

Description of the picture: The Son of the Snakes.

„While living, he made himself into a grave“.

From this grave of nature the Son arises, clothed with the Golden Wedding Garment of the new soul. He is the new Mercury, the thrice great Hermes. His head is adorned with the wondrous golden flower of the new thinking faculty; in his hands are the fiery serpents of the renewed spinal fluid in its positive and negative aspects.

The five points of contact of the new soul with the transfigured personality radiate like roses. He has found his Pymander. So he arises, one with the Gnosis, from glory to glory, leaving behind the dead bones of the many failed attempts in the desert of the dialectical past.



THE EGYPTIAN ARCH-GNOSIS

and its call in the eternal present

PROCLAIMED AND EXPLAINED AGAIN FROM

the TABULA SMARAGDINA and the CORPUS HERMETICUM
OF
HERMES TRISMEGISTUS

by

J. VAN RIJCKENBORGH

PART I

FIRST EDITION 1982

RENOVA-LIBRARY NR. 3

ROZEKRUIS PERS HAARLEM THE NETHERLANDS

International School of the Golden Rosycross
Lectorium Rosicrucianum
Baknessergracht 11-15, Haarlem - The Netherlands

Translated from the Dutch second revised edition
Original title:
De Egyptische Oer Gnosis en haar roep in het eeuwige nu.

ISBN 90 70196 88 3
1982 Roze kruis Pers, Haarlem, The Netherlands

PREFACE

It is with particular joy and gratitude that we may once again place the ancient message of the Egyptian Gnosis in the full light of day, now that world and mankind have reached a periodic turning-point in the great cosmic tides.

This message, which was and is the foundation of all liberating activity in the Aryan period of humanity, irrespective of when and where and under what name it is given, is directed to all those who perceive the tragedy of human events. It is intended for those who, with deeply disturbed hearts, still try to find a sure way out of the fatal cycle of death which, irresistibly, causes mankind to perish in the immeasurable darkness of the falling cosmic night.

By the nature of its contents, this book speaks directly to those who, as pupils of the gnostic Spiritual School, endeavour to go the path to the true destiny of humanity. Through this, all serious seekers of the liberating truth are able to approach the Spirit of gnostic pupilship in the purest manner possible and in this self-orientation discover whether they are also called to this path.

J. van Rijckenborgh

I

HERMES TRISMEGISTUS

At the end of April 1956, during a meeting with many pupils in our conference-centre Renova, at Lage Vuursche, the Netherlands, we asked the participants to reflect upon the new development in our work which would begin in June 1956, after the month of May, which is always so important for the Spiritual School. The great gnostic work for mankind was to begin in the following months.

Most of the pupils knew to what a great extent the fivefold Living Body of the School shuddered, as it were, under the increasing tensions of the coming events. They were conscious of the glorious times we had entered, times which would reveal to which camp each one would belong: to the camp of the Gnosis, or to that of ordinary nature. A very remarkable separation would take place.

The gnostic council had to be established, a council rooted in the Arch-Gnosis* — the Gnosis of Hermes Trismegistus. It is evident that all who seek the light of the liberating Truth must profoundly reflect on this Arch-Gnosis. This is the reason why we make known the instructions, given to the pupils of the Spiritual School, to all those who are as yet outsiders but who are called to the harvest of this time according to their inner state of being.

* See glossary page 222.

Who was, or rather who is Hermes Trismegistus? In answer to this question one can of course visualize an exalted divine envoy. There is no objection to this as long as you do not think of one historical person but rather of a number of envoys. For, according to the custom of the ancients, powers and manifestations were symbolically indicated as gods in a human form.

Therefore, one should say: Hermes *is*. Hermes is the true heavenly man who passed through the portals of the Golden Head. For this reason he is called 'Trismegistus', 'the thrice Great One' or 'the thrice Exalted One', for heavenly man is exalted in a threefold sense: religious, scientific and artistic. Religion, science and art constitute a perfect equilateral triangle in him.

When we speak of religion we understand by this that heavenly man lives and experiences his religion in the only true form, out of the absolute link with the original divine being. A pupil on the path who aims towards spirituality demonstrates the fact by a great purity, love, veracity and earnestness. He shows that he has been touched in his whole being by the great love that is God and that he wishes to live by this love, that he is longing for it, that he is striving after perfection. Even in this love, in this one aspect, a majestic equilateral triangle is to be seen. For he who wishes to receive the love of God and so desires to be a true gnostic should, firstly, empty himself of I-centredness and earthly ambition and action. Secondly, he will then receive and be filled with the light radiations of divine love and thirdly, he who receives these radiations through this emptying will also radiate the love of God.

By this clear-cut liberating action the pupil proves that he is on the path. This is the first hermetic aspect of sublimation. The second is its result.

