental breakdowns which are in fact nothing else than persons suffering from exposure to psychic forces which they do not understand, and as a result of which they are nervously and emotionally exhausted and go in deadly fear. These conditions are caused by the over-stimulation of the great nerve center of the solar plexus, before the

higher centers in the brain have come into play sufficiently to extend a measure of control.

We touch upon this issue only in passing, as a symptom of the sensitization which occurs as the Aquarian Age approaches. It is not only the solar plexus which receives such stimulation from cosmic forces, but other nerve centers, also, including the optic nerve and the brain areas having to do with vision, which in this case is the extended vision pertaining to the etheric region.

Etheric sight ordinarily depends upon the sensitiveness of the optic nerve, but even when the optic nerve is defective or destroyed, it may be that etheric vision can be developed through the use of substitute nerve channels. We are told that much of the defective vision found among us today is due to the increasing densification of the ethers, which is part of the over-all effect of the solar radiation when the Sun nears Aquarius at the vernal equinox by precession.

By means of etheric sight it is possible to see everything that exists in the Etheric Region of the physical world. When this vision first develops it reveals the lowest, or Chemical Ether, which varies from gray-blue, through blue, to violet, or a dark blue that is almost black. Max Heindel speaks of the Chemical Ether as "dark, almost black." Because of the interplay or intermingling of the other ethers in the Chemical Ether, this ether may also seem to be reddish-blue, magenta, violet, or purple, according to the density of the ethers.

When anyone views an object with etheric sight he sees *through* the object in a manner similar to the way an

X-ray penetrates solid substance. It is therefore called X-ray vision, although this is by no means an accurate description. In viewing an object with etheric vision the seer sees first the outer part, then the next adjacent part, and finally on through to the farther side of the object. One may have higher grades of sight (Desire World vision, mental, etc.) and yet not have etheric sight. By means of etheric sight one can see through books, papers, letters, wall, or anything else for a short distance.

In the Aquarian Age when many will have etheric sight it will be extremely easy to study anatomy and to detect a morbid growth, a dislocation, or a pathological condition of the body, for with this vision the doctor will be able to study directly both anatomical structures and physiological processes without hindrance.

As the New Age advances, the masses will develop etheric sight, and with this widespread development it will be largely impossible for one to live a double life and to act differently in the home than one does in public. Were we aware now of the invisible entities thronging our houses, we should often feel ashamed of the things we do and say. The various kinds of entities filling the air are attracted to people who are of like nature with themselves, whether good or evil, and these entities cannot be mistaken for anything but what they are. Deception is impossible because these entities are low on the path of evolution and have not the intelligence to retain a disguise very long at a time, but must, sooner or later, expose their true inner quality.

But whether seen or unseen, the invisible etheric

entities feed on the Life Ether of the person to whom they are attracted, if they are permitted to linger in the aura. Consequently they not only tend to influence such persons toward evil, but they also weaken their vital body; and this leads to such cases of nerve exhaustion as result in partial possession or obsession. It is as impossible to rid the aura of such entities without a complete moral and emotional cleansing as to stamp out malaria without draining the swamps and pools where the malaria mosquito breeds.

Where the atmosphere is full of such entities, revealing unerringly the condition of psychic and mental uncleanness of those who entertain them, and when in the New Age virtually everyone has the power to see them, there will be no way of hiding what our prevailing character may be. "There will be no privacy which may not be broken into by any one who desires to see us. It will avail nothing that we send the office boy or maid out to tell an unwelcome visitor that we are 'not in.' This means that in the New Age honesty and straightforwardness will be the only worthwhile policy, for we cannot then do wrong and hope to escape detection. There will be people whose weaknesses of character lead them in the ways of wickedness then as now, but they will at least be marked so that they may be avoided."

Concerning etheric vision Max Heindel says further: (MS 590-1): "Experience has proved that the afflicted stellar ray from certain parts of the Zodiac already mentioned interferes with the etheric vibration sensed by the retina of the eye, and thus impairs the physical sight. If, in the same figure, Neptune is focused through one of these

places, the so-called ‘blind spot,’ which is *blind* because unresponsive to the etheric mercurial vibrations, is sensitized by the spiritual ray of Neptune (i.e. the spinal spirit fire), and thus it may be that a person physically near-sighted, or even blind, may view the spiritual worlds hidden from people whose sight is focused by mercurial vibrations” (in the nerves, ruled by Mercury).

And again (*Letters To Students* p.82): “We do not see physical objects *outside* the eye:* they are reflected on the retina, and we see only their ‘image’ *inside* the eye. As light is the agent of reflection, objects which resist the passage of light appear opaque; other substances, like glass, seem clear because they admit light rays readily. When the spiritual sight is used, light of superlative intensity is generated *inside* the body between the pituitary body and the pineal gland. It is focused ‘through’ the so-called blind spot in the eye directly upon the object to be investigated. The scope of the direct ray is entirely different from the range of the reflected physical ray. It penetrates a wall without difficulty.”

*Recent findings seem to suggest that the function of the retina is more analytical and selective than was formerly believed, but this does not affect the correctness of the above in reference to etheric sight.

2—The Chemical Ether in the Human Body

The etheric region of the Earth's planetary envelope is part and parcel of the physical Earth itself. It is not "spiritual" except in the sense that the entire living universe is the expression of God's beauty and wisdom. It is commonly called "the lowest" of the invisible "spirit" regions, and etheric sight is also called "the lowest" form of "spiritual" sight. "Lowest" it may be, but it reveals a world lying just beyond the borderline of physical sight, magical to those fortunate enough to gaze upon it.

There are several kinds of vision besides the physical which belongs to the normal human eye. We have said that etheric vision depends in part upon the sensitization of the optic nerve. It depends also on a certain degree of looseness between the etheric body and the physical. In primitive races this looseness of the etheric body results in entire populations having a degree of etheric vision, so that the existence of fairies and spirits is never doubted, and magic, both white and black, flourishes. Such people are so responsive to psychic force projected at them by occult practitioners that they have been known to lie down and die from no discoverable physical cause. This condition is due to the etheric body being pushed out, in whole or in part, from the physical body, as occurs also in the process of hypnosis. We know of one instance where one person, holding the hand of a girl belonging to a more primitive race, by a little effort of concentration, and without intending it, drove the etheric double out of the girl's hand and arm, which became cold, clammy, and inert. This girl was highly intelligent, showing that looseness of the

etheric body does not infer weakness of intellect in these primitive races. In fact they are often very bright mentally.

Hypnotism should not be confused with mesmerism or magnetism; there are real magnetic currents which flow through the vital body, visible as radiating lines of force, and which can be sensed as electrical in nature. Concentrated by an effort of will, they become dense and almost physically tangible. Many persons have seen what they call “magnetic rain” in the atmosphere. This fall of magnetic force is not the same as the “cosmic rays” of modern physics, however. It is susceptible to control by the human will—which, so far as presently known, the cosmic rays are not—and can be directed in various ways. The magnetic forces have some connection with the biological life process; it is not *merely* electromagnetism, although it is quite obviously capable of acting in that area; as shown in the laboratory experiments where nerve currents have been proved to be a form of electricity.

Occult science has shown—long before physical science entered the field—that the forces which run through the nervous system are electromagnetic in nature, and that their diminution or blockage may result in paralysis. It is this magnetic aura which modern biology is exploring, within which every organ of the body has its positive and negative pole; and some, like the heart, having more than one set of poles. The heart has been found to have twelve poles, alternating negative and positive.

Again, it is this magnetic aura which binds the molecules of the body into their organic patterns; and the Invisible Helper is sometimes aware of streams of magnetism flowing through the inner planes when he

awakens out of the body at night.

Many persons who have developed a small degree of etheric sight have expressed astonishment when first beholding showers of stars, pyramids, double pyramids, cubes and other geometrical forms issuing from the body. Such figures are the cast-off molecules of which his body is composed and which are being excreted through the action of the radiating vital forces of the etheric body. Students who are interested in making an analysis of these figures may consult scientific magazines and books in which the molecular structure of matter is indicated. There they will find that each molecule has its own characteristic atomic structure, which occult investigators have been describing under another terminology.

Note that these microscopic crystals seem to have actual size and shape to the etheric vision. (Sometimes they appear in large clusters). We can understand from this why the seers were not at first able to explain what they saw in terms of laboratory science. This has not been possible until our own twentieth century, with its development of atomic and nuclear physics.

In occult science, the Chemical, Life, Light, and Reflecting Ethers correspond to the four classic elements: Fire, Earth, Air, and Water, as mentioned before. No doubt a new table will have to be constructed to accommodate the new science of our day, but for the layman the old classification is still usable.

The Chemical Ether (corresponding to the element Earth) is that ether through which forces act to sustain and nourish the body. This process includes eliminating what is not good for the body, and the elimination takes place by

means of forces acting through the negative pole of the Chemical Ether, as we read in the *Cosmo-Conception*, whereas the upbuilding and nourishing forces act through the positive pole. When food has been digested and has entered the blood stream, it is visible to the etheric vision as a mass of ether which flows along magnetic lines of force. Without this etheric counterpart of the chemical elements found in the physical blood stream, the food we eat would do no good to the body. There are points deep within the body where to etheric vision the blood seems to be almost wholly gaseous, but biological science of course has found no evidence of this at the present time, partly because the biologist does not expect to find such a condition and partly because his instruments are not adequate to its discovery. The gaseous aspect of the blood could be discovered only in a living, unutilated body. X-rays cannot show it, nor can any of the other rays now in the hands of the physicist.

Poisons which build up in the blood stream are visible to etheric sight as black miasma which hangs in curls from the afflicted parts. To the etheric sense of touch, this black miasma feels heavy, and in fact, the heavy feeling which accompanies illness is in part due to the accumulation of large masses of black ether in the body. Water carries much of it away, which is the reason that baths give a feeling of lightness and resiliency; but when the body is sick it continues to generate these poisonous ethers, which then obstruct the passage of the clean solar magnetism or "solar ether" as it is also called. This is particularly true of the center at the root of the nose, which becomes clogged with miasma to a superlative degree, and when through

spiritual healing and the etheric manipulation of the Invisible Helper this clogging is broken up, there is an immediate improvement. The dense miasma in the vital body also has a part in obstructing the opening of etheric vision by slowing down the action of the etheric force centers. Coincident with the densification of the ethers into a black miasma, the rest of the vital body becomes attenuated, for the physical body is drawing upon it just as in starvation the stored fat is drawn upon, leaving the body to become emaciated. Actual “holes” develop in the etheric structure, showing that energy is not being specialized by the vital body.

It is at once apparent that the black miasma belongs to the Chemical Ether, which normally, as indicated before, varies in color from blue-gray, through blue-violet, to a blue so dark as to be almost black, depending upon the density of the ethers.

Various persons have seen this ether lying like a blue glove upon the hand, as a blue envelope in which the body is embedded, and as blue fuzzy flames, like a low gas flame, appearing along wall surfaces. Now physicists have shown photographs of free electrons, and these free electrons have the appearance of blue flames—not perhaps exactly as described by persons having etheric vision, but something similar, and suggesting that the Chemical Ether does, in all probability, consist of atomic particles existing in a state as yet undiscovered by physical science; not electrons alone, but an amalgam of particles. This Chemical Ether would be a kind of life-plasma, as shown in Max Heindel’s description of the etheric “food stream” moving in or with the blood.*

A great many people see the “dots” in the air, which seem to be gold or silver dust (or sometimes multicolored, and which sometimes move in great cloud-like masses before the vision. Ancient seers have described these clouds, out of which “the spirits of the ancestors” would condense and materialize before the physical eyes. This is again a view of the Chemical Ether, as it appears in materialization from etheric to physical formation.

*The word “plasma” has several definitions in today’s science.

(1) Blood plasma, the liquid part of the blood used in blood transfusions.

(2) A condition of matter in a molten state at high temperatures in which it becomes abnormally conductive of electricity.

(3) A highly ionized gas, which produces a rosy glow (as seen in a stellarator), and is a medium in which radio waves can have a phase velocity greater than the speed of light in that medium. When microwaves are sent through the plasma of ionized gas, the increase in velocity is a measure of the density of the free electrons.

(4) Astronomers similarly to definition three describe a sort of magnetic cloud in interplanetary space in which positive and negative particles are suspended, but the cloud as a whole is neutral in charge.

(3) and (4) approach states which the occultist refers to as etheric.

3—Atoms and Molecules

Without entering upon a discussion of atomic structure, which in any case demands specialized knowledge, it is evident that a rough correlation can be worked out as between the four ethers and the various atomic forces presently known. The greatest part of the mass of the atom resides in the nucleus, which consists of a complex of forces or particles: the heaviest are the proton, weighing 1836 times as much as the electron, and the neutron, which as its name suggests is neither positive nor negative. Protons and neutrons alike are called nucleons because they are part of the nucleus. Still smaller particles have been discovered, some in the nucleus and some falling through space. Scientists are searching among these for the “binder” of the nucleus, which as we have seen is not wholly positive as was originally believed, since it actually consists of more than just the positively charged proton.

The first popularly accepted model of the atom as compared with the Sun and planets is also now challenged. According to this first concept, the proton stood in the place of the Sun, positively charged, and the electrons circulated around the proton like planets around the Sun. The electrons are negative in charge. Now it is suggested that quite possibly, since the electron acts like a wave as well as a particle, and is described as a bundle of energy, the electron may in reality be a wave which completely encircles the central nucleus, with its complex of particles and forces.

However, while there are several diagrammatic schemes, or models to represent atomic structure, all stand in need of verification. It may be that the old solar-system model may still have its use.

We note further that the physicist says that the Earth's aura of electrons extends out to the Moon, which is therefore within the Earth's electric atmosphere. This is an obvious restating of the occultist's maxim that the "etheric body" of the Earth extends to and includes the Moon, and is the channel for continued magnetic interaction between the Moon and the Earth, especially as impinging upon and influencing growth of living organisms on the Earth.

The etheric vision reveals both molecules and atoms and the forces locked up within the atoms, and other forces and particles. Occult scientists have described them as best they could, but their vocabulary is not the vocabulary of modern science, and until a nuclear physicist develops the etheric vision or an occult scientist schools himself in nuclear physics, students will have a difficult time in equating their occult knowledge with modern physics and chemistry. A few scientists have admitted to the possession of extrasensory perception.

Kekule, the discoverer of the benzene ring, saw the structure of molecules in a dream, or something he calls a dream. He says: "The atoms began to play antics before mine eyes....I saw how two smaller ones often united to form a pair, how the two larger ones seized two of the smaller ones, and how the still larger held three or even four of the smaller, and *how they all moved in vortices*. I saw how the greater formed a row, and how the smaller

were drawn along at the side of the chain. I spent the night transferring to paper at least sketches of each of these dream pictures. Thus arose the structure theory....The benzene theory had a similar origin....The atoms again played antics before mine eyes. Small groups kept themselves modestly in the background. *My mind's eye, trained by repeated sights of a similar kind*, now distinguished larger forms of various shapes. Long rows united, becoming much thicker; all in a movement snake-like and turning. And see, what was that? One of the snakes seizes his own tail....I awoke as by a flash of lightning. This time also I spent the remainder of the night working out the consequences of the hypothesis."

Max Heindel has said in many places that the great Hierophants of the Mystery Schools are working with the modern scientist, and that they have always worked with scientists in the past; with the alchemists, for example, during the Middle Ages. Here is a sample of inner-plane help given to a modern scientist, whose standing is unchallenged.

Other scientists also have been helped by their budding clairvoyance; usually it is purely intellectual in nature, an illumined reason, but occasionally one does, for a brief moment, see with etheric vision into the atomic structure of matter, but dares not publish this to the world.

What is the relationship of molecules and atoms to the magnetic aura of which the occultist speaks and which science is now beginning to explore? Here we stand on the threshold of the second of the four ethers: the Life Ether.

Before proceeding further, however, let us review what

we are taught in the Rosicrucian Philosophy about our planet's own etheric envelope. The etheric envelope of the human organism is in fact a miniature replica of the etheric envelope of the Earth globe, and is representative of it in the way that a drop of seawater may be said to represent the ocean.

The physical Earth is surrounded and penetrated by an invisible globe which extends out into space a great distance beyond the atmosphere, traditionally, to the Moon, which is included within the etheric envelope of the Earth. This is the vital body of the Earth. This globe is composed of ether, of which there are four grades: the densest is called the Chemical Ether, and is closest to the Earth. The next is the Life Ether; then comes the Light Ether; and finally, the fourth and rarest, most attenuated, which is called the Reflecting Ether. Ether is substantial, but not physical in the sense that matter as we know it is physical. However, to the trained clairvoyant it is as tangible as the solids, liquids and gases of our common experience. In these ethers the clairvoyant sees the vital forces which give life to the mineral forms of plant, animal, and man. The etheric bodies of all beings that exist on the Earth partake of the Earth's vital body; and they also partake of the cosmic forces which flow through the planetary vital body.

The vital body has no power of itself; it is the channel through which the solar life forces pour into the physical body, and also it is the channel through which the dynamic energy of the desire body acts upon the physical to stir it to activity. The vital body determines the direction in which a

given force is used, but that force must be supplied from outside—or from “above,” if we are thinking in terms of the higher spiritual, mental, and psychic forces.

Just as the Earth’s envelope has its positive and negative poles in *each* sheath or layer from Chemical to Reflecting Ether, reflected at the physical level as the magnetic poles of the earth globe, so each sheath or level of man’s etheric body has its positive and negative pole, manifesting in opposite polarity in the two sexes. The Chemical Ether is predominantly positive in the male structure, negative in the female. The organs of the physical body have each their own magnetic field within the etheric body in general, each with at least one pair of poles, and some with more than one.

We have shown that the Chemical Ether is the medium of manifestation for the chemical forces which cause the formation of crystals, poetically explained as the loves and hates of atoms. Other forces in this ether promote assimilation, excretion, and growth. The color of the Chemical Ether is deep purplish, or indigo; sometimes amethystine or bluish violet, clear and transparent in its normal state, but dark to blackness when it carries disease, and then it is called miasma. Miasma is so dense that it is actually tangible even to persons without any particular occult development. Max Heindel described a case of illness in which black miasma enclosed the throat of the patient like a collar. He also described it as hanging in curls from the body, in the form in which it exuded from the magnetic atomic vortices of the vital body of the afflicted person.

The “forces” which act through and in the Chemical Ether will be described in a future discourse. We may say in passing, however, that these forces include living intelligences, a class of Nature Spirits, generally called Gnomes in the fairy mythology of the peoples: and other higher intelligences which direct their activities, among them Angels and the human spirits of those whom we call “dead.”*

*In common speech it is sometimes customary to speak of “magnetism” when what is really meant is the ether of the vital body itself. Magnetic healers speak of “throwing off magnetism” when they mean that diseased ethers are drawn off from the vital body of the patient and “thrown” down. This is not scientifically correct, as the student will understand from our discussion of the two lower ethers; but it is a common phrase and should be understood in its popular sense.

Thus Max Heindel says that this miasma, when drawn from the patient’s body, is subject to gravity and can be burned in a fire or carried away by water. “To the spiritual vision it is a dark or black jelly-like fluid. It lies shimmering and shivering on the floor. If now the patient gets up relieved, and goes over the place where this magnetism has been thrown away, then the miasma will re-enter the body and he or she will be in a worse condition than before.”

PART II—THE LIFE ETHER

4—The Life Ether and Genetics

The Life Ether is the avenue for the operation of forces which have as their primary object the perpetuation of the species—in terms of humankind, the building of new racial forms. The cosmic force which works in the Life Ether is the third Principle of Deity, the Creative Energy of God. The lesser forces working in this ether are, briefly, the Solar-Lunar Race God Jehovah (who works with planets having moons, though His cosmic focus is the solar orb); the Archangelic Race Spirit; the mother and father of each reincarnating Ego; the incarnating Ego itself; Nature Spirits; Angels and Archangels; and spirits belonging to the plant life wave, including the plant Group Spirits. (Minerals generally do not possess a Life Ether).

Like the other Ethers, the Life Ether has two poles, positive and negative. The positive pole predominates in the female structure, the negative pole in the male structure, the reason for this being that the female requires the extra portion of creative energy for the use of the infant body of the Ego who comes to her for rebirth. The forces that work along the positive pole are those which work in the female during gestation, enabling her to do this positive, active work of bringing forth a new living form. The forces which work along the negative pole of the Life

Ether enable the male to produce semen, in which the spermatozoon containing the seed atom of the dense body of the incoming Ego is deposited by the Angels.

The Angels are the warders and keepers of the propagative seed atoms of plant, animal, and man. When working with animals, the Angels are assisted by the desire body of the mother. When working with mankind they are further assisted by the desire body of the incarnating Ego itself.

When the Ego is ready to seek rebirth, the Recording Angels determine the sex of the body in which it shall function during that particular earth life, and the archetype is formed accordingly. The factor determining the sex is the Law of Alternation, unless this law is modified by specific circumstances established by the Ego in previous earth existences. The sex is therefore determined before the etheric matrix, made of Chemical and Life Ether, is built.

The law is: When the Life Ether matrix of the incarnating Ego is positive it attracts negative Chemical Ether and physical atoms, through the agency of forces which work along the positive pole of the Life Ether, and the dense body will be female. When the Life Ether matrix is negative, it will attract positive Chemical Ether and physical atoms, through the agency of the forces working along the negative pole of the Life Ether, and the dense body will be male. This work begins in the uterus with the fertilized ovum which is the body itself, at this stage.

The incarnating Ego hovers near its future mother clothed in the embryonic sheath of mind and desire body, while the matrix is placed in the womb of the mother by the Angels. After the seed atom has been deposited in the

body of the mother and conception takes place, the ovum being fertilized, the incoming Ego remains outside for a period of from eighteen to twenty-one days while the mother's desire body alone is working on the embryonic dense body.

To the occult scientist all elements of heredity inhere in the Life Ether and are manipulated by unseen Intelligences, though the human being assists. The secondary sex traits are also the product of forces working through the positive and negative poles of the Life Ether. It is to be noted that sex traits are not confined to the primary reproductive functions of the body, but that *every* cell in the body shows a sex difference. For example: *each* cell in the female body has 23 sets or pairs of chromosomes, each pair identical twins; but in the male body *each* cell contains *one pair* that is asymmetric; that is, different. We may say that the "23rd" pair of chromosomes are the sex chromosomes, which in the female body cell are identical, and described as the two X chromosomes; whereas the "23rd" pair of chromosomes in the male body cell consists of two different chromosomes, X and Y. It is the Y chromosome that determines the maleness of the body.

Until 1957 it was believed that there were 48 chromosomes (24 pairs) in the human body cell; but in that year a new kind of microscope revealed that there were in fact only 46 (23 pairs).

We repeat: what we have said here relates to every cell in the body, not to the "gametes" or "marrying cells" alone. Certain cells are set aside in the reproductive organs at the very outset of the incarnational process for the specific purpose of perpetuating the species. Although

these cells divide, they do so less often than the other body cells, and are still fresh when the work of reproduction begins. Their way of dividing is also different from that of other cells (*meiosis* versus *mitosis*) allowing for variety in transmission of hereditary elements since these are drawn from two people instead of one alone, and many mixtures are possible. When the reserve cell splits in two it forms the “gametes,” which are more commonly known as ova and spermatozoa, or egg and sperm cells. The egg cells contain each one X-chromosome; the sperm cells contain each one X-chromosome or one Y-chromosome. Also, each gamete contains only one-half the number of chromosomes of the regular cell, but when the two gametes unite the resulting cell (fertilized ovum) has once more the full number of chromosomes.

The chromosomes carry minute formations called “genes,” which are the real agents of heredity. Since each chromosome has as many as 1,000 genes, something like 46,000 genes are available to the incarnating Ego from each of its parents. Thus the “genetic die” or pattern is set in the original cell, which continues to divide in the usual manner of body cells to form the new organism which is to house a human Spirit. Femaleness seems to be the basic condition: the Y chromosome adds the male element. (Compare *Cosmo-Conception* diagram 13, page 364.)

Under the microscope the genes are seen within the cell as little cross bands on the thread-like chromosomes, sometimes compared to beads. It is said that they are “nature’s molds, which make a certain creature conform to the pattern of his forebears.”

Of special interest to the occultist is the statement

(Gamow) that the gene is perhaps a sort of “missing link” between living and non-living matter; hence it is also termed “the living molecule.” So we can perhaps start to draw the line at this point between the common molecule which belongs to the field of the Chemical Ether and the *living* molecule which belongs to the field of the Life Ether.*

The gene is the smallest unit of *living* matter. Yet “it also possesses characteristics of the complex molecule (like those of proteins) which are subject to all the familiar laws of chemistry.” (Gamow). It is estimated that the gene has about a million atoms. Occultists say that the genes and chromosomes are *deposited* by forces working in the Life Ether.

Therefore the two lower ethers do in fact constitute a “vital” or “life” body which acts as a matrix, in terms of a network or meshwork of force, into which the atoms of the body are collected in a living pattern or organism. It is taught that the blood and ductless (endocrine) glands are in a special sense the highest product of the vital body; and among the ductless glands the pituitary body, located in the head, is in the words of modern biophysicists the most powerful sex organ in the body. Its secretions govern the fertility cycles in both men and women. It is the focus of the Life Spirit (Macrocosmic Christ) in man, *which is a fire*. (*Occult Principles of Health and Healing*, pp. 127-128). The vital body *as a whole* is the “reflection” or “emanation.” (we might even say, condensation) of the same Principle. (*The Vital Body*, p. 46).

* Viruses and enzymes also function close to this level.

All hormones secreted and released into the blood stream by the ductless glands are expressions of the Life Ether, but those like the pituitary body and gonads, which secrete sex hormones are especially so; for these are the active participants, with the genes and chromosomes, in the reproductive cycles of the individual and the race. Eventually the Cosmic Christ Life must of necessity supplant the Jehovistic Race Principle, in its entirety.

The number of chromosomes in each cell differs from one species of life to another. Only the human body contains 46 chromosomes. The entire development and practically all properties of the adult organism are determined by the set of genes hidden in each chromosome in every body cell. Every animal or plant “grows around its genes.”

This has been compared with the way a lump of inorganic matter is formed. For example certain atomic nuclei carrying a charge of six positive electric units will surround themselves with atomic envelopes of six electrons each, which cause the atoms to tend to arrange themselves in a regular hexagonal pattern, forming the crystals that we call diamonds. It goes without saying that even the very simplest living organism is far more complex than the diamond, “but in both cases we have the *typical phenomena of macrocosmic organization being determined to the last detail by microscopic centers or organizing activity.*” (Gamow).

It is rightly said that the laws of heredity show a mathematical simplicity and clearness which suggest that “we are dealing with one of the fundamental phenomena of life.”

5—The Spiral of Life

It has been previously shown what physical science has to say about the life forces in the human organism. We take note again that the carbon atom is the crux of the chemical life process, in the words of the scientist: “Whereas the structure of the universe depends upon hydrogen, the structure of life depends upon carbon. Carbon is the essential ‘building block’ upon which all living things have been constructed. Why should this be? Life requires atoms which have the ability to form themselves into exceptionally large molecules....What gives the carbon atom this special property of adhering to other atoms on so large a scale? It appears to be an ordinary atom distinguished by having six planetary electrons: whereas boron and nitrogen, its neighbors in the atomic table, have five and seven electrons respectively—yet the carbon atom is quite unique. This is due to its peculiar structure. It is known as a quadrivalent atom because it has a power of four in forming combinations of atoms, in comparison with others having more or less. It is this quality that gives the carbon atom its tremendous potentiality of creating more complex structures. In fact, the number of possible compounds, based on this versatile atom, actually runs into millions.” (*The Living Universe*, Gatland and Dempster).

For centuries occult science has spoken of the “diamond body” of the Adept, or of the Adept himself as “the Living Diamond.” Here in modern biochemistry a hint of revelation shines forth, for this carbon atom,

which bulks so large in the life process, is the same form which Nature long ago formed diamonds in the rocky strata of the primordial earth globe. The diamond is the symbol of immortality; but it is more than a symbol. It is a promise.

Behind the diamond lay the energy of sunshine, the pressure of masses of rock, and the heat of the still young earth. The same forces are present in the human organism, though in another form, and shadow forth the ultimate destiny of the human being.

In popular thought “Fire” and “Water” are taken as opposites; but in occult chemistry they are in fact complimentary. And so it is not surprising to discover that intimately connected with the Life Ether is the “colorless solar ether” or “solar fluid,” which pours in through the spleen center of the etheric body; for the Life Ether is the particular avenue for the specialization of this solar fluid, Max Heindel states.

Now just as there is a universal or macrocosmic Life Fire (called the Life Spirit, which is the Christ Principle), so also there is a macrocosmic magnetism visible to etheric sight as a kind of rain which seems to fall in slanting lines toward the earth. Many people have seen this fall of cosmic force without knowing what they saw. It is not the same as the “cosmic rays” of modern science, although, since the Sun is a star and the stars are all suns, there is no reason to suppose that this “solar ether” would not include forces emanating from distant stars and nebulae, as well as from our Sun. Matter and light involve electromagnetic phenomena; so too, does “life,” as biologists are now discovering. The “sex force”

so-called, is “generated in” the Life Ether, as the solar or cosmic force rushes in through the spleen.

The cosmic magnetic rain is colorless, like water; and as rain consists of separate droplets of water, so too this magnetic rain consists of separate units of force. Moreover, it has an affinity for water, and Mesmer discovered that the oceans are charged with what he termed solar magnetism, and so are lakes, rivers, and streams. And of course the highly magnetic human body reveals its origin in primordial seas in the fact that it is more than 80% water. Mesmer also said that the Sun was a great magnet—which modern astronomy now verifies. (*Frontiers of Astronomy*, Hoyle).

Plants are rich in the Life Ether, and so are certain animal products such as fresh cow’s milk, still warm from the milking. Most of the human needs are met through the ingestion of plant foods, to which is added the magnetism pouring in through the spleen. Some day man will not need to sustain himself on plant food, but will draw his sustenance directly from the cosmic energy field itself.

The universal magnetism rushes through the spleen to the seed atom of the vital body located in the solar plexus; thence it fans out through the body, radiating through the nerves. Without these magnetic currents the body could not function, but would be inert and motionless, like an electric machine with the current turned off. The activity of the vital body as it specializes the solar fluid is audible to etheric hearing as a steady drone, or hum, and the vortices of force are clearly felt. The keynote of this activity is set by the “Sounding

Flame” which burns in the medulla oblongata, which in turn sounds the keynote of the archetype. When the Ego wills action it causes the brain to specialize great quantities of this energy, which pours out to the muscles and compels action. It is the same force which the Ego used earlier when building the body in the maternal womb.*

Max Heindel describes the “million mouths” which in the positive (female) vital body suck in the solar energy in far greater measure than the negative (male) vital body is able to do; and this, he says, accounts for the great recuperative capacity of girls and women. The excess force is supplied to the female vital body for the needs of motherhood, but it is there for use in every day life as well.