When a pupil receives the love-light of the Gnosis, which occurs to the extent that he has conquered I-centrality and has broken through to self-emptying, a great change takes place in the five fluids of his natural soul-state. Neutralisation is an absolute condition and the endura is the basic formula, otherwise the Son of Man, the light of the Gnosis, can find no dwelling-place in the human system. However, when a human being's heart is open and the gnostic light can dwell therein, then it circulates daily in him.

One of the first characteristic results of this is enlightenment, illumination, as the ancients called it, a change of consciousness. New possibilities of consciousness then awaken. These already existed potentially in the system, but were unable to come to life until that moment. However, as soon as the new possibilities of consciousness become active, intellectuality recedes and wisdom is born. The science arising from this wisdom is the second hermetic aspect of sublimation. This second hermetic aspect of greatness is rightly called the Rosicrucian aspect, for the true Rosicrucian is wise by the grace of God; he is a sage in a new sense. He is the man of Golgotha who, in dying daily, fastens the Rose to the cross and so passes away in Jesus the Lord.

Also, in the second hermetic aspect we see how the equilateral triangle radiates. Wisdom must first be born out of the heart, out of the Rose of the heart, out of Bethlehem. It comes to maturity in the head sanctuary and just as Love, is diffused as a radiation by the whole being. So we should now clearly see the third hermetic aspect.

The art referred to is the Royal Art. Firstly, the Art of being able to live as a liberated man; secondly, the Art of becoming truly invincible as a heavenly, liberated man; thirdly, the Art of serving, through this life, God, world and mankind.

So, we see before us the magician by the grace of God, the brother or sister of the Holy Grail; the man who serves, illuminated by the wisdom of the Rosycross and the love-power of the Gnosis. The one who has become perfect by these three times three aspects is a Hermes Trismegistus, a heavenly man. He who begins to live by these nine aspects and who aims at this in complete self-surrender, goes the hermetic path, has become a child or son of Hermes. He approaches the state of the heavenly genesis of man, which arises from the threefold exaltation, also guaranteed by the classical Rosycross. Firstly the candidate, after having purified the heart-sanctuary by the emptying of the I, is touched by divine Love via the gate of Bethlehem and is thereby ignited by the Spirit of God; secondly, he will receive wisdom through this light of Love, not as traditional intellectual knowledge, but because the Fire circulates through him, from Bethlehem to Golgotha, due to his complete passing away in Jesus the Lord.

Then, thirdly, he demonstrates this sublimity in daily, magical priesthood. This is the rebirth out of the Holy Spirit.

Rebirth as understood in the gospel naturally involves complete sacrifice. You who are awaiting sublimity, you who are awaiting the touch of the Gnosis and the results of your going the path, should bear this in mind. Above all, the secret of your success is to be found in complete sacrifice. Therefore, when we speak of Hermes Trismegistus you will know that we do not wish to draw your attention to mankind's ancient past, to prehistoric times when the teacher spoke of most sublime things to mankind, but that we are dealing here with the living present of the Gnosis of all time.

In this living present dialectics, the ordinary state of nature, speaks most clearly and with its forces it claims our attention, wishing to absorb us completely and leading us to

believe that there is nothing else. Perhaps you have sought the Light — the Mystery — all your life. That is why we say to you that in the living present there are mysteries which you will have to approach with a total reversal in your attitude of life, if you really wish that their veils be rent and truth radiate from them.

The nature of dialectics is sometimes indicated as 'Herod' in the Bible. But the secret that must be unveiled, and has been omnipresent since the dawn of times; that has dug itself — bored itself — into dialectics, is sometimes indicated as 'Egypt' in the Bible.

When, in the early pupilship of the Holy Gnosis, you are touched by the light of the secret so that the mystery can be unveiled, the Herodian force of nature will try to kill this element, which is foreign to it, before the unveiling is completed.

Therefore, every serious pupil is told to flee to Egypt, just as the Child Jesus. That is, the serious pupil is told to penetrate deeply into the mysteries of the true life, if only we are able to see it, if only we are able to penetrate into it. For we say to you: the Holy Grail lives.

Finally, you will now understand why it is said that many great teachers of mankind, such as Pythagoras and Plato, obtained their knowledge from Hermes Trismegistus and why it appears that the hermetic wisdom is wholly identical to, for instance, the sacred doctrine of the East. For there is but *one* wisdom that has always been preserved and on which man has drawn, whenever and wherever in the world he might be. It is also clear, now, why numerous books are ascribed to Hermes. One author even speaks of a hundred thousand parchments containing Hermes' wisdom. However, all the books in the world could not contain the hermetic

wisdom because it is free from all traditional knowledge. In fact, this wisdom cannot be found in any book, but it will become a possession of one who really fastens 'the Rose' to the 'cross'.