Students sometimes see these “mouths” as “circles,” and it would seem that these circles are the basic unit of the positive pole of the Life Ether, which determines the shape of the overall magnetic matrix, which is a network, or meshwork, of force.

*Most physicists agree that an electric charge in motion generates a magnetic field; but a few are researching the possibility that magnetism and electricity are not in fact the same thing, and they postulate the existence of “monopoles,” which are to magnetism what the electron is to electricity. According to this theory there are both positive and negative “monopoles” just as there are positive and negative electrons. The occult student speaks from the standpoint of etheric *experience*, and therefore speaks of both electricity and magnetism of the body in connection with the two lower ethers; but it is to be observed that the “electrical forces” are most often referred to in connection with the Chemical Ether and the “magnetic forces” with the Life Ether.

Within the magnetic meshwork are innumerable whirlpools (or spirals of force), large and small, some turning left-handed and some right-handed. This reminds us of the saying that light is energy running in circles, running freely, whereas matter is “bottled-up” energy. The Chemical Ether is the “bottle” for non-living matter; the Life *and* Chemical Ether *together* are the “bottle” for living matter.

The etheric atom and the physical atom are as a rule tightly intertwined, but occult students (and some others) often feel a sensation as of the etheric atom “unscrewing” from the physical atom. Only recently has physical science come to realize that it does make a difference in Nature whether a force runs right-handed or left-handed. Formerly the “Law of Parity” expressed the common belief that it made no difference in Nature which way the forces run. A whole new branch of science has developed out of the discovery that it does definitely make a difference, both to structure of matter and the development of life.

Everywhere in Nature one finds the Law of the Spiral; from nebulae and galaxies in the heavens to the spiraling growth of leaf and bud in plants, right down into the helix of chromosomes on which the genes are strung like beads, and down still farther to ions—and to the atomic bases of substances which live or once had life. There we discover again that the carbon atom seems to be a special agent of the spiraling habit. For although there are some non-living molecules and ions which also show the spiraling habit, this characteristic is frequently the sign of the life forces. We quote: “What started the

right-handedness and left-handedness now so vital to living things? If some life process must accompany the separation of right-handed from left-handed materials, how could life begin in the first place? If everything now right-handed were suddenly made left-handed, would life proceed without interruption and without change? These are deeply studied problems. Some good guesses have been made, but they have not produced the full answer. The guesses have come—and perhaps the full answer will come—from examining the symmetries of the forces acting on matter, along with the symmetries of the matter on which they act. Crystals furnish one of the most beautiful examples of order and symmetry. Thinking further, you will find that order and symmetry have very far-reaching application in all the natural sciences. Today physicists think of the symmetries of the fundamental particles of which the universe is made, of the fields of force in which those particles find themselves, and of the mathematical equations which describe the resulting behavior of the world. Chemists think of the symmetries of the molecules, simple and complicated, made of those particles. And biologists think of those symmetries—that orderliness—in their effort to understand the origin and behavior of life itself.” (*Crystals and Crystal Growing*, Holden and Singer, pages 274-275).

6—Organic vs. Inorganic Magnetism

Although we may speak of the magnetic rain as “solar ether,” it is not a property of sunlight. It is seen falling through space in dense darkness as well as in the light. This is why occult science classifies it with the Life Ether; or, as Max Heindel puts it, the Life Ether is the particular avenue for its specialization. Its fluidic magnetism is the source of what is commonly known as “sex attraction,” which occult science views as an activity of the positive and negative poles of the Life Ether. Polarity, as such, however, is not limited to the Life Ether or to the sexuality of organically propagating creatures; it is found on higher spiritual planes as well, where it manifests in a different way.

As evolution advances, the incarnating entity (Ego) is able to specialize more and more of this cosmic magnetic fluid; and therefore the human being specializes this energy in far greater quantities than do plants and animals. Moreover, Max Heindel’s investigations suggested that the forces entering through the spleen show different colors according to the various uses made of it by the different life waves. (*Teachings of An Initiate*, p. 172).

This colorless ether is in fact the original form of the “animal magnetism” or “organic magnetism” traditionally assigned to all living creatures, but not to the mineral kingdom. Sex and heredity are part of the function, but not the whole function, which is, in general, the promotion of life in the entire organism.

Note that there is a “mineral” as well as an “animal”

magnetism. We may liken the difference between these two kinds of magnetism to that between inorganic and organic iron. The plant takes the mineral element iron and transmutes it into organic iron, which is abundant, for example, in the green leaves of the plant; yet this organic iron is outwardly not in the least like a lump of iron, or iron ore, from which it is originally derived.

The magnetic field of the Life Ether, as we have seen, builds the embryo in the womb beginning with the fertilized ovum, and because the child body requires large quantities of this ether, the child's etheric aura is larger in proportion to its body than is the adult's. This reserve supply of ether in the child's aura consists of Chemical Ether atoms as well as a reserve supply of the cosmic life force. (The "prismatic ether atom" actually consists of both Life and Chemical Ether.)

Physical science has as yet discovered neither the colorless solar fluid nor the fact that it is subject to the human will; yet, if it were not subject to the human will, it could not be true that the higher life forms specialize larger and larger quantities of it. The cosmic magnetic rain does indeed respond to the human will, which is focused in the frontal sinus as we know. A sense of heat often accompanies the down-pouring of the cosmic rain. Max Heindel points out that in early epochs of our evolution this cosmic force did enter the vital body at the will of the human being, and in a different way from that by which it enters at present (through the spleen). We can now begin to *recover* the conscious use of the cosmic life forces.

Drawing the "inorganic" force through the human

magnetic aura converts it to “organic” magnetism, which the human body needs for growth. Hence the ancient practice of “laying on of hands.” The magnetic healer builds, in effect, an artificial womb of force in which the body of his patient is able to reconstruct itself. A case is reported of a child born with “buds” in the place of fingers on one hand, and under months of work by a group of dedicated church healers (members of an orthodox communion) these “buds” (which are found in the embryo) unfolded and grew into normal fingers, just as if the child had been placed back in the mother’s womb and growth taken up where it left off.

Again Max Heindel has commented that “when it (the solar fluid) is sent out by the brain centers in particularly large quantities it moves the muscles to which the nerves lead.” But for the work of body-building—which is what healing really is—still greater quantities of the solar fluid are required, and unless these are called down from space by way of the frontal sinus (human will), and thence directed by the brain, such miracles as we have mentioned cannot be performed; and oftentimes more than one healer must work on the case. The group of healers mentioned above knew nothing of the *modus operandi* of the cosmic forces, but nevertheless successfully invoked them through prayer to a Divinity whom they pictured as in Heaven. It is noteworthy that most of the healers were women with their positive vital bodies.

The science called “mesmerism” involves the use of these cosmic forces, but mesmerism is not the same as modern hypnotism, which depends upon suggestion.

“Suggestion” could not have made the embryonic buds unfold into fingers for the child. Neither could “suggestion” delay corruption of a piece of meat, or a vegetable, as the application of live magnetism has been reported to have done.

We have said that magnetic force is nearly always allied with some form of moisture, like the sap of the tree in plants and the blood of animals and humans, or other fluids. Trees cut down for Christmas trees bleed their sap away; and as this bleeding goes on, the tree’s vital magnetism rushes out, a veritable hemorrhage of force, soon after cutting; then more slowly until the tree is dead and its needles brown.

It is painful to any sensitive person to sit in the room with a tree so palpably bleeding to death; and most occult students prefer a living tree, or at least a tree culled by the forestry service to make room for a healthier growth on mountain slopes; or an artificial tree, of which there are many beautiful specimens.

The solar force flowing in through the spleen is a cosmic force, but still “inorganic” from the human point of view; which by the alchemy of the incarnating Spirit becomes an “organic” force of life-magnetism. Iron is important to the creation of human magnetism, and there are four atoms of iron in every normal hemoglobin cell; and the presence of iron in the planet is undoubtedly concerned in the planetary magnetism. But there are also great magnetic fields in interstellar space—the matrices of future worlds.

We have been speaking of “life” forces, but occult

science also speaks of “death” forces, and as the life force is associated with the Sun, so the death forces are associated with the Moon. Max Heindel speaks of “the death-dealing Moon forces” and also “the crystallizing Moon forces.” The life-process is a balance between the upbuilding solar forces and the down-tearing lunar forces. In some ancient schools of occult science these currents are known as “upward flowing” and “downward flowing” breaths.

The growth cycles of the vital body are set in septenary periods derived from the crystallizing lunar forces. Seven years is the span of maturation of the etheric sheath, the vital body being “born” from its sheath at the age of seven, then the several ethers maturing further, separately, in seven-year cycles; the Life Ether at fourteen with the desire body; the Light Ether at twenty-one with the mind; the Reflecting Ether at twenty-eight with the mind’s full maturation. Max Heindel also mentions an ancient tradition of “Moon beings” whose life span from infancy to old age is but seven years. Such cases are known to medical science.

We have spoken heretofore of etheric sight and etheric hearing; we must also take note of an etheric sense of touch. The Life Ether is *sensed*, for example, as a kind of heavy magnetic fluid. One may call it syrupy, if it is understood that we mean by this that its magnetism gives it this consistency. When the Invisible Helper dips his hands into the etheric body of the patient and then withdraws them, the vital body of the patient seems to cling to his hands. Ordinarily, of course, the patient does not feel his

own magnetism, but the Helper's magnetic aura in this instance is exerting an outside attraction. This is the "cement" of assimilation about which Max Heindel speaks (*The Vital Body*, p. 71). Note that the "cement" of assimilation belonging to the Life Ether is found *below* the molecular threshold of the body, whereas the "cement" of the Chemical Ether is definitely molecular, as shown in the fact that the lines of force of the vital body carry off these molecules, which many seers have described. We have said that the molecule is the smallest portion of a substance which can still be called "matter." When we break down the molecule we have entered into the world of atoms, and when we break down the atoms we enter the world of sub-atomic forces. And here on the borderline of matter we enter the states known to occult science as the Life Ether.*

The Invisible Helper works directly within and upon the molecular structure of the body in the Chemical Ether, though he can materialize a hand physical enough to perform massage, make chiropractic adjustments, or even perform surgery.

Biochemists naturally assume that all of the electromagnetic phenomena of the body *derive from* the body's chemistry; the occultist claims that the vital body has an independent existence, that it exists prior to the body and is its continuing matrix. No doubt biochemists will one day take their instruments and test a dead body and, of course, find no electromagnetic field; this, they will declare, proves that it emanates from the body, which

*"All reactions, including those of living matter, are linked to the nucleus." (1964-1965).

being dead, has no field. But if the occultist is right, the biochemist will discover this electric field if he evolves sensitive instruments capable of exploring the space a few feet above the corpse, for there he will find that for a few days after death, a magnetic field does exist, floating above the corpse. And even later, if he knew where to look, and where to transport his instruments, and how to place them, he might discover a human-shaped magnetic field which corresponded to the dead body but separated from it in space as well as in time!

But if the theory of a floating magnetic field seems strange, we may recall that astronomers now postulate that magnetic fields exist in interstellar space which—if they do nothing else—speed the cosmic rays on their way through the universe.

7—The Life Ether and Cosmic Fire

Mention has been made several times of the “Life Fire” which burns in the Life Ether. It is not merely a physical heat, but a Fire which denotes the presence of a living spirit. In the so-called “Lost Sayings of Jesus” discovered in Egypt in 1904 (and again in 1945) the statement occurs: “Wherever there are two, they are not without God, and wherever there is one I say I am with him. Raise the stone and there thou shalt find me; cleave the rock and there I am.” There is still in use in certain churches an Easter Ceremonial in which part of the ritual consists of striking a spark from a rock, and lighting the Easter candles from the flame built from the spark; suggesting that the Cosmic Fire (Life Spirit) is meant in these verses.

Yet the Universal Fire is “cold” while it sleeps in the rock and in cosmic space; it is still “cold” in the plant kingdom, although to the etheric sight it has the appearance of a delicate flame, not a flame which burns and leaps, but a steady glow of the pink-orange which characterizes the Life Ether in the plant kingdom. In animals and men it takes on a deeper rosy or red hue for just as the radiation of energy and atomic particles are not visible to the human eye, although they exist, so the “heat” of cold-blooded animals or of plants is not detectable to human senses in the common range. Apropos of which we quote Dr. Donald H. Andrews of Johns Hopkins University, who said in a speech: “If you turn out the lights and stand in the dark, you do not appear to be glowing; yet if you stand in front of an infrared television camera in

complete darkness the television screen will show you as a glowing form, beaming with light which radiates out from you as a result of the vibrations of your atoms. This is an established physical fact.”

It is now some ten years since a professor attached to Chicago University, Dr. Bernard Strehler, and another attached to the national Laboratory at Oak Ridge, Dr. William Arnold, discovered that green plants give off a faint red light, much as fireflies do, and then produced in the laboratory a substance which seems to be the same as that which in the plant emits the red glow. The red light cannot be seen with the naked eye, they pointed out, but something producing it must be there. They added: “These findings were made possible by the study of fireflies and luminous bacteria. It is now thought that there is a close relationship between light emission which releases energy and photosynthesis, which stores energy....Even more surprising is the fact that the same chemical compounds which are responsible for light emission in fireflies and the luminous bacteria often causing lighted fish at night, are involved in photosynthesis.”

Only in warm-blooded animals and in humankind does the “cold” Fire of space take on heat which is felt as such to human sensory equipment.

The heat aspect of the Life Ether in the human body is really a property conferred by the activity of forces operating in the positive pole of the Light Ether, with which we are concerned in our next set of lessons. For just as we have not been able wholly to separate the Chemical Ether from the Life Ether, so too we cannot wholly separate the Life Ether from the Light Ether. All of the

ethers react and interact one with the other.

As color is associated with sunlight in the common range of vision, so color is associated with the body magnetism to the etheric vision. The five colors specialized by the ethers, which stand between violet and red in a color circle, are not found in the solar spectrum as known to ordinary vision; they do not occur in the rainbow, which is refracted sunlight. These are the colors running from beyond-violet, through mid-purple, to magenta or peach-blossom color, to below-red. But though these colors are not found in the solar spectrum, they are true primary colors in the Desire World, and the peach-blossom color is the color of the Life Force as seen in the Life Ether in the human body. Max Heindel says that this color is not always described in identical terms by those who see it. He himself calls it “pink-blue” or “pinkish-purple.” It is the expression of the Universal Life Spirit, as noted before, and since it is a *life* ether it appears only in plants, animals, and man—not in the mineral kingdom. Ordinarily the color of the vital body is called a “rosy hue.”

The Chemical Ether is characterized by blue or indigo, deepening to mid- purple or near-black.

Other colors may also appear in these two lower ethers but those mentioned are basic.

When the solar ether pours through the spleen and is refracted in the seed atom of the vital body in the solar plexus, it pours through the body so that every atom of the body, both physical and etheric, receives its stimulation. The excess force then radiates outward in rose-colored lines. Mr. Heindel’s first thought when studying the ethers was that this force took on its rosy hue by refraction

through each prismatic ether atom: later he decided the change occurred in the solar plexus seed atom, and a cluster of atoms around it. (*Cosmo-Conception*, p. 10) He had not completed his researches at the time of his sudden death in January, 1919.

Summary

Now let us turn once more to the view of the vital body available to the etheric sight of the occult scientist. Necessarily the vital body atom is seen in conjunction with the physical atom, with which the etheric atom is tightly entwined. To picture the physical and etheric atom of the body, imagine a pear-shaped wire basket having walls of spirally curved wire running obliquely from pole to pole. This is the physical part of the atom. It is shaped nearly like our Earth and the prismatic vital body atom is inserted at the top, which is widest, and corresponds to the positive pole of the earth. Since the vital prism is inserted at the top, the point of the prism extends toward the bottom of the “basket,” which is termed the negative pole. The whole atom, thus interpenetrated, resembles a top swinging, swaying, and vibrating, in a note which is set by the archetype and the Sounding Flame in the medulla oblongata.

This suggests that the “prism” is part of the atomic nucleus (of which little was known during Max Heindel’s lifetime), while the “wire basket” would be, perhaps, the spiraling paths of electrons traveling in the magnetic vortices determined by the Life Ether. Note that this atom is not disc-shaped but pear-shaped, as it is now thought the

Earth globe may really be, with the wide part at the South Pole.*

The etheric prisms expand when life force is rushing through them; they contract (“shrivel up”) in fatigue and the lines of force are crumpled and bent, forcing the Ego to withdraw in sleep. On page 101 of *Rosicrucian Mysteries* Max Heindel comments that “when the vital body collapses, as it were, the little streams of force which permeate each atom seem to shrivel up, and the Ego is forced to abandon its body to the restorative powers of sleep.” He also mentions certain forces which circle the atom and the earth from pole to equator. (*The Vital Body*, p. 42).

To the etheric vision, points of the etheric prisms are seen sticking out in every direction. But just as physical vision varies, so also etheric vision varies from person to person, and although all see much the same thing, it is seen in varying degrees of sharpness and clarity. Students should therefore avoid arbitrary statements until they are

*Max Heindel specifically designates this as the common physical atom; but modern occult writers point out that it is perhaps not the hydrogen atom, but an “etheric” atom which is really sub-atomic.

Of the so-called “ultimate physical atom” Max Heindel says: “If we are so far developed that we are able to leave our dense physical body and take soul flight into interplanetary space, we shall find that *the ultimate physical atom* is spherical in shape like our earth; it is a ball.” (*Rosicrucian Mysteries*, p. 8-9).

Nineteenth century physics once held that atoms were of various shapes; hence this comment that the true atom is round. Modern physicists say that the atoms of matter are energy running in circles.

quite sure that their etheric sight is reasonably well developed. To one the vital body may appear to be no more than a vaguely colored mist extending about an inch and a half from the body. To another this mist resolves itself into a multitude of rose-colored lines of force. The Chemical Ether may be seen lying close to the body, and to some its dark blue color may seem to be an empty space like the core of a gas flame. Many have seen crystals, molecules and particles, streaming from the surface of the body. Sparks of vital energy which shoot from head, face, and hands are seen now and again by almost everyone. They are also seen around plants and a blue spark which flies from a seed sometimes signals the presence of a Nature Spirit which dwells in the seed.

We usually discover that when Max Heindel says “vital body” he means specifically the Life Ether, rather more than the Chemical Ether, for of course, “vital” means pertaining to life, but it is the Chemical Ether which forms the actual etheric double of every single molecule in the human body. However, each atom is also penetrated and surrounded by a slight aura of the Light and Reflecting Ethers. (*The Vital Body*, p. 43).

Death of the body occurs when the archetype collapses, which is followed by the rupture of the seed atom in the heart and the collapse of the vital body (as before sleep), forcing the Ego to withdraw from its vehicles. The vital body is then seen to rise like a twisting column of smoke, which re-forms itself into the individual’s likeness above the body, to which it is still attached by the lower part of the Silver Cord, and with which it decays synchronously. Folklore describes this

phenomenon as the corpse-candle, and although it is usually seen as a more or less luminous blue-gray mist, it has been seen on occasion as green or blue-green in color, changing color in the process of decomposition.

Death is often accompanied by the sensation of a spiraling motion in the atoms of the body, but this sensation is not necessarily an indication of death, and the student need feel no alarm if it occurs. The pre-initiatory work “unscrews” the ether atoms in a safe way, enabling the Initiate to rise out of the body, leaving the two lower ethers with the physical body. Only a certain exercise given by true occult teachers enables the individual to make the right cleavage in the ethers, between the two lower and the two higher. Wrong exercises—especially such as taught in mediumship classes—may cause a cleavage between the Chemical and Life Ethers, or between the Chemical Ether atoms and the physical atoms, and when this happens various diseases, such as tuberculosis, may result. (*The Vital Body*, p. 71) But in any case, the “spiraling” of the atoms is a characteristic sensation.

It should also be observed here that when the Chemical and Life Ethers are driven out of the dense body, deep unconsciousness occurs, which is not sleep; and when consciousness returns upon the vital atoms re-entering their physical counterparts, a prickling, tingling sensation is felt. Physiologists say this is due to the circulation of the blood being restored, for the same sensation occurs when the circulation is cut off from a part of the body, as when a hand “goes to sleep.” When this happens, the occultist sees the etheric hand hanging below the physical hand.

Similarly, in hypnosis the etheric “head” is pushed down around the shoulders of the subject, dividing from above. The circulation of the blood slows down, too, under such conditions.

The atoms of the physical body have a very slow vibration; the ether atom prods every physical atom into action and vibration, (including the atoms of the blood). In the human body the rate of vibration of the physical atom is *normally* an octave below the vibration of the ether atom which ensouls it. (*The Vital Body*, p. 191) The prickling sensation which results when the ether atom is re-entering the physical atom from which it has been driven out does not cease until the normal vibration of the body atom, one octave below the etheric, has been reached. Then the discomfort stops, for normal activity is once more established.

Occult science has not yet clarified the relationship between the planetary, solar, and ether magnetism of living things on Earth. Horoscopes for persons born in the southern hemisphere are traditionally reversed, so that where a northern chart shows Aries rising, for example, the southern chart would show Libra. Is this, perhaps, an effect of planetary polarity? This is one of the many mysteries still to be solved by the occult science of the future.

8—Star and Spiral

We have seen in an earlier chapter what modern science has to say about the Spiral. It is a curious fact that the five-pointed Star, always of great importance to esotericism, is also recognized as a special feature of life on this planet, as we learn in the new biology. Let us explore a little further into the part which this symbol plays in the world about us.

On a certain Tarot card (designed by A. E. Waite) is found this interesting design: a little flower growing which is shaped like a true star with five points. There really is such a flower, shaped like a five-pointed star, with the same star form repeated several times, at the heart of the blossom and at its base. The star itself is a delicate mauve color, not dissimilar to the pinkish blue of the vital body as Max Heindel describes it; and its petals are like soft velvet to the touch. It grows principally in Australia, but also occurs in parts of the Near East and Asia; and it has been “discovered” recently by California gardeners, for it grows well in Southern California. It is called the Hoya flower.

Now, among the six crystal systems known to science, “there is no permissible form with an axis of fivefold symmetry, and therefore no crystal can have such an axis,” (*Crystals and Crystal Growing*, Holden and Singer, p. 163). “It is interesting to reflect upon the difference between crystals and living organisms in this respect. Starfish and buttercups, for example, have axes of fivefold symmetry; but crystals cannot.” Therefore there is no star—no pentangle—in the crystal domain (which includes the largest part of our solid earth crust), but only

in the kingdom of life. The five-petaled wild rose, ancestor of all modern roses, may also be mentioned with starfish and buttercups.

It can scarcely be doubted that ancient scientists had observed this simple fact of Nature, for everywhere the five-pointed Star is the symbol of the human being, as in Christianity it is the symbol of the Christ Child and points to the birth of the Christ in every man.

Intimately associated with the esotericism of the five-pointed Star is the Life Spiral observed throughout the universe. In occult symbolism it is seen as the serpents entwining the Staff of Mercury, the Caduceus, and as such it is the representative of the ascent of the threefold spiral spirit fire, discussed in *Freemasonry and Catholicism*, and *Ancient and Modern Initiation* by Max Heindel.

Esotericists will understand at a glance the supreme importance of this combination of symbols: the Star and the Spiral, both intimately concerned in the most complicated life processes.

In Masonic symbolism, in the rites and mysteries of the Rose Cross and Holy Grail, the Spiral is viewed in the stairway once found in Solomon's Temple. Historians and archeologists have not been in complete accord as to the kind of building Solomon's Temple really was, some likening it to the temples of ancient Ur in Chaldea, Abraham's birth-place, where the Temple of the Moon God crowned the uppermost of three great stages of mountain-like masonry. Others have likened it to the ziggurats of Babylon, seven-staged pyramids with a small domed cella, or sanctuary, on the top story in which the god was said to appear to the priestess, or priest. We may

look upon this “upper room” of the Babylonian Temple as the *place of the Oracle*, where the will of heaven was made known.

There were two ziggurats, or stepped pyramids, within the walls of the greater Babylon: the Temple of Bel within the central area, and the Temple of Nebo, or Mercury, farther east in the suburb of Borsippa, the two connected by a “sacred way,” or walled street. The Tower of Mercury at Borsippa was the more ancient and the more sacred, and one may well believe that from its summit the priest-astronomers watched for the tiny star near the Sun which was the planet Mercury.

The stepped pyramids of Chaldea and Babylonia necessarily had stairways and inclines leading from one stage to another, until the top story was reached. Doubtless they also had secret, interior spiraling stairways, as shortcuts to the summit, known only to the priests and their initiates, as the Great Pyramids of Gizeh in Egypt would suggest. However, archeologists have never discovered any such interior passageway in the Babylonian pyramids and towers. Assyria and Persia shared the Chaldean civilization, and also had towers which were at the same time observatories and temples. They also housed great libraries. More clearly, perhaps, than anywhere else, China shows the true nature of the pyramids and towers built in ancient times: as for example the famous Altar of Heaven at Peking, with its three marble terraces and nine concentric circles, its stairways at the four cardinal points; and the numerous “pagodas,” some with as many as thirteen stories, each with its encircling roof, and containing nothing but a spiraling staircase leading to the

summit, obviously designed for astronomical observatories as well as for worship of Heaven in a nation where for a thousand years before Christ the official religion was a purely astronomical one.

In recent times archeologists have discovered in the ruins at Qumran, the Essene Headquarters on the Dead Sea, traces of a tower, and in it the suggestion of an upright central pillar around which a stairway once wound. Was this merely a storehouse? a watchtower?—or an observatory? Perhaps all these, and more. It is notable that Mercury, and Mercury's day of the week, were important to the Essenes. It is said that Wednesday was their Sabbath.

Turning now to Christian Europe, we find that in some accounts the legendary Temple of the Grail also had its high tower, within which was the spiral stairway leading to the top level where the Grail Chapel was found and the Grail Mysteries celebrated. What was shown in these Mysteries at the top of the tower? Obviously the dome of heaven revolving around the dragon-guarded Pole Star; and just before the dawn at certain times of the year, the planet Mercury, sparkling like a diamond not far from the rising Sun. For this is precisely what the earliest legends say: that the Mystery of the Grail is revealed in the stars of heaven, especially the zodiac and its decans.

Other accounts say that the Temple craftsmen pictured the heavens within the over-arching dome, with stars and planets moving in their courses. Similarly, in the Temple of Healing at Mount Ecclesia, the domed ceiling suggests the vault of heaven, around which the twelve constellations of the zodiac are ranged, with Leo, the Lion of the

Mysteries, over the altar, and Aquarius, the Son of Man (“Whosoever wills may come”) over the door of entry.

In an era when illiteracy was common, it is easy to see how the neophyte would be taught to visualize the winding stair, and as his physical body relaxed into the “clear sleep” which is not trance as commonly defined, the wakeful mind would climb the spiral stairway to the place of Mystery at its summit, turning always toward the right hand, AND THE NEOPHYTE AWOKE ON THE INNER PLANES WITHIN THE SANCTUARY OF THE TEMPLE OF INITIATION, or at its threshold, or in the anterooms, according to his merit.

For on the inner planes, space is no consideration. The “stepping-off” at the top of the spiral staircase takes the neophyte at once (without intermediate traveling) to his destination. Today the philosophy of science recognizes this condition in what is termed “the collapse of space” and its correlative, “the collapse of time.” It is as if all space intervening between one point and another vanishes, and the step-over from “here” to “there” is instantaneous.

Sometimes meditation affords a hint of this, for as the mind becomes spiritually lucid, the neophyte sees into a crystal space, perhaps viewing some distant spot on Earth’s surface. He has not left the body, he has not gone anywhere; yet he senses the reality of the distant place, and is sometimes seen, or even tangibly felt, or his mental voice audibly heard by persons living there. He feels that he might put out a hand and touch objects in that far-off place, for he is “there” and “here” at the same moment.

This “collapse of space” accounts for many strange dreams in which events and places seem to melt into one

another without rhyme or reason. It also explains why one and the same Mystery Temple has been “discovered” in many different places: in the dense dark forest, on mountain summit, in swamps and marshes, in palaces and courts, in the seeker’s own house.

When the neophyte does experience a sense as of movement in inner space, it means that *his attention is tracing out* the intervening distance, and in a manner of speaking, building a thought-trail or bridge over which he seems to travel. This is, however, unnecessary. The travel can be immediate, and with no sense of transition.

Thus to the student in the Mystery School, *the star and the spiral*, in addition to their outer, exoteric scientific significance, *reveal something different and unique*: the spiral ascent of the mind in the tower of consciousness, and at its summit the bright and blazing star which is the Invisible Helper himself, shining for the world.

With the dawn, the Helper returns to his body, and as he hovers over it, feeling the magnetic pull of the vital body drawing him down into the fleshly sheath, he is aware of the rotating of many wheels of force in his aura; and while these wheels rotate, he settles gently, with no shock or discomfort, into the dense physical instrument which lies upon the bed. He there awakens, to take up anew the cross of the body in the world of time and space.

PART III—THE LIGHT ETHER

9—The Light Ether and the Sun

In our chapters on the Life Ether we learned something about what Max Heindel designated “the colorless solar ether” and “solar fluid,” and we noted that this solar fluid was visible to etheric sight under several varying states or conditions: as a kind of “rain” of cosmic force, it rushes in through the etheric spleen, and turns a rose color in the solar plexus. We noted further that this solar fluid was magnetic, and was felt as such by the etheric senses, and that although it is called a “solar” ether it is studied in connection with the Life Ether rather than with the Light Ether, because the Life Ether is the particular avenue through which it is specialized. As magnetism it belongs to the “dark” spectrum which exists below and above the normal range of light visible to the human eye. In cold-blooded creatures and in the plant kingdom, the solar ether seems “colorless” and “cold” as viewed by the etheric senses. We can draw a parallel with this condition if we take in our hands an ordinary iron magnet. This magnet will have a north and a south pole, or positive and negative, and will pick up iron filings; yet ordinarily we can neither see light nor feel any sort of sensation emanating from the magnet. The iron is cold and dark, despite its magnetic field which is so easily demonstrated.

Only when the Light Ether is acting in conjunction with the Life Ether do we have the appearance of biological magnetism and the life-fire of warm-blooded

creatures. The colors associated with the activities of the Life Ether, we observed, were those from ultraviolet to infrared, and other rays not yet familiar to the lay public. Perception of these forces and colors, however, is something else again.