After having provided an introduction, through the *Tabula Smaragdina*, which is the foundation and the synthesis of the original wisdom, we now invite your attention to the book, *Corpus Hermeticum*. However, by this we certainly do not suggest that: 'This is wisdom'. Rather, we wish to make you conversant with the testimony of the ancient wisdom, which should also be assimilated by us in the living present.

Therefore, we do not stop at the sight of ruined sanctuaries or yellowed parchments, although we salute them with reverence. We thank God for the preceding Brotherhoods, who have borne and suffered so much for us, for through their love-power, it is now permitted us to approach the Gnosis. However, we must never forget that, as a young gnostic Brotherhood, we are to do in the living present what the ancients did in the past.

We compare their testimony with our experience. As touched ones, as young shoots off the ancient trunk, we 'flee to Egypt' together. We immerse ourselves in the mystery that as children of God we may accomplish our task in the present.

II

THE TABULA SMARAGDINA

It is true!

It is certain!

It is the whole truth!

That which is below is equal to that which is above,
and that which is above is equal to that which is
below,
in order that the wonders of the One shall be
accomplished.

As all things are accomplished out of the
One, through one mediatorship, so they are
all born out of the One by transmission.

His father is the sun; his
mother is the moon, the air
has carried it in its womb, the
earth was its feeder.

The father of all talismans in the whole world is omnipresent.

His power remains intact, when it is used in the earth.

Divide lovingly and with great insight and wisdom the earth from the fire, the subtle from what is gross, dense and congealed.

It ascends from the earth to heaven and again descends to the earth, and takes unto itself the power of that which is above and that which is below.

So you will possess the glory of the entire world and for that reason all darkness will flee from you.

This one is the mighty Strength of all Strengths, because he will overcome everything subtle and penetrate everything solid.

So the world was created.

Out of it, in the same way, wonderful creations will arise.

I have been called the thrice-great Hermes, because I possess the three aspects of the doctrine of wisdom of the entire world.

Completed is that which I have said concerning the preparation of Gold, the activity of the spiritual Sun.

We wish to place before you a testimony of the ancients, known as the *Tabula Smaragdina* — the Emerald Table. Many legends exist in connection with this *Emerald Table*, which will undoubtedly be very well known to you. The table referred to is a tombstone covered with inscriptions, which contain the traditional wisdom of the ancients. This classical wisdom was hewn in the tombstone, under which the undamaged body of Hermes Trismegistus was found.

This reminds us immediately of the temple of the tomb of Christian Rosycross, with the bronze plate, also full of formulae of universal wisdom. It covered the grave of Christian Rosycross and, analogous to the story of the *Tabula Smaragdina*, the undamaged body of our Father Brother C.R.C., attired in full state, was found beneath it.

Thus Johann Valentine Andreae and his companions were certainly not original when composing their *Fama Fraternitatis*. They could not be original, for the Call of the Brotherhood remains constant throughout all times. It must be the same and it always will repeat the wisdom of the Arch-Gnosis.

In the testimony of the ancients our attention is directly drawn to the fact that an *Emerald Table* is mentioned. The emerald is a precious stone of an exceptional green colour. Precious stones, just as metals, have the quality of absorbing vibrations and radiations — to maintain and reflect them.

Not every stone and not every metal polarizes with the same vibration. Each metal and each stone has its own character and particular faculty. This is why in occultism, for instance, the science of metals, stones and colours is often practised to enhance the results of certain radiations and to deter other radiations. In the Bible, precious stones are also mentioned. Just think of the city, which in the Book of Revelations is called the New Jerusalem. Its twelve gates are

decorated in an exceptional manner with precious stones to make clear, so it is said, that all the illuminating, helping and strengthening radiations enter through these twelve gates. Consequently, the city no longer needs the light of the dialectical sun and moon.

The colour, the power, the radiation indicated as 'emerald', points to a basis, to a beginning, to a foundation without which nothing can be undertaken. Therefore, the *Tabula Smaragdina* is meant to be the beginning of hermetic philosophy. Without this key, it is impossible to understand the arch-wisdom of the Gnosis. This is what the hermetic philosophers of days gone by meant by the name: *Tabula Smaragdina*.

The *Tabula Smaragdina*, the Emerald Table, the tombstone under which the undamaged, noble body of Hermes Trismegistus lay buried, begins, as you now know, with the words:

'It is true!'

'It is certain!'

'It is the whole truth!'

This is a threefold corroboration of the formulae of wisdom recorded on the holy stone. If this beginning is considered superficially, it seems that it is trivial and contrary to objective soberness. Could not the author have been content with saying: 'The contents are completely in accordance with the truth?' No, this would not have been enough, because this threefold corroboration relates to a magic formulae of very deep meaning.

In the first line it is declared that the truth, of which the *Tabula Smaragdina* testifies, is completely confirmed by the experience of one's own personality in the microcosmic system.

So, when the hermetic man says: 'It is true', he means something quite different than what is meant by dialectical man. The hermetic man speaks of the truth only after he has walked the path and experienced its values. When we hear such a testimony from this magical person, we can believe it and trust it to be true while realizing that we, in turn having walked the path of experience, will also be able to say joyfully and with the same certainty: 'It is true'.

Truth is only of value, is only true for you when you experience it yourself. What use is a truth you do not follow, you do not live? Mere truth cannot free anyone, but it can judge, that is, man can come into conflict with the truth if he tries to go his own way. Yet as soon as man endeavours to approach the truth more closely, to vivify and to affirm it through his attitude of life, he becomes free from judgement. That is why the man of the Old Testament has every reason to fear the truth and tremble before its judgement, whereas the man of the New Testament, who fulfils the truth, learns to love it exceedingly.

With the second line 'It is certain', is meant that truth goes no further than the limit of one's own experience, is not able to go any further and that every speculative-philosophical element keeps us separated from the truth.

You will know that all dialectical philosophy is almost completely speculative and the Spiritual School has often shown this. This is why there are so many philosophical systems that contradict each other. They very often demonstrate high trains of thought and an unlimited longing after truth, but are very, very far removed from the truth itself.

The truth of which the hermetic man testified is, firstly, experienced and, secondly, divested of every speculative element. Thirdly, it must be the whole truth, because only then can it be liberating.

The ordinary man often says: 'What is true for you is not necessarily true for me'. Here is meant that many truths, which are contradictory to each other, are fostered in this world. Here is said that struggling, natural man, in his loneliness, often goes a way that is necessary and true for him, but which for another might be completely useless or even damaging. However, the whole truth, in a hermetic sense, is all-embracing, concerns everyone, is intended for world and mankind.

That is why the *Tabula Smaragdina*, first of all, intends to say: we do not speak about a truth that means a lot at a certain moment for a certain person as a romantic painting of life's course, but of a truth that must be experienced, which contains not one speculation and which is completely whole, that is, destined for all of humanity. The *Tabula Smaragdina* contains such a threefold complete and unassailable truth. It continues: 'That which is below is equal to that which is above, and that which is above is equal to that which is below, in order that the wonders of the One shall be accomplished. As all things are accomplished out of the One, through one mediatorship, so they are all born out of the One by transmission'.

You will recognize in these statements the well-known hermetic axiom: 'As above, so below'. It is good to reflect on this axiom for, viewed superficially, there is something wrong with such an absolute thesis. One cannot possibly defend the idea that the true realm of light, with its glory and divinity, projects itself into the world of dialectics as though dialectics would be its proof. On the contrary, there is an enormous conflict between the 'above' of the Gnosis and the 'below' of the nature of death.

For this reason it is necessary to consider this hermetic axiom in a way that is completely different from the approach of dialectical man. The occultist, of all men, is guilty of wrong

interpretations; with the help of hermetic philosophy he tries to excuse his own I-central endeavours. In his striving to the kingship of the I the occult man pretends to follow God's paths, to make the 'so below' equal to the 'as above', which, of course, is impossible. Starting from the certainty of finding the complete wisdom in the *Tabula Smaragdina*, we can, precisely through the hermetic axiom, establish that there is a great conflict in the All-revelation. The 'so below' is not equal to the 'as above'! The great power of the *Tabula Smaragdina* is that we are faced with this great conflict in the All-revelation, not only to accentuate it, but to point out that it can be abolished in world and mankind; yes, that it must be abolished. The great mission of the *Tabula Smaragdina* stems from the hermetic axiom.

Everything in the All-revelation was once accomplished through the power of God. Therefore, when it now seems to exist in a damaged state it can either disappear from the power of God or be raised once more to the original state. So it can also transfigure by this power.

The hermetic axiom presents the great secret of salvation as a scientific formula, as an unassailable thesis: if you connect yourself with the wonderful power of the spirit of Love, with Pymander whose name means 'shepherd' or 'guide of man', then it cannot be otherwise than the lower is once more equal to the higher. That is why the *Tabula Smaragdina* continues: 'His father is the sun, his mother is the moon, the air has carried it in its womb, the earth was its feeder. The father of all talismans in the whole world is omnipresent. His power remains intact, when it is used in the earth'.

This short formula is a wonder of clarity. The author says: Take care, there are two Fathers; the Father of the realm of nature and the Father of the field of the Spirit. The realm of

nature must generate and be maintained out of the field of the Spirit.

However, it is possible that a man lives only out of the realm of nature (this being possible as it is in itself a completely equipped field of creation), that he is entirely wrapped up in it and so forsakes and forgets the Father of the field of the Spirit, as is the case with dialectical mankind. In this way the conflict develops because then the 'as above' is no longer equal to the 'so below'. A hardening of the racial body occurs and also other crystallisations accompany natural man, who has fallen away from the field of the Spirit.