When the occult student begins his study of the Light Ether, he enters into the range of light, heat, and color of the normal senses, because the so-called “five senses” are the gift of forces working through the negative pole of this ether.

We may say further, however, that the Light Ether is the stronghold of the brain-mind, because it is the seat of all *sensory perception*, both within, below, and above the normal range of the sense organs. Extra-sensory perception belongs to this Ether in its higher reaches where it impinges upon and interacts with the Reflecting Ether.

The forces working along the negative pole of the Light Ether are the ones that vitalize, and in the beginning create, the *sense* organs, especially the eye, giving them the power to respond to and recognize differences in rates of vibration, and to classify these vibrations according to the effects they produce in Ego-awareness. The nervous system is its special field of activity. We know, of course, that the nerves are in reality part of the sensory-mechanism of the brain, which is made of the same “gray matter” as the nerves, and the new biology knows that electrical impulses travel through brain and nerves.

Vibrations ranging from 16 to 32 thousand per second the Ego recognizes as sound. These are vibrations in the air, but there is a super-sound (supersonic vibration) which is also audible to etheric senses. Another range of

vibrations the Ego recognizes as feelings (heat and cold, soft and hard, etc.); another as seeing, another as smelling, another as tasting, and so on. All of which are simply varying rates of vibration recognized by the Ego, the speed of which produces the different sensations as allocated to the five senses or kinds of receptors. There are also organs of internal reception: receptors which report to the Ego such things as weight (the weight sense), heat (the heat sense), balance or equilibrium (the balance sense), the relationship of parts of the body to each other (the proprioceptor sense—essentially a muscle sense); while a “nearness sense,” such as blind people develop, gives the sensation of something near which cannot be seen or felt—an object which is being approached, or an invisible presence—at which point the “nearness sense” tapers off into the extra-sensory range of perception.

All of these sensory perceptions are properties of the negative pole of the Light Ether as known to occult science. It is of special interest to the esotericist to note that the “heat sense” has finally been located by modern science in a special set of nerves centered in the spinal cord itself, which send out long filaments (nerves) to patches of skin, chiefly around the middle of the body. (Buttocks and back are most sensitive to temperature.) (*Reader's Digest* September, 1963, *Mysteries of Our Sixth Senses*.)

The heat control center of the body has been generally assigned to the brain area of the cerebellum or to the medulla oblongata, where occultists say that the Flame of Life burns.

It is this negative pole of the Light Ether which acts with the Life Ether in the production of living creatures

with a full range of sensory perception, or physical and etheric consciousness. The thalamus, a tiny organ in about the center of the head, and in front of the pineal gland, is thought to be the original or primitive brain, in which the primordial instincts reside; while the great mass of the brain is the seat of sensory consciousness or awareness. (The pituitary body is lower down and farther forward than the thalamus.) Perhaps these are the seats of the subconscious and conscious minds, as defined by modern analytical psychology. The so-called “sub-conscious” mind of modern psychology actually includes what the occult scientists term the “super-conscious” mind, and the forces operative in the Reflecting Ether.

Why is the range of the Light Ether defined in terms of the solar spectrum? Because all human senses have evolved in a system dominated by our Sun, the majority of whose rays are in this particular range, from infrared to ultraviolet. Science had nothing to tell the occultists, until quite recently, about the activities of the negative and positive poles of the Light Ether. What the occultist saw with extended vision could not be explained in terms of academic physics. The situation has changed. A correlation is now possible, and also an explanation, for which Planck’s Quantum Theory is responsible. According to this theory the basic unit of radiation is the Quantum—a packet of energy, called a “photon”—which is created continuously in free space by the collisions of positrons and electrons, and are also released from the interior of atoms when electronic changes occur. No law has yet been discovered to show just how or when these sparks of energy are created or liable to be created. There is an

“uncertainty principle” in physics.

“Radiation is composed of individual units, known as quanta. When there are enough of them these quanta arrange themselves in wave patterns. Each pattern possesses a wave-length.” (Hoyle) Thus light is both “particles” (in the sense of quanta, or energy packets) and waves. Both are visible as such to the etheric sight. We will understand this better if we think of a few drops of water, which do not form a wave; but when there are millions of drops of water, then a wave becomes possible, given the right conditions. But we note also that *each unit (“photon”) is at the same time both particle and wave.*

“It is worth noting,” says Hoyle, “that the shorter the wave-length, the more energetic the individual quanta (photons) become. It is because of this that gamma-rays, X-rays, and even ultraviolet light are so destructive of animal tissue, and why radio waves are so harmless.”

He continues: “A further interesting point is that of the vast range of wave-lengths from radio waves to gamma rays, only the narrow band from four hundred-thousandths to eight hundred-thousandths (of a centimeter) can be detected by the human senses.” And he explains: “This....is not an accident, however, because this is just the range in which most of the Sun’s radiation is emitted. It is true that the Sun does emit some ultraviolet and even some X-rays, but the Earth’s atmosphere absorbs such destructive radiation quite strongly, thereby preventing it from reaching the ground. Consequently there has never been an opportunity for creatures on the Earth to develop senses receptive to these wavelengths.” (*Frontiers of Astronomy*, Hoyle) However, occultists, can and do develop senses

receptive to these and other wavelengths, by means of forces operative in the negative pole of the Light Ether; although it is the scientific aspect of light itself that is most easily observed by the budding occult scientist. All sensory perception belongs to the negative, or passive, aspect of the Light Ether.

Hoyle goes on to say that more infrared rays than other rays do reach the ground, due to droplets of water in the air (not vapor) which absorb more visible light than infrared; but infrared does not affect the human eye. "Clearly it would be a great advantage to possess eyes that were sensitive to infrared, as indeed I suspect that birds may. This would go far toward explaining the amazing sight that birds seem to possess."

Astronomers say that our Sun is a "yellow" or "orange" star, one of the class known as "Orange" or "Yellow Dwarfs," among the most unstable of stars. Sunlight is therefore not really "white," but tinged with yellow or gold; and the Light Ether is also described by the occult scientist as golden or yellow, although like sunlight again, it does possess a complete band of colors, visible to ordinary eyesight as color or as light, but visible to etheric sight as vibration and sparkling points of energy.

10—The Occultist’s View of the Light Ether

Although all of the four ethers have work to do in every part of the living organism, each ether has one special work of its very own. The Chemical Ether is the avenue for forces concerned with upbuilding and nourishing the entire body; but its special field of action is the bony structure, or skeleton. The Life Ether promotes growth activities and the perpetuation of the species; its special area consists of the blood and other liquids of the body, the generative system, and the endocrine glands. The Light Ether is the avenue for the *cosmic* forces related to sunlight, color, and heat—all tremendously important in our evolution, but its special area is the nervous system, both voluntary and sympathetic. The pineal gland and the brain as a whole are the seat of the Human Spirit (Ego). The brain is the great central receiving and coordinating center of the nervous system, organizing all sensations as reported from the sense organs by way of the nerves. We noted in our last chapter that the tiny thalamus body is thought to be the original brain, and that instincts and psychic powers still have a focus there, while the upper brain governs all later evolution of sensory powers.

Again we have seen that the Life Ether specializes the “solar fluid” which acts as the electricity of the nervous system. Mr. Heindel adds further that the *light* Ether *transmits* the motive power along the various nerves which enables the Ego to move the body. *Motive* power is not the same thing as the life energy involved in growth and perpetuation of the species, even though it may spring from the same primordial root. Note that the solar fluid

also circulates in plants, which already have a rudimentary nervous system and therefore also the beginning of sensory perception. Modern physics offers some clarification on these points in the statement that the “photon,” the unit of the electromagnetic spectrum, is itself “chargeless,” although it carries electromagnetic energy. The photons discussed in these lessons on the Light Ether pertain only to that band of the electromagnetic spectrum which we know as our Sun’s light. The electromagnetic spectrum extends both above and below this belt.

The cosmic Fire operative in the Light Ether has been mentioned. The human Ego is part of this Fire, and its energies play through the Light Ether, not as a part of the race complex but as an individual, willing, and thinking Spirit, working out its destiny. Max Heindel says that the Ego works particularly in the *heat* of the blood.

It is stated in the *Cosmo-Conception* (p. 36): “...the forces that play along its positive pole (i.e. the Light Ether) are the forces which generate the blood heat in the higher species of animal and in man, which makes them individual sources of heat.” (These forces also circulate the blood.) At the age of twenty-one, when the “mind” is “born”—throws off its protective sheath—the Ego comes into full control of its own bodies, and the blood heat, which during adolescence was often overheated, now is held to somewhere near the norm of 98.6 Fahrenheit. This blood heat is necessary to the Ego’s consciousness in the body. If the blood temperature falls too far below or rises too far above it, the Ego is forced to withdraw from the body, which then falls into the states we recognize as sleep, coma, or death. The egoic Fire is the Fire of the

alchemist, which eventually creates the “diamond body” of the Adept.

In the cold-blooded animals it is only the circulation of the blood which is activated through the positive pole of the Light Ether, the need for heat not being present.

In plants the forces operative in the positive pole of the Light Ether circulate the juices, and these forces relate to Sun heat rather than to sunlight. At the winter solstice—modern research has shown this—in the northern hemisphere, even in those climes where ice and snow cover the land, the slight change in the etheric forces when the Sun begins to turn northward from its southernmost declination causes the trees to awaken, and the sap begins to move in their roots and deep within their trunks. It is the cosmic “heat,” dormant in the positive pole of the Light Ether, that triggers this awakening.

“The forces which work along the negative pole of the Light Ether are those which operate through the senses, manifesting as the passive functions of sight, hearing, feeling, tasting, and smelling. They also build and nourish the eye.” (*Cosmo*, page 36)

To the etheric senses, the various colors are actually tangible as well as visible, and some occult investigators declare that all other sensations have a correlation to light and color. The different wavelengths of color in the beam of sunlight can be felt, and a difference in quality noted. Blind children can sometimes differentiate between colors, although they cannot see them as such. Some physicists speak of a “facial vision” developed by these children; but about forty years ago, Dr. Jules Romain demonstrated (and recounted in his book, *Eyeless Sight*, now out of print) that

most portions of the skin could be converted to the use of sight. He found areas especially sensitive to light were the forehead, cheeks, temples, chest, and hands. Embryologists also say that almost any part of the skin of the embryo can be used to form eyes. Dr. Romain explained this by saying that the skin is studded with small cells, called *ocelli*, which do in fact resemble miniature eyes. The occultist has always maintained that so long as the Light Ether is present, any living organism will always develop sensory perception, and especially the perception of light, in some sort of eye structure.

The forces working along the negative pole of the Light Ether are those which deposit the chlorophyll and the colors in flowers. All color, in all kingdoms of Nature, is “deposited,” by means of forces working through the negative pole of the Light Ether.

Since we now know that light is not merely waves in an ether but consists also of actual particles, in “packets” of energy, called the photon, we are in a position to see that there is a definite and real substance which the Nature Forces can use and handle in this work of depositing color. These Nature Forces include fairies, angelic beings, and the human Ego.

Because the Light Ether is the avenue for the forces which promote sensory perception, and especially the eye, it is usually true that the student’s early experience with etheric vision relates to the phenomena of this ether. He generally sees first a sort of bluish mist, or cobweb, which seems to fill space, oftenest in a twilight, or in a dimly lit room or hall, or when he is coming from a darker room into a lighted one, say along a corridor. This bluish mist is

observed to be in violent motion where the light strikes into it, for it beats with a rapid motion like that of a hummingbird's wings. Later he may see that the beating wings (or cobwebs) of light are full of rainbow colors, in the midst of which innumerable points of silvery light dash to and fro. The stronger the light the more of these particles are seen, and the larger they appear to be. They dash about in the atmosphere with great energy, appearing and disappearing continuously, but they do not settle toward the ground. (Not all of them are basic sunlight, however—some have another origin.)

On closer inspection the cobweb in space seems to consist of small transparent flakes, with a comet-like nucleus—which is the sparkle first observed, the flake as a whole being transparent and filmy. Physicists speak of light as consisting of both waves and particles—that is, the photon itself is both; and the occultist sees this photon in the range belonging to our Sun's radiation as described here. The transparent flake would seem to represent the wave aspect of the photon and the spark the particle aspect; and the occultist suggests that the first is negative and the latter positive, but this is tentative.

In the human body complex, the Light Ether is said to be dominantly positive in men and negative in women. Let us see how this works out. The senses and colors belong to the negative pole, and women's sensory responses are often quicker than those of men; they see colors more clearly, and they suffer less from color blindness. Their etheric aura also shows a larger proportion of the golden Light Ether. The positive energy of the Light Ether, however, is evident in the dynamic urge to action which

characterizes the masculine incarnation, and the masculine aura often sparkles thickly with the energy-points belonging to this ether. The man also shows more of the fiery egoic drive.

Since light is made up of photons, and the photons consist of both waves and particles, both appear together throughout space.

In trying to study the Light Ether, the student should look out not at an object, or against a wall or ceiling, but **DIRECTLY INTO SPACE ITSELF.**

The following quotation is of interest: "Light Ether is a substance of a peculiar type which has no familiar atom-mosaic that we usually call matter.... We can call light ether a *substance* but we can also call it *space*.... keeping in mind that....space may possess certain morphological or structural features that make it a much more complicated thing than in the conceptions of Euclidean geometry. In fact, in modern physics the expression *light ether* (divested of its alleged mechanical properties) and *physical space* are considered synonymous." (Gamow: *One Two Three....Infinity*).

It may help the student to observe this ether for the first time if he will lie prone upon a bed and gaze into the corner of the ceiling in a room full of light. His eye will not then come to rest upon a surface, but will rest within space itself, and soon he will begin to see waves and sparkles of the Light Ether. Eyestrain should be avoided.

11—Summary: The Three Ethers

Before entering upon a discussion of the Reflecting Ether, let us review the salient features of the three lower ethers as known to physical and occult sciences. First: light belongs to what is called the electromagnetic spectrum, of which only a small segment, or band, is visible to human eyesight, for the reason that this band represents the radiation from our Sun, in whose field our senses were evolved. Had our race evolved on a planet belonging to a red giant sun, for example, we might have evolved eyesight in the infrared range. It is a curious fact that when etheric sight begins to unfold, it is the invisible aspect of light in our own solar spectrum that is usually first seen: the actual waves of light themselves, and the nuclei of energy sparkling in the waves. The waves of light ether are actually made up of units, or packets, of energy, which are waves and particles at one and the same time. Both are visible, simultaneously, to the etheric vision. The unit of energy is called the “photon,” and it is not merely the unit of solar light, but it is the unit of all electromagnetic waves.

Photons are packets of energy, says the physicist, which correspond to atoms and molecules, which are packets of matter. Electrons, protons, and alpha particles are particles of electricity. All radiant energy consists of photons. The photon is properly defined as “the building block of the electromagnetic field.” It travels with the speed of light.