Therefore, a solution, a redemption must be found. This redemption is possible, for: 'The father of all talismans in the whole world is omnipresent. His power remains intact when it is used in the earth'.

If you wish to apply this power, then listen to the prescription that the *Tabula Smaragdina* gives you: 'Divide lovingly and with great insight and wisdom the earth from the fire, the subtle from what is gross, dense and congealed. It ascends from the earth to heaven and again descends to the earth, and takes unto itself the power of that which is above and that which is below. So you will possess the glory of the entire world and for that reason all darkness will flee from you'.

Assail your entire natural being, which is severed from the Father of the All, from the Spirit, through the power of the Gnosis, through the power of the loving breath of God.

Go the path of the endura, the path of the great reversal, which has been announced and taught by the Spiritual School for so many years, and you will certainly conquer. He who really joins the mighty Strength of all Strengths, will once be victorious.

Then everything that the Gnosis has announced about the preparation of Gold, the activity of the spiritual Sun, is accomplished.

III

THE CORPUS HERMETICUM

After having studied the fundamental formulae of wisdom of the *Tabula Smaragdina*, we now turn our attention to the *Corpus Hermeticum*, to compare this key of the ancients with that of the young Gnosis of the present day. When we examine to what extent the doctrine, the life and the directives of the ancients are in agreement with those of the younger ones, we will know whether the young Gnosis derives its right to take the initiative in the great world work from intrinsic values or from mere delusions.

The *Corpus Hermeticum*, the work into which we will go deeply in this edition, consists of eighteen chapters indicated as books. The first book bears the name *Pymander*. It deals with a dialogue between Hermes and a mysterious being, which calls itself Pymander.

Hermes is the nature-born man who has embarked upon the path of liberation; who has gone through the cave of birth of Bethlehem and in this way received the new soul state. He is the one who is now weaving the golden Wedding Garment as the basis for the new-born soul state, while the new state of consciousness, the Mercury of hermetic consciousness, also begins to manifest itself. As soon as this consciousness begins to assert itself, Pymander comes to the fore.

Pymander is that with which the hermetic man comes into

contact by virtue of the new manifestation of his being. Pymander is the omnipresent wisdom of God. Yes, Pymander *is* God! He is the Word that is from the beginning. Yet he is this word not in its general sense as is the case, for instance, in the prologue of the gospel of John: 'In the beginning was the Word', or as in many other places in the Bible, where the name of God is used in a general sense.

No, Pymander is the Wisdom, the Word, the God that directs itself very definitely, very personally to Hermes. When you read in the Bible that God directed himself to a hierophant or any other worker, then often the divine language is not meant in a general sense but, in fact, that the Logos approached this worker, this servant, this hermetic man in the sense of Pymander.

The omnipresent wisdom is a radiation, a vibration, a universal light-force, a great and special electromagnetic force. It is the highest radiation of the All-revelation, the radiation of the Spirit itself. When a man possesses the rising hermetic consciousness, the radiation of the Spirit is immediately recognised and experienced by this consciousness. A focus arises, a fierce, powerfully luminous meeting point between this universal field of the Spirit and the hermetic man. In this focus the Spirit and the consciousness see each other face to face. The Spirit of this focus is Pymander; the consciousness is Hermes.

The walking with God, the dialogue between God and man arises through the activity of the focus. As soon as on the path, you develop and experience something of the new consciousness, you simultaneously enter into personal contact with the deity; the daily walking with God begins to develop. We hope you will understand that this has nothing to do with the spiritualistic practises of the disembodied entities of the reflection sphere, who try to imitate in a loath-

some way the contact between spirit and man. See clearly that everything which directs itself to the nature-born consciousness, to the I-consciousness, is without any exception imitation, delusion, deception.

A luminous structure of force-lines*) arises when the hermetic consciousness directs itself to the Spirit. In this way the spirit-fire is ignited in the meeting-point and the hermetic man will meet Pymander. A power, a vibration flows into the hermetic man out of this structure of force-lines. This vibration has a sound and a colour completely in accordance with the motive of the hermetic man. On this basis he lifts himself up into the field of the Spirit. So this meeting has a very special character and only in this way God speaks to man. It is the finding and hearing of the Ineffable Name of which you will already have heard or read. You will have heard how throughout the centuries countless persons have sought after or tried to listen to the Ineffable Name.

The wisdom of all times explains quite correctly that the finding and hearing of the Ineffable Name is the summit of a gnostic magical development. As we have said, countless people seek this Horeb, this mount of attainment in a negative way, out of their natural I. But it is evident that these attempts are doomed to fail and always will fail as long as the I is the basis of the effort.

Yet, the key to this magical climax is to be found in the heart of every man. When a man opens his heart to the Gnosis, he begins to walk the path which will lead to the meeting with God, to the daily association with the Deity. How terribly poor, how completely ignorant present-day theology proves to be that wishes to understand God's word as a book and which diligently digs in the earth to find God's

*) As a help to your imagination, just think of the structure of force-lines one can perceive in any flame.

word; which imagines that if only one reads a chapter a day and speaks of it, one will hear God's voice. Not one priestly man or priestly expedient will be able to help you walk with God. In order to celebrate the meeting with God, you need to go the way to your Pymander yourself.

Seen in this light you will no doubt realize the danger of faulty meditation. The hermetic man can consciously raise himself by meditation into the field of the Spirit. The hermetic man, who has the command over the new consciousness, can raise himself on its wings unto the field of the Spirit and meet the flame of the Spirit. But as soon as the non-hermetic man, for whatever reason and however well intended, seeks God meditatively in order to be united with him, negative activities and results will always arise, which for the most part cause a link with dialectical forces and the reflection sphere. It is the aim of those, who continually invite and encourage you to become meditatively active by means of all sorts of invocations, to create such links.

It is a part of the Great Play* and therefore, we are avowed adversaries of a pronounced meditative life. If you wish to be safe, do not seek God through mediation but by your life's course. Do not make idle stories but act with deeds. Let your new attitude of life speak for you by means of action, by means of a demonstrated reality of life — and go the path!

Whenever we gather in our Temples, the invocations, rituals and prayers are not a means of creating a mystic-meditative atmosphere, but always an attempt to attune to the attainable and admissible key of vibration of the Living Body of the young Gnosis which is going the path. By this we want to make clear that every invocation must correspond

*See J. van Rijckenborgh *Unmasking*, Roze kruis Pers Haarlem, The Netherlands.

with the state of being, the quality of the person who invokes and is conscious of going the path. If you are presently unable to determine the quality of your state of being, then a safe basis is to be found in the Lord's Prayer. There it is stated: 'Give us this day our daily bread' and in this every pupil will always find safety. If the prayer is spoken by a longing soul, he will certainly receive the daily spiritual bread that is his due.

The personal meeting of the hermetic man with the field of the Spirit, also indicated as 'hearing the soft voice', is frequently discussed in the Bible. It is said of Elijah, when he found himself before the cave of mount H oreb: 'See, the voice came to him'. And when Appolonius of Tyana wished to hear the soft voice, he wrapped himself, just as Elijah 'in his mantle'. This is an indication for the raising up of oneself to God in the vested values of the golden Wedding Garment.

We think the way is now sufficiently paved to confront you with the first book of the *Corpus Hermeticum*, the book *Pymander*. We have intentionally introduced this subject in detail to impress on you the fact that you stand on holy ground when you approach the *Corpus Hermeticum*.

IV

FIRST BOOK

PYMANDER

1. Once, while I was meditating on the essential things and my mind elevated itself, my bodily senses fell into slumber, as may happen to someone who, after excessive feeding or as a result of great bodily fatigue, is overcome by a deep sleep.
2. It seemed to me that I saw a mighty being of indefinite stature, who called me by name and said:
3. 'What do you wish to hear and see and what do you long to learn and to know in your Spirit-Soul?'
4. I spoke: 'Who art thou?'
5. And I heard in answer: 'I am Pymander, the Spirit-Soul, the Being who exists out of itself. I know your desire and I am with you everywhere'.

6. I said: 'I desire to be instructed in the essential things, to understand their nature and to know God. Oh, how I long to understand!'
7. He answered: 'Keep firmly in your consciousness what you wish to learn and I will instruct you'.
8. With these words he changed in appearance and at once, in the twinkling of an eye, everything opened itself to me; I saw an immense vision; all things became one light, very serene yet exalted and I was exceedingly delighted at its sight.
9. Shortly afterwards, a terrible and melancholic darkness came into being in a part of it. It bent itself downwards and rotated in tortuous spirals, just like a snake, it seemed to me. Then this darkness changed into a moist and inexpressibly disordered nature, from which smoke arose as from fire, while emitting a sound like some indescribable groaning.
10. Then a cry resounded from out of the moist nature, a wordless call which I compared with the voice of the fire, while from out of the light a holy word spread itself over nature and a pure fire darted on high out of the moist nature, light, fierce and mighty.