The photon is never at rest. The electron, proton, and neutron can be at rest, but the photon cannot be. Hence the electron, proton, and neutron are the units of matter, so-

called, and in occult terms, “packets” of the Chemical and Life Ethers, which Max Heindel describes as “the stationary ethers.” Radiant energy, however, the unit of which is the photon, represents energy which is continuously escaping from matter. Occultly it is the unit of the Light Ether. The photon itself has no charge, but it carries electromagnetic energy. Subatomic particles and photons have a spin, and when charged they are responsive to magnetic fields. Astronomers say there are magnetic fields in interstellar space, in which new galaxies tend to form; but the occult scientist also sees a rain of cosmic force, electrical or magnetic in nature, which he calls “the colorless solar ether.” It is not *identical* in nature with cosmic forces or with solar and planetary magnetism, but there is a connection of some sort, which has not yet been determined either by mundane or by occult science. The colorless solar ether is subject to the call of the human mind and will.

Just as the magnetic fields of space are known to impart spiral activity to certain subatomic particles (usually nuclei), so also the “animal magnetism” of occult science seems to be accompanied by spiral activity in the Life Ether, which forms and guides the activities of the Chemical Ether. The two lower ethers are generally considered together as a working unit, as it is almost impossible to study them separately.*

Photons are not uniform in magnitude. The amount of energy is in proportion to the frequency. “X-rays have frequencies one thousandfold larger than visible light, so

*Science speaks of “bio-electrochemistry” and “bio-electromagnetism.”

when they give up their energy to atoms, electrons, etc., their “punch” is greater and more easily observed,” the physicist explains.

The body structure is formed in the two lower ethers, and the Life Ether specializes the solar fluid which acts like electricity in the living organism; the solar fluid is converted from “inorganic” cosmic magnetism to the “living” magnetism known to occult science and now being researched by physical science.

The electrical energy of the solar fluid energizes the nervous systems of the human organism, both voluntary and sympathetic. The “two complementary halves that make up every functioning electric circuit” have been discovered by biologists. We mention in passing here that the back of the head is found to carry a positive charge and the front a negative charge; and this front portion is termed a “silent area,” and is supposed to be associated with extrasensory perception. In occult science the keynote of the vital body is heard humming in the medulla oblongata, and its vibration is often felt in the back of the head.

The scientific investigators say that there are three axes of magnetic force to which the human being is subject; and they are testing various patients in hospitals to see if emissions of cosmic rays, magnetic storms on the Sun, and other phenomena of the sort have an effect on the nervous condition of human beings. Occult science has taught for centuries that such cosmic conditions (the macrocosm) do have a reaction in the human organism (the microcosm). Modern science now uses the terms “macrocosm” and “microcosm” as freely as occult science has done in

previous ages, but the “microcosm” of modern physics tends to be the interior of atoms and molecules and not merely the human organism as a whole—the infinitely large being the macrocosm and the infinitely small the microcosm.

An increased understanding of the Light Ether will bring about an important new science in the matter of color healing and the use of color in promoting growth in plants and animals. Color therapy is already making great progress, not merely among occultists, but in the world of physics, chemistry, and medicine. It is understandable now, when the nature of light is seen as consisting of particles as well as waves, that color can have a very clear and definite physical effect. Even very serious organic diseases have yielded to color therapy in the hands of experts; not merely nervous and mental, but actual physical disorders.

Color therapists believe that a ray of color represents an actual substance, and that vitamins and other elements contain these substances, so that in a very real sense the red ray, for example, may be said to give needed iron to the blood, and so forth.

But none of these color deposits could be made in plants without the keynoting or pattern-making activity of the Life Ether, as we have indicated. At the borderline of the Life and Light Ethers the strange life-substances called enzymes do their work. It has been found that “in plants as diverse as apple trees and lettuce there is a light-sensitive enzyme which regulates plant growth at all stages from germination to the ripening of fruit. The government experimental stations (e.g. U.S. Department of Agriculture

Research in Beltsville, Md.) have partially isolated the substance, which is effective in minute quantities and have reproduced what is apparently its critical reaction in a test tube. The enzyme exists in two forms, and transforms reversibly from one to the other upon exposure to appropriate wavelengths of light. One form absorbs light in the orange to red range, the other absorbs far-red light, near the limit of the visible spectrum. The first form triggers such effects as the reddening of apples and the germination of lettuce seed; the other form promotes flowering and regulates growth.

“The predominant form of the enzyme in the plant depends upon the color of light to which the plant is exposed. Both forms are present in about equal amounts after exposure to light in the middle of the red range. At longer wavelengths the reaction favors the orange-red absorbing form, while shorter wavelengths (toward the yellow) stimulate the production of the far-red absorbing form. In the living plant the intensity as well as the wavelength of the light influences the function of the enzyme. The investigators found that soybean plants will flower after an extremely short exposure at night to far-red light but will not flower if the intensity of the light is increased 100 times. Exposure at low intensity to the same wavelengths stimulates germination in lettuce seed; exposure at high intensity reduces germination to about zero.”

Occult science divides the spectrum of light into positive, negative, and neutral areas; with the colors below green called “hot,” or positive, and the colors above green being called “cool” and electric, or negative. Green is neutral, but no color is more important, for this is the color

of chlorophyll. In color therapy the positive or “hot” colors are thought of as streaming upward, as if from the Earth; the negative or “cool” colors are thought of as streaming downward from the heavens, while green, the neutral color, draws in its forces horizontally. Green has been proved to be a primary color in the new color science.

Whatever may be said of the effects of color on human beings as purely psychological, the same cannot be said of the influences of colored light on vegetation: some kinds of light promote growth of roots; others of the stems, leaves, and flowers; others the germination of the seed, and so on; while the light-sensitive enzyme in the plant tissue proves to be an important link in the life process.

Science has gone down to the far-red limit of the spectrum, but has not yet found the “peach-blossom” color known to the occultist.

Wave-lengths of color will one day be used to open up the spiritual faculties, for as we have shown, these also belong to the Light Ether forces, supersensory perception as well as common sensory perception being dependent upon this Ether, so far as consciousness in the body is concerned.

PART IV—THE REFLECTING ETHER

12—Between Two Skies

As far back as there is any written record, we find references to “reflection” and “images” as illustrating the way in which God’s creative Ideas become objectified in space and time. Now when we look into a pool of clear water—man’s first mirror—we see that the sky which is farthest above us is the bottommost part of the reflected scene in the water; while other objects, including ourselves, occupy intermediate positions BETWEEN TWO SKIES.

In our study of the Reflecting Ether, let us keep this image in mind, as neophytes in Mystery Schools have been doing for many thousands of years.

In *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception*, pages 37 and 38, Max Heindel has written: “The Reflecting Ether deserves its name for more than one reason, for the pictures in it are but *reflections* of the Memory of Nature. The real Memory of Nature is found in a much higher realm. In this Reflecting Ether no thoroughly trained clairvoyant cares to read, as the pictures are blurred and vague compared to those found in the higher realms. Those who read in the Reflecting Ether are generally those who have no choice, who, in fact, do not know in what they are reading. As a rule ordinary psychometrists and mediums obtain their knowledge through the Reflecting Ether. To some slight extent the pupil of the occult school in the first stages of his training also reads in the Reflecting Ether, but

he is warned by his teacher of the insufficiencies of this ether as a means of acquiring accurate information, so that he does not easily draw wrong conclusions.

“This ether is also the medium through which thought makes an impression upon the human brain. It is most intimately connected with the fourth subdivision of the World of Thought. This is the highest of the four subdivisions contained in the Region of Concrete Thought and is the home world of the human mind. There, a much clearer version of the Memory of Nature is found than in the Reflecting Ether.”

He also states that the “memory” aspect of this ether resides in the negative pole, while thought processes make their impression on the brain by way of the positive pole. *He does not say that these poles are magnetic poles, however.* The Reflecting Ether is not electrical, nor is it magnetic. Its “positive” pole is dominant in the front of the brain, in the area where the “Silent Watcher” (Divine Spirit) has its seat.

We are taught further that the Reflecting Ether is the least dense of the four ethers; that in the growth cycle it ripens at about the age of twenty- eight; that it is negative in men and positive in women; that like the Light Ether it is volatile and migratory; that it is really a hyper-ether, as much astral as etheric, and even mental, (since it is so closely penetrated by desire and mind-stuff); and while it appears to be empty at first glance, it hides within its translucent folds many secrets, in a picture record which consists not only of reproductions of physical forms but also of feelings and thoughts. Consequently, when the student-seer learns to read in this ether he may be surprised

to discover that he not only sees the moving pictures of past events in his life, but may also sometimes see the auric formations and thought forms which accompanied them, even though he had no clairvoyance at the time the events occurred.

Another of the oddities of the Reflecting Ether, which makes it difficult to assess the value of what is seen there, is familiar to most students, for Max Heindel has mentioned it often. This is the way in which the time stream of the Reflecting Ether seems to move backward, so that if it is desired to investigate an event, say, in the year 500, it would be necessary to look first for the year 600, and then allow the record to roll back to the year 500. Yet it is not to be supposed that this reverse flow is comparable to the backward unrolling of a moving picture filmstrip, in which for example the chicken grows back into a chick and then enters into the eggshell which closes around it. It is more in the nature of time pulsations which go back to a certain point and then move forward, according to some as yet undefined law governing the time- images. For it is common knowledge among occult students that pictures of former incarnations seem to unfold in a perfectly regular and normal way, at least so far as any one interval is concerned. The exercise of Retrospection is recommended for development of time-stream vision, with power to regulate the flow of images.

Again, the Reflecting Ether sometimes reverses numbers, so that a number which seems to read 235 may be in fact 532. However, an analogy can be pushed too far, and it would not be true to say that numbers reflected in the Reflecting Ether are turned backward in the way that

mirror numbers are, and as handwriting is. Books and documents seen in the “library” of the Reflecting Ether are usually read straight-forwardly as in the physical world; but in many instances the reader then suddenly finds that instead of reading a script, he has suddenly plunged into the midst of the story or record, which he views as an omnipresent though invisible spectator.

Take note, however, that the supersensory powers vary greatly, according to individual bias and temperament, for just as the physical eye cannot see an object if the eyelid covers the eye, so clairvoyance cannot show anything to the seer unless he definitely and consciously turns his attention in a given direction. Saints of the Church have in many instances achieved clairvoyance, yet saw nothing in the astral world except the thought-forms of heaven and hell built up by their own community of faith.

Occult students have developed the power to see disembodied spirits, Nature forces, and the celestial Hierarchies, without ever discovering the nuclear forces known to modern physics, *because they did not think to look for them.*

The pictures in the Reflecting Ether generally fade away in a few thousand years, leaving “holes” where the seer can find nothing. In the charged areas of the Mystery Temples, however, the Elder Brothers and their Initiates read a clearer version of the Memory of Nature, which in the fourth or archetypal region of the World of Thought, carries all of the records pertaining to our current Earth Period; and as these records are reviewed and vivified in the mind of each Initiate the corresponding record in the Reflecting Ether is, so to speak, reinforced and continues

to be available even to the relatively weak vision of the ordinary clairvoyant or beginning student in the occult school. Again, the Teachers on the inner planes will sometimes themselves project into the Reflecting Ether the pictures they want the neophyte to see and remember; and thus the neophyte sees records which would not otherwise then be available to him.

Max Heindel has shown that the Light and Reflecting Ethers are very intimately associated not only in the Golden Wedding Garment, but also in particular functions of the bodily organism. The student may find this closeness of function between these two ethers a source of confusion when first observing them.

When once the student-seer has begun to see the agitation of the Light Ether with its wing-like movement and its dashing comets of energy in their filmy packets, he begins to recognize that space is pulsing like the swells of the ocean, in great slow waves. As he looks into these bluish space-waves he begins to see what may at first appear to be colorless transparent forms, sometimes geometrical, but often resembling leaf forms which move in the sea of ether like underwater plants. Then, as the attention continues to focus in these deep tides of light, the student may suddenly realize that he is in fact gazing into the Reflecting Ether, for behind the moving waves of light his gaze comes to rest upon what seems to be a mirror world, a world with pictures as bright and clear as images in a mirror. There is no movement here, noripples.

The records in the Reflecting Ether are not easy to read at first sight for the reason that the ether seems so full of them, all of which can be *seen through*; so it necessitates

practice in separating them before each can be read. This is done by the power of the will in holding the attention focused upon one image, not allowing side-images to distract the attention. There is a tendency in all undeveloped seers simply to relax and allow these pictures to stream or move past the mental vision, with no attempt to control or analyze them. The ordinary person may indeed never realize that it is at all possible to control the stream of images, and he may even boast of the fact that he cannot “turn-off” the pictures which rush past his eyes. This is the secret of the negative development which may lead to obsession; or if not to actual obsession, then at least to mediumship, and perhaps to a lack of mental and emotional control which medical science would define as “unbalanced” or “disturbed.”

The student must therefore exercise discrimination as regards the stream of images he sees. It may seem to him that the images are irresistibly self-impelled, but this is not so; they do respond to his will, as he soon discovers when he makes the effort to control them.

Note that not all of these images are “records.” They include, sometimes, actual scenes and real people living on earth; and again they may include faces and forms of those who have passed on, and scenes of the inner worlds. For this Ether may be likened to a two-way mirror, as Max Heindel says, reflecting the outer universe on the one hand and the inner, spiritual worlds on the other.

13—What the Reflecting Ether Reflects

It is often said that every observer colors (by his own mental bias) his observations of the world as it exists both without and within himself. There can be no argument about this. Of course we see the world, we experience the world, through what we are. It cannot be otherwise. But the philosopher of modern science goes beyond this in saying that it is not only that impressions of the outside world depend on his mental bias as well as on the individual sensorium seated in the brain, but that the **OUTSIDE OR OBJECTIVE WORLD ITSELF IS REALLY AND LITERALLY CHANGED BY THE ACT OF OBSERVATION AND EXPERIMENTATION**, through the interaction of physical forces, and the pressure of mentally generated forces as in telekinesis. How can this be?

The answer lies, for the occultist, in the Reflecting Ether, with its strange mirror-like qualities.

It is the Archetypal Force of the Ego, “reflecting” or “projecting” into the great root substance of Nature, the subconscious mind of the cosmos, which thus affects its world. The Reflecting Ether, as Max Heindel has shown, extends all through the First Heaven, and even through the Second Heaven, for it contains the principle of memory and it has a special connection with the Region of Archetypal Forces. We may call it the “floor” of the two lower heavens. When the philosopher of science observes that it may not be necessary any longer to separate subject from object, the observer from the observed, he is expressing the spiritual reality of the

Archetypal Force as known to occult science. Space and time “collapse” in the realm of the Reflecting Ether, but the Virgin Spirit-as-Ego Consciousness, remains.

For the physical scientist, the outward attributes of the Reflecting Ether are of primary concern. He thinks of worlds and universes of matter which are explained by laws inhering (or reflected) in this subtle plane. But for the occultist, it is the INNER UNIVERSE, reflecting into the Reflecting Ether, which is of primary importance. And what collapses here is the “sense of barrier,” the sense of separation, between mankind and the Living Universe with its innumerable Hierarchies, from elemental forces to the One Supreme Being in whom all creation lives, and moves, and has its continuing existence.

Thus Max Heindel’s statement that this hyper-ether is a mirror which reflects a twofold reflection, the upper or inner universe and also the downward or outer universe, receives a new application in modern science.

We recall further that Mr. Heindel called both Light and Reflecting Ethers “migratory” and “volatile.” The Reflecting Ether, like the Light Ether, is luminous, and it flows, which is the reason that at a certain point the seer finds it difficult to tell where the one leaves off and the other begins.

It has been pointed out that when once the student has learned to see the waves of the Light Ether, and practices sighting into these waves in near- darkness when the air seems filled with the pulsing tides of bluish light or mist, his sight comes to rest upon leaf-like forms which float and drift in the watery ether like underwater

plants. Here he may see the familiar frost pattern of the winter's windowpane, its branches waving in the steady pulsing flow; and after a time he may become aware of the presence of color, and of life moving among the forms. It may be that he sees a little tree, which has the appearance of crystal, moving softly in waves of light; and small transparent winged shapes cluster, like crystal butterflies, upon its twigs. He discovers that when he fixes his attention upon this, it seems suddenly to move in toward him, thus seeming to grow larger, and its colors and details of structure may be studied as if under magnification. But if the attention wanders, all disappears.

Although called "volatile" and "migratory," the Reflecting Ether does present pictures as vivid and clear as those seen in a mirror, so that the student may feel as if he had indeed stepped "through the looking glass" when he has his first experience with this ether.

Looking into the space-waves moving in near darkness, he seems to himself to be at the bottom of an ocean of dim bluish light, and the great swells pulsing around him continuously reveal new forms, all of them moving slowly along like objects carried by sea tides.

Sometimes he may feel convinced that he can really see, with his physical sight, in this bluish light, and he may fix his eyes upon something in the room, say a picture which he knows hangs in a certain spot. For a moment indeed it seems that he is really seeing the picture; and then he realizes that instead he is seeing the same omnipresent plant forms, glowing, translucent, and crystalline in the ether. Space is full of patterns: "God

geometrizes.” At this point, gazing into the negative pole of the Light Ether, the student-seer passes insensibly into the vision of the negative pole of the Reflecting Ether. It is virtually impossible to say when or at what place the boundary has been crossed.

Note that these “patterns” which swim in the Light Ether shows every indication of being the guide-patterns for the elemental forces which construct earth forms. Geometric patterns and also intricate plant patterns of every sort, together with the life-forms that work through and with them as beheld here, pertain not merely to records of the past, but directly to the present-day world.

It is at the boundary between these two ethers that the Archetypal Forces mysteriously cross over into the space-time continuum. Here is the point where subjectivity, so-called, becomes objective, and the thought-form hovers on the verge of chemicalization.

The record inscribed on the seed atom of the heart and in the negative pole of the Reflecting Ether is only one manifestation of the powers resident in the Reflecting Ether; it is the *specialized* record belonging to *one* individual. The Reflecting Ether of the planet is the “memory” of the entire globe, receiving reflections from the planet’s own mental envelope where the records—memories of the living Earth Spirit—are held inviolate and unchanging.

Some pictures in the Reflecting Ether do belong wholly to what we call the past, whether in the subconscious mind of our present embodiment, or in the race sub-conscious recorded in the seed atom in the apex of the heart, which we carry with us from life to life. All

of the past resides in that part of the Reflecting Ether which we call the “sub-conscious,” both in man and Nature, and which can be probed with the right technique.

Apropos of which Max Heindel says: “George du Maurier has written a story called *Peter Ibbetson*, wherein this theory of the sub-conscious memory is very clearly drawn. Peter Ibbetson, a prisoner in an English penitentiary, learned how to “dream true;” that is to say, by putting his body in a certain position he LEARNED HOW TO LOCK THE CURRENTS OF ETHER WITHIN HIMSELF so that at night he was able at will to keep in touch with any scene in his past life that he desired to; there he could see himself as a spectator (grown man that he was) and he could see himself among his parents and playmates, and in the environment he was in at the time that scene was enacted. He could see the whole scene with many more details than he had been able to observe at the time when the events took place in this material world . . . He would have been unable to gain any information concerning the future, but the past had been inscribed upon the tablet of his heart and was, therefore, accessible under the proper condition.” (*Q & A, Vol. I*, p. 114).

Note that the seer does not have to “go” to the Etheric Region in order to read the records in the Reflecting Ether. He does not leave his body or “go” anywhere. He simply reads from the Reflecting Ether which permeates the air he breathes, which has a special connection with the blood stream and the seed-atom in the heart. Max Heindel has said, however, that in his

opinion it is necessary to be able to leave the body consciously in order to read in the Memory of Nature in the fourth Region of the World of Thought, for this record exists high up in the mental atmosphere of the planet.

Although the Reflecting Ether is largely confined to the past and the immediate present, yet it is also true that “coming events cast their shadows before;” but by the time these “shadows” are being cast into the Reflecting Ether they are on the very threshold of materialization. Clairvoyants often see these reflected shadows of the future in the Reflecting Ether, their own and others’, but they do not see the archetypal forces belonging to the higher level in the World of Thought, and which may change these “shadows” without so much as a moment’s notice. The student-seer should take note, therefore, that he himself, the Ego, active as a thinking, willing Being in the mental world, can alter or cancel out any picture seen in the Reflecting Ether; but he does this, not by attacking the matter-environment, but by treating through spiritual force and understanding the Creative Idea *behind* the picture, which is a property of the World of (Abstract) Thought, home world of the human Spirit.

There are many interesting stories of people who have had flash-dreams of pictures of future events, usually those about to happen. Sometimes these have been in the nature of warnings of danger, and acting upon them has saved the seer’s life. But in a great number of cases the pictures are not clear enough or complete enough for the seer to be able to plot a course of action; and sometimes they show circumstances over

which he has no control. In such cases it is well to remember that **THE REAL SEAT OF CONTROL IS IN THE ARCHETYPAL WORLD OF THOUGHT**, from which point the Ego works with the subtle forces of Nature and controls every situation in harmony with cosmic law.

The Ego can and does control events which are at the point of materialization and which are, therefore visible as pictures in the Reflecting Ether, since it is through the positive pole of this ether that thought makes its impression upon the brain. But let no one become disturbed by the prophecies of fortune tellers or by his own flash-pictures and flash-dreams, because these pertain to the Reflecting Ether only, and can be referred back to spiritual forces in the home-world of the Ego itself, where *it holds the reins of power*.

Now how is the record made in the first place? Max Heindel says (Q & A, Vol. I, pages 113-114): “Memory is of three kinds. There is in the first place the record which is made by our senses . . . these impressions are engraven upon the cells of the brain and we are able consciously to call them back—yet not always, . . . for this memory is exceedingly unreliable and capricious, and were this the only method of gaining a record of our lives the law of cause and effect would be invalidated—our afterlife would not be a sequence of what we have done or left undone in the past.

“There must be another memory, and this is what scientists have called the subconscious mind. Just as ether carries to the camera of the photographer a record of the surrounding landscape and imprints it upon the

sensitive plate to the minutest detail, *so the same ether which carries a picture to our eye and imprints it upon the retina* carries into our lungs a similar picture which then is absorbed by the blood, and as the blood passes through the heart this record is indelibly inscribed upon the sensitive seed atom which is located in the left ventricle of the heart near the apex. The *forces* (“soul”) of that seed atom are taken out by the Spirit at death and contains the record of the whole life to the minutest detail, so that, regardless of whether we have observed the facts in a certain scene or not, they are, nevertheless there.”

(We may add that the third kind of memory is the superconscious memory found in the World of Life Spirit, which is the Christ Consciousness. *Cosmo*, page 92).

As Max Heindel has said that each atom of the body has a film of Light and Reflecting Ether, one sees that this must form, collectively, a sheath or aura. As the Ego evolves greater spirituality, it draws more heavily upon the cosmic Light and Reflecting Ethers, and the film surrounding the atoms grows and expands until they enclose the entire body in an extensive aura having very special properties and powers: the “Golden Wedding Garment” of the Initiate.

The *permanent* record of the seed atom goes with the Ego from life to life; but the film of Reflecting Ether on each atom carries a record pertaining to the present life in the body, moment by moment, until death, all of which is focused in the permanent record of the seed atom and carried from life to life.

There is but a small amount of the two higher ethers in the average human organism, and this is found chiefly in blood, brain, and nervous system; and it is precisely the enlargement of the Light and Reflecting Ether aura which brings about a stronger and more extensive memory, and one which is better able to focus the pictures from the planetary Memory of Nature, as well as from the seed atom of the heart.

Medieval philosophers made the surprising deduction that memory was not a part of the mind; just as we now say that it belongs to the subconscious, whence it may be called up, voluntarily or involuntarily.

Or as Max Heindel puts it in his camera analogy, the Light Ether pictures are focused on the film, which is the Reflecting Ether and permanent record of the seed atom.

Since Light Ether and Space are “almost synonymous” we see that the “pictures” in “space” imprint their images upon the film of the Reflecting Ether, flowing in two directions, one toward the past, the other toward the future.

14—The Reflecting Ether and Records of Previous Incarnations

Not only does the Reflecting Ether contain the records pertaining to daily life, it also contains the records of the hours that are spent in sleep, which in the case of the occultist are hours of great activity. Few students remember the activities of the night hours when as Invisible Helpers they are working, or studying, in the spiritual worlds. The Invisible Helpers have a choice of action, and while all of them show an interest in the healing work, some have other fields of activity as well. They attend classes, and also are given the opportunity of visiting the regions of Purgatory and First Heaven, to observe conditions there. Even after the First Initiation, Max Heindel said, his memory was not yet perfect, and required further training.

Psychologists used to speak of people as being “eye-minded,” or “ear- minded,” or “abstractionists” (as we may designate the third group), who could recall with no images whatever, of any sort. Incredible as it may seem to most people, there are some who can tell you exactly what they had for breakfast, describe everything that was on the table, and yet insist they do not “see” any image at all. Possibly this type of recollection without images belongs to the mathematical mind, accustomed to thinking without imagery except mathematical formulas. The occult student who is beginning to awaken upon the inner planes shows similar differences of memory and recall, which are undoubtedly due to just such differences of mental habit and temperament. Some will say to themselves, “I was at

such and such a place last night and talked with so and so.” Yet asked to describe the scene or the person he cannot do so, having no image at all in his mind relative to the situation. Perhaps in daily life he has the same sort of imageless recollection. To improve memory it may then be necessary to practice building images in the mind, as taught in the exercise of concentration, which the student is to perform every morning upon awakening.

If the student is “ear-minded,” if his auditory responses are acute, he will be likely to recall words and speeches more vividly than images; and if he is “eye-minded,” and his visual responsiveness is the outstanding quality, he will bring back a memory of scenery, objects, and people. Obviously, artistic people are largely “eye-minded,” musicians and speakers “ear-minded.” But those who say they recall experiences without images either visual or auditory are nevertheless also placing on record a true recollection.

Recent psychological experiments at various universities have brought up the suggestion that forgetting occurs as the result of interference of several memory-systems of which the images or items are closely similar. This is the contrary of popular belief, which would have it that one remembers more easily things that are similar. In the case of inner-plane memories, the unusual events are the most easily recalled; but the continuous life of study and work, night after night, is forgotten, largely, because it resembles our daily activities in many ways.

Along with the ability to recall the experiences of the inner planes where the Spirit functions during the sleep of the body (provided, of course, that it has any higher

interests than those of the body), comes the ability to see the pictures in the negative pole of the Reflecting Ether, which relate to past incarnations. We are told that these records, in a way not yet definable in scientific terms, are impressed upon the seed atom of the heart and carried from life to life; and these seed atom records are among those which, reflected into the negative pole of the Reflecting Ether, the student often sees before sinking to sleep and before awakening in the morning. Psychologists call them “hypnogogic” visions, visions thrown out of the subconscious, in sleep or near-sleep. Since they come during sleep, like dreams, the student is not able to exert any real control over them, but as the soul-awareness increases he does acquire control. Most “trance” vision belongs to the area of hypnogogic vision. In the higher order of clear-seeing, however, the person is wide awake, but relaxes into complete stillness by an act of will, and then sees these so-called “hypnogogic” visions in full waking consciousness, and learns to control and direct them.

It is because of the need of complete relaxation that most occult schools in the past were situated in out-of-the-way places, on mountaintops and deep in forests or desert places where the air was clear and pure, and there were only the sounds of Nature. Obviously, when students trained in such quiet places went out into the noisy thoroughfares of the towns and cities, they tended to lose their hard-won powers, and had to learn to concentrate in the midst of noise and confusion.

The Western Mystery School of the Rose Cross has seen and met this problem. Its training is designed for the

use of the city-dweller, and while it may seem to the student that his progress is slow, he would find, if he were to make a retreat to some quiet spiritual haven in the country, that he had actually acquired more power than he had realized, and would compare favorably with the students resident there who had been trained in solitude.

It is not to be thought that the “sleeping” vision carries over into the waking state. The point we are making is that the sleeping state gradually clarifies, or becomes permeated with waking consciousness; and this waking consciousness then covers both the hours of sleep and the hours of waking, and also the intermediate zones where the “hypnogogic” visions occur.

In this clarified or “clear” state, the student-seer reads in the negative pole of the Reflecting Ether, and sometimes within that ether he will see pictures from past incarnations, his own and others”.

There are certain important points to be observed in connection with these visions in the Reflecting Ether. First, the known characteristics of this ether to transpose some of the images, as in the case of Mme. Blavatsky who read a page number backward. The mirror-analogy should not be pushed too far, because, after all, the Reflecting Ether is not a physical looking-glass; *it is a four-dimensional mirror in which the three dimensions of space are experienced by consciousness as a reflection.*

This means that unlike the mirror-image, which is never mixed up with our physical selves but remains apart, we ourselves seem to be taken into the stream of the Reflecting Ether, so that we stand in the very midst of the events shown taking place there. It is only at first that the

pictures rush past like the moving pictures familiar to us on the theater screen; the student at some point will find that he has, himself, entered the scene shown him, and he is likely to assume that he is seeing a picture of his own past incarnation. And this is usually true. The first pictures seen are generally those which pertain to our own past incarnations. However, we may not recognize ourselves, in a scene where many people are shown, and where our sympathies go out to some one character. Inevitably the student-seer will assume identity with the character with whom he feels the strongest sympathy, because he has, through the “reflecting” power of the ether, actually entered into the emotion-pattern of the character he sees. Thus several women wrote to Arthur Weigall, the Egyptologist, thanking him for his kind treatment of the history of Cleopatra—who, they said, they were in their former incarnations! Now how could these several women all believe they had been Cleopatra? Obviously they had seen visions of Egypt with Cleopatra central to them all; and they had felt a powerful emotional identity with the unfortunate queen.

We may assume that the seers were people who had, in very truth, lived in Egypt and who had known Cleopatra. They may have been servants at court, or court ladies, friends of the queen. They may even have been her sincerest enemies, who worked to bring about her downfall and death, and who in Purgatory between incarnations, had entered into her suffering and learned to repent their evil. Now, in the incarnation when they at last entered upon the Way of Initiation, the past opened its doors and showed them the place in which they had made much karma. They

were not only in the midst of the scenes of Cleopatra's time, they were also in the midst of the waves of emotion which surged through her court, of which she was the pivot and the center. Each of the women seers, obviously because of personal vanity and perhaps also because she was starved for excitement, promptly decided that she herself was Cleopatra reborn.

Thus we see that there is a *memory of emotion* as well as a memory of thought and action, and this also is touched upon in the Reflecting Ether clairvoyance; though this emotion-memory is for most people more rarely experienced than the other. However, when the image of the past is not merely viewed, but entered into in the way described, the emotion-memory comes into play. Now since most of us identify ourselves with our emotions and feelings to an even greater degree than with body-sensations and thought, it is natural that, feeling a strong emotion emanating from a pictured character, we assume an identity which is not really ours, and thus ridiculous situations arise such as that of the several women who thought they were Cleopatra.