11. Because of its lightness the air followed the fiery breath; from out of the earth and the water it raised itself to the fire, so that it seemed to be hung on the fire.
12. The earth and the water remained where they were, very thoroughly mixed together, so that it was not possible to distinguish the earth and the water; they were continuously moved by the breath of the word which hovered over them.
13. Then Pymander spoke: `Have you understood what this vision means?'
14. I answered: `I will learn that now'.
15. Then he said: `I am that light, the Spirit-Soul, your God, who was before the moist nature which appeared out of the darkness. The luminous word that emanates from the Spirit-Soul is the Son of God'.
16. `What does that mean?' I asked.
17. `Understand it thus: that which sees and hears in you

is the word of the Lord and your Spirit-Soul is God the Father. They are not separated from each other, for their unity is Life'.

18. 'I thank you', I said.

19. 'Now direct your heart upon the light and know it'.

20. With these words he stared me full in the face for a while, so penetratingly that I shuddered at his stare.

21. When, after this, he raised his head again, I saw in my Spirit-Soul how the light, consisting of innumerable powers, had become a truly unlimited world, whereas the fire was enclosed and restrained by a very mighty power and thus was brought into balance.

22. All this I determined in the vision through the word of Pymander. As I was completely beside myself, he spoke to me again:

23. 'You have now seen in the Spirit-Soul the beautiful original human figure, the archetype, the original

principle from before the beginning-without-end'.
Thus, Pymander spoke to me.

24. 'From where came the elements of nature?' I asked.

25. He answered: 'Out of God's will which, when he had taken up the word in himself and had seen the beautiful archetype of the world, formed this after this model into an ordered world, out of the elements of his own being and out of the souls born of him.

26. God, the Spirit, which in itself is man and woman and the fount of life and light, brought forth by a word a second spirit-being, as the Demiurge which, as the God of the fire and of the breath, has formed seven Rectors, which surround the sensory world with their circles and govern it with what is called Destiny.

27. Immediately the word of God shot away from the elements that are active below to the pure region of nature that was just formed, and it united itself with the Demiurge with which it is essentially one.

28. Thus the lower elements of nature were left to

themselves, robbed of reason, so that they were nothing more than mere matter.

29. But the Demiurge, united with the Word, whilst he encompassed the circles and caused them to rotate very rapidly, brought the cycle of his creatures into motion from an indefinite beginning unto an end-without-end, because the end coincides with the beginning.
30. According to the will of the Spirit, this rotation of the circles brought forth out of the sunken elements senseless animals, because they had no longer the word in their midst; the air brought forth winged beasts and the water swimming beasts.
31. Earth and water were separated, according to the will of the Spirit, and the earth caused to issue from its womb the beasts which it held enclosed in itself: four-footed animals, crawling beasts, wild beasts and domestic animals.
32. The Spirit, the Father of all creatures, who is life and light, brought forth a man alike unto him, whom he began to love as his own child. For man, being the

likeness of his father, was very beautiful; God loved in truth his own figure and gave him charge of all his works.

33. However, when man observed the creation the Demiurge had formed in the fire, he also wished to bring forth a piece of work and the Father granted him this. When he then entered the field of creation of the Demiurge, in which he was to have a free hand, he observed the works of his brother. The Rectors began to love him and each of them let him share his own rank in the hierarchy of the spheres.

34. When, afterwards, he had learnt to know their being and had received a share in their nature, he wished to break through the limitations of the circles and learn the power of him who rules over the fire.

35. Then man, who was given power over the world of mortal beings and the reasonless beasts, bent over, through the cohesive power of the spheres, the envelopment of which he had broken through, and showed himself to the nature below in the beautiful figure of God.

36. When nature saw the one who possessed the inexhaustible beauty and all the energies of the seven Rectors, united in the figure of God, it smiled with love, for it had seen the features of this wonderfully beautiful form of man reflected in the water, and had perceived his shadow upon the earth.

37. Concerning himself: when he observed in nature the form that so very much resembled him, because of the reflection in the water, he fell in love with it and wished to live there. What he wished he did at once, and thus he inhabited the reasonless form. And when nature had received its beloved unto itself, it encircled him wholly and they became one, for the fire of their desire was great.

38. That is why, of all the creatures in nature, only man is dual, namely, mortal as to the body and immortal as to the essential Man.

39. For although he is immortal and has power over all things, he still undergoes the fate of mortals because he is subjected to Destiny. Therefore, although he belongs above the cohesive power of the spheres, he has become a slave within this power. Although he is

man-woman, because he issued from a father who is man-woman, and although he is free of sleep, because he issued from a being that is free of sleep, he is nevertheless conquered by the desire of the senses and by sleep'.

40. Thereupon I said: `Oh, Spirit-in-me, I, too, love the word.'
41. Pymander spoke: `What I am going to say to you is the secret that has been hidden until this day. When nature had become one with man, it generated an astonishing wonder. Man had in himself the nature of all the seven Rectors, composed, as I have told you, of fire and breath; nature now brought forth, without delay, seven humans corresponding with the nature of the seven Rectors, at the same time man and woman and with a figure that was erect'.
42. Then I cried out: `Oh Pymander, a special wish has now arisen in me and I burn with longing to hear it. Please go on!'
43. Pymander spoke: `Be silent, for I have not yet finished my first explanation'.

44. 'I am silent', I answered.
45. 'Well then, as I said, the creation of the first seven humans took place as follows: the earth was the matrix, water the procreative element, fire brought the process of genesis to maturity, nature received from the ether the breath of life and created the bodies according to the form of man.
46. Man, out of life and light, became soul and Spirit-Soul; life became soul, light became Spirit-Soul. All creatures of the sensory world remained in this state till the end of the cycle and till the beginning of the species.
47. And now listen to what you so strongly desire to hear. When the cycle was completed, the bond that united everything was broken by the will of God. All the beasts that until that moment had been both male and female were separated as to these two aspect, just as man; thus some beasts became male and others female. At once God spoke the holy word: 'Grow while you increase and multiply in number, all you who are created and made. And let those who possess the Spirit-Soul recognize themselves as immortal

and know that the cause of death is love of the body and of everything that belongs to earth'.

48. When God had thus spoken, providence brought about the blending through fate and the cohesive power of the spheres and it set propagation in motion. All the creatures multiplied themselves after their sort; whoever has recognized himself as immortal is chosen above all, whilst whoever has loved the body that originated out of the error of desire remains wandering in darkness and must go through the pain of experiencing all things that belong to death'.

49. 'What an atrocious fault have those, who are in ignorance, made', I cried, 'that they have been robbed of immortality?'

50. 'I think you did not reflect on what you have heard. Have I not told you to be especially attentive?'

51. 'I reflect on it', I said, 'and now I remember and am grateful to you'.

52. `If you reflected on it, tell me then why those who are in death deserve to die'.
53. `Because the fount from which their bodies spring is the dismal darkness which caused the moist nature to arise; this composed, in the sensory world, the body in which death quenches its thirst'.
54. `You have understood this well. But why does he, who recognized himself, come to God, just as God's word said it?'
55. `Because', I answered, `the Father of all Things, out of whom man is born, is light and life'.
56. `Yes, light and life, that is God the Father out of whom man is born. If you know that you have come forth out of life and light and that you are composed of these elements, you will return to life'. This is what Pymander told me.
57. `But tell me yet, oh my Spirit-Soul, how shall I enter into life?', I asked. `For God has said: `Let man who possesses the Spirit-Soul recognize himself. Do not all people then possess the Spirit-Soul?'

58. `Take care of what you say! For I, Pymander, the Spirit-Soul, come to those who are holy and good, pure and merciful — to the devout; my presence becomes a help to them, so that they at once recognize everything; by their love they please the Father and thank him in childlike devotion, with the praise and the songs they owe him. Before giving their body over to death, whose own it is, they scorn their senses, because its activities are only too well known to them.
59. Yet I, the Spirit-Soul, will certainly not allow the activities of the body that attack them, to practise their influence upon them: for as the Guardian of the Doors I shall refuse admittance to evil and shameful deeds and cut off unholy imaginings.
60. Yet I keep myself far from the foolish, the bad, the corrupt, the envious, the covetous, the murderers and the ungodly; them I leave to the avenging Demon who, by belabouring such people with the scourge of the fire, drives this into their senses and through this equips them for further unholy deeds, so that an ever greater punishment is executed upon them. Therefore, the desire of these people is continually seeking

greater satisfaction, causing them to rage in darkness, without there being anything that can satiate them. In this exists their torment and through this the flame that scorches them blazes ever higher'.

61. 'Oh, Spirit-Soul, you have instructed me in all these things exactly as I wished. But tell me now, how does the way upwards develop'.

62. Hereupon Pymander answered: 'First, this body is relinquished to transformation in the dissolving process of the material body, and the form you had will then be seen no more; you give your ordinary I, that in the future is rendered inoperative, over to the Demon. The physical senses return to their sources of which they once more form a part; they once more become one with its activities, whereas the passion and desire impulses return to the reasonless nature.

63. In this way man travels further upwards, across the cohesive power of the spheres; to the first circle he yields the power to increase and decrease; to the second circle the proficiency in evil and the artifice that has become impotent; to the third circle the now impotent error of desire; to the fourth circle the

vanity of ostentation of the ruler, who can no longer be satisfied; to the fifth circle the godless recklessness and insolent thoughtlessness; to the sixth circle the attachment to riches that has been put out of action; to the seventh circle the lie that continually sets its snares.

64. Then, when he has stripped himself of that which issued from the power of the spheres, he enters the eighth nature, in possession of nothing but his own power and sings, with all those who are there, hymns of praise to the Father and all rejoice with him because of his presence.

65. When he has become equal to them, he also hears certain powers that abide