15—The Reflecting Ether and its Relationship to Matter

Note that every object in the outer universe has its clear and unmistakable replica in the Reflecting Ether. It is not only the Soul Body or Golden Wedding Garment that is found there. Everything in the universe has its reflection in this ether. The laws of reflection in the hyper-ether, however, are not a simple mirror-type image, although this is the analogy upon which teachers base their explanations. We suggest that science's newest theories about matter and anti-matter pivot about this ether; and that as anti-matter has anti-gravity one may read here a possible explanation of the old saying that levitation is accomplished by means of the astral light. A current theory has it that in the beginning matter and anti-matter existed together in a sort of "cosmic egg," and were separated by some kind of repulsive force as yet unknown. Max Heindel has said that levitation is accomplished by the reversal of the polarity of atoms.

The proposition that the negative pole of the Reflecting Ether may constitute the "great negative mass" which underlies the Space-Time continuum of which modern science begins to be aware may come as a shock to students who have not realized how close physics has come to metaphysics.

Max Heindel speaks often of "interplanetary ethers," chief of which are the Light and Reflecting Ethers. The interplanetary Light Ether, in particular, he associates with the Cosmic Christ or Solar Logos. But just as matter actually extends throughout the universe in interplanetary and interstellar space— there are atoms of matter in every

cubic foot of cosmic space; space is not empty—so also do the ethers; and each planet specializes its own field in which evolution proceeds for the life-wave belonging to that planet.

Many of the so-called illusions of matter are due, indirectly, to the properties of the Reflecting Ether, which has been called the Mirror of the Gods.

All three of the lower ethers are active *within* the confines of the Reflecting Ether. We may, indeed, think of each ether, starting from the top, as enclosing or enfolding (and interpenetrating) those below it. Thus the Reflecting Ether “contains,” as it were, the Light, Life, and Chemical Ethers. The Light Ether “contains” the Life and Chemical Ethers; and the Life Ether “contains” the Chemical Ether, which we may add, in its turn may be said to “contain” the physical organism.

For example: the Ego impresses thought upon the brain by way of the positive pole of the Reflecting Ether. Now we know that the thinking and memory processes of the embodied Ego have not only the electromagnetic correlations of the Light and Life Ethers, but also the purely chemical correlations of the Chemical Ether. There is a chemistry of memory and a chemistry of thought, as well as an electromagnetic pattern and forces in brain and nerves which transmit thought impulses to the body and which carry sensory impressions from the body to the brain.

Certain forces in the Light Ether flow in response to the thought-impulse focused by the Ego in the positive pole of the Reflecting Ether, where the thought form moves out toward chemicalization, passing downward

(which is outward) by way of the electromagnetic spectrum and Light Ether. Some biologists have already formulated the theory that the electrical currents in the voluntary nervous system actually pour out from the brain, where they are generated. The occultist points out that the Ego has its seat in the brain. Max Heindel speaks of the great waves of energy that push out from the brain when the Ego wills action in the body.

Therefore, says the biologist, there is “an intricate chemical basis for how people remember and why they forget.” Experiments have shown that learning is reflected by changes in the cell’s production of RNA (ribonucleic acid), but how the RNA is changed remains as yet unknown. It is known, however, that the learning process is accompanied by basic changes in the composition of this complex chemical. Since RNA molecules tell cells what proteins to make, changes in RNA structures would result in changes in the production of proteins. These proteins apparently “form the chemical basis for thoughts.”

Again a scientific writer comments: “The enormity of the task of mechanizing and electrifying brain power is illustrated by the fact that the human brain contains about 10,000,000,000 nerve cells. We do not know how it translates nerve impulses into sight, sound, or touch, or how it stores and retrieves vast amounts of knowledge.” The occultist classifies the “brain power” and nerve impulses in the Light Ether; the storing and retrieving of knowledge in the Reflecting Ether. The Life Ether supplies the life force which keeps tissues and cells alive and growing, and the Chemical Ether is the field in which atoms and molecules are cemented magnetically into the

patterns of evolution. Again, Max Heindel comments (*The Web Of Destiny*, p. 99) that the vital fluid from the Sun “charges” the Chemical and Life Ethers, and that “thus charged (they) are the avenues of assimilation which preserve the individual and of fecundation which perpetuates the race.”

Since Reflecting Ether vision is not dependent upon the optic nerve, the physically blind can learn to see in this ether, and see not only inner-plane images but physical-plane images as well. If this seems a poor substitute for physical sight, let us consider that normally no one ever does look out directly upon the physical world. Ordinarily one sees only the image which has reached the retina of the eye, which is translated into nerve impulses, these in turn passing inward to the optical center of the brain, where somehow, the nerve impulses are translated back into the image and interpreted by the Ego. And where does this translation take place? Where but in the Reflecting Ether interpenetrating the brain.

“Within each individual there is a built-in mechanism, not yet discovered, that allows man to evolve. The DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid) that embodies this mechanism, the genetic code of all living organisms (except the blood and several viruses) is made up of four chemical bases; adenine, guanine, cytosine, and thymine, and it is the different combinations of these four chemicals that provide the specific information used by the cells in the construction of proteins. It is this DNA which is shaped by evolution. There is constant competition for survival among these combinations, and in this way organisms slowly become enriched with experiences that facilitate

this survival. No one yet has discovered the complete base sequence of these different combinations for a single gene, and a cell contains many thousands of genes. Now we are out of the field of generalities of epigenesis and philosophy and into the alchemist's laboratory, where our alchemists of old with their four basic elements would feel right at home." (*Rays From The Rose Cross*, Nov., 1963, page 516.)

Without the Reflecting Ether, the Ego could not express consciousness in the physical body; that is, it could not be conscious in the physical world. Consciousness, suggests a philosopher of modern science (Erwin Schrodinger) appears in the role of a tutor. It "supervises our education," introduces us to new experiences, but leaves us to carry on our old routines in the form of "habit"—which we relate to the negative pole of the Reflecting Ether. Consciousness is concerned with the learning process and is intimately associated with all that is new. That is, with new experiences and with creativity, epigenesis, the forces of the positive pole—in a word, the future.

Occultists have long recognized phosphorus as important to the thinking process. Max Heindel says: "Phosphorus is the particular element by means of which the Ego is able to express thought and influence the dense body....The degree of consciousness and intelligence is in proportion to the amount of phosphorus contained in the brain." "Soul growth enables the brain to assimilate an increasing amount of phosphorus" (which is a chemical poison).

The term "Astral Light" is not (as is well known) an

orientalism, but was anciently used by Western teachers in reference to the star-like Soul Body and its aura. Paracelsus refers to it as “the sidereal light.” The words of the great Paracelsus are most significant: “Hidden things of the soul which cannot be perceived by the physical senses may be found through the sidereal body, through whose organism we may look into Nature in the same way that the Sun shines through glass. The inner nature of everything may therefore be known, through magic in general, and through the powers of the inner or second sight.” In the Rosicrucian Philosophy the descriptive term “Reflecting Ether” is used instead of “Astral Light,” the latter term including the Light Ether as well as the Reflecting Ether.

We deem it important that oriental and medieval European occultists have claimed that heavy bodies can be levitated by means of the Astral Light, besides noting its function in promoting the other supersensory powers. We may study the various chemical and electromagnetic properties and processes of the body singly or collectively; but the root of the mystery is found nowhere else than in the Reflecting Ether; in the negative pole, which is the Cosmic Reflector, and in the positive pole which projects the creatively working archetypal image that represents the future.

16—The Reflecting Ether and Archetypal Forces

A Study of Diagram No. 1, page 52, of *Cosmo-Conception*

In this final chapter on the Reflecting Ether we turn again to Max Heindel's statement that "this ether is the medium through which thought makes an impression upon the human brain. *It is most intimately connected with the fourth subdivision of the World of Thought.* This is the highest of the four subdivisions contained in the Region of Concrete Thought and is the home world of the human mind. There a much clearer version of the Memory of Nature is found."

The fourth subdivision of the Region of Concrete Thought is termed the Region of Archetypal Forces. (*Cosmo*, pages 50-55). Let us look farther into what we are taught concerning this region, in order to gain a clearer understanding of the Reflecting Ether, for it is the record in this Region which is reflected "down" into the Reflecting Ether, and the cosmic relationship existing between the World of Thought and the Reflecting Ether has its microcosmic replica within the aura of the embodied human being.

The records of the Memory of Nature are contained in the negative pole of the Reflecting Ether, and so is the individual memory. But the Ego directs its positive thought force into the brain by way of the positive pole of the Reflecting Ether. This positive thought force, which works through the positive pole of the Reflecting Ether in the brain and nervous system (the mind really

works everywhere that the “gray matter” is present, throughout the body) is *creative*; it is not passively receptive. The negative pole is the receptor, and therefore contains the memory, being the storehouse of all images, as hitherto described.

Of the Region of Archetypal Forces, Max Heindel writes: “It is the central and most important Region in the five Worlds wherein man’s entire evolution is carried on. On the one side of this Region are the three higher Regions of the World of Thought, the World of Life Spirit, and the World of Divine Spirit. On the other side of the Region of Archetypal Forces are the three lower Regions of the World of Thought, the Desire and the Physical Worlds. Thus this Region becomes a sort of “crux,” bounded on the one side by the Realms of Spirit, on the other by the Worlds of Form. *It is a focusing point, where Spirit reflects itself in matter.*” (*Cosmo-Conception*, page 51.)

In another place Mr. Heindel points out that from another viewpoint the world of Spirit proper really begins only with the World of Life Spirit, which he calls the first universal world, and that in the broad sense, the material universe begins with the Region of Abstract Thought, and that above this all is “pure” Spirit. The World of Abstract Thought is “chaos, the seed-ground of cosmos,” in which the “germinal ideas”—the germs of all causation, and therefore of evolution, are created by spiritual intelligences in that world. In the *Cosmo-Conception*, Diagram 1 page 52, we are shown a schematic drawing by which to understand the “relative permanency of the visible and invisible worlds,” on the

analogy of the stereopticon with its projected images. *The diagram is drawn from the point of view of the VIRGIN SPIRIT*, whose Will corresponds to the operator of the stereopticon machine; which conceives, in the World of Life Spirit, by means of the divine creative imagination, *a concept*; this concept takes the form of an Idea in the Region of Abstract Thought, and the Idea is posited before the Lens of the Mind, in the fourth subdivision of the World of Thought. *This fourth division alone is properly and scientifically designated “the mind.”* The mind is the lens, but the light emanates from the Life Spirit, while the slide represents the permanent Idea created by the Virgin Spirit in the Region of Abstract Thought. That is, this Permanent Idea is the “Germinal Idea;” so called because it is the “seed” from which the exterior world-objects spring. The light of the Life Spirit projects the living, permanent Idea through the Mind, which lies specifically in the Region of Archetypal Forces, and, therefore, it is these Archetypal Forces which from this point on are represented by the beams of light which emanate from the World of Life Spirit. The Archetypal Forces ray downward through the Region of Concrete Thought and the Desire World, awakening the driving power of desire, and the image, corresponding to the image cast on the screen by the stereopticon projector. What are the Archetypal Forces? They are all the living beings who work on the Archetypes in the Second Heaven, which Archetypes are *thought forms*. They include human beings between incarnations, Nature Forces, and the celestial Hierarchies, such as Lords of Mind, Archangels,

Angels, advanced members of our own life wave (Mercurians, Venusians), etc., and Adepts of our own humanity.

Now when we come to the Physical World, where the image is objectified, we are shown seven subdivisions, of which the four upper are the ethers which are the subject of these chapters; and of these four ethers, the Reflecting Ether is the uppermost. It is, Max Heindel says, a hyper-ether. *This ether is the screen upon which the image is projected from the mind.* But the forces of the Desire World are present with the image, just as the heat, light, and electricity of the stereopticon machine are involved in projecting the image inscribed on the glass slide on to the screen—or, in another analogy, the moving picture projected from the filmstrip.

But the projected image of the stereopticon or moving picture is flat and two-dimensional. The projected image contained *within* (not on) the Reflecting Ether, is three-dimensional. It is projected in depth, and with life and force. *The Memory of Nature and of the human mind* is comparable, on this analogy, to art galleries and newspapers which carry pictures and symbols, but these are only a portion of *the entire physical world itself*, the so-called time-space continuum of modern physical science.

The time-space continuum as a whole correlates with the Reflecting Ether, and therefore modern scientists speak of “traveling in time,” or “the annihilation or collapse of space,” and “the collapse of time.” Where the occultist says that he “reads in the Memory of Nature”—particularly the Reflecting Ether—the scientist says that

he “travels in time.” And many scientific fantasies show this traveling in time as if it were possible for a person living in the 20th century to return, in actual fact, to a former time and way of life, retaining as he does his present-day personality and knowledge. The occultist questions such a reversal of the time stream. He does, indeed, travel backward in consciousness in the course of his Initiations, where he reviews, and remembers, his previous existences—not only his embodiments as a human being in the Earth Period but his former existences as animal-like, planet-like or even mineral-like beings of earlier periods of evolution.

But whereas those periods were experienced with no self-awareness, the Initiate now views them and enters into them sympathetically (or with empathy, empathically), in full waking self-consciousness, and in so doing becomes able to use the forces voluntarily which he then used involuntarily—negatively or passively—under the guidance of higher spiritual beings.

Now just as the physical body of man is surrounded by and derived from the world around him, so the Divine Spirit and Life Spirit are surrounded by and derived from their corresponding macrocosmic worlds of Spirit; so also the Human Spirit is differentiated within the World of Abstract Thought, and the Mind and Desire Body from their corresponding worlds; while the vital body consists of the ethers which surround it on all sides, and the physical body is made up of physical substances as said.

But from another point of view we may say that the universe consists solely of Spirit: the Divine Spirit which

is “reflected” or condensed into the physical body as its representative; the Life Spirit, which is “reflected” or condensed into the Vital Body, as its representative; the Human Spirit which is “reflected” or condensed into the Desire Body *and* Concrete Mind, as its twofold representative. *But*—as we see from a process of elimination—*it is the mind itself which is the focus, condensation, or reflection, of pure Virgin Spirit. And the Reflecting Ether is, as it were, a kind of lower polarity or octave of the mind; the subconscious mind, in the sense that it occupies a plane below the true mind.*

To call the Reflecting Ether the “lower octave” of the mind is of course a musical analogy, but such an analogy bears a high degree of accuracy as regards the World of Thought, for that world is the great cosmic world of tone, or sound; each cosmic sound pattern created in Cosmic Root Substance by a Creative Idea sent forth by the Threefold Spirit in the way shown in Diagram 1 of the *Cosmo-Conception*. The World Archetype sings a song emanating from the Solar Logos and the Great Spirits before His Throne who are the Planetary Logoi; and Man, as Virgin Spirit, is part of this Song, and he also sings along with the innumerable spirits of the celestial Hierarchies.

It is known to musicians—and to physicists who have drawn up a science of sound—that when a certain note is struck, say on a piano, other keys harmonious to it will vibrate in sympathy, creating overtones, undertones, chords, and octaves, as the case may be. (See *Cosmo-Conception*, pages 122-123.) So the harmony of the threefold Spirit sounds, and by sounding creates

tone-patterns in the World of Concrete Thought, which are translated into form and substance in the Physical World. This is why it is said that the Reflecting Ether is the “lower octave” of the fourth or Archetypal Region of the World of Thought, and therefore reflects, or *resounds with* the pictures of the Memory of Nature, *and with all other forces which belong to that high realm.*

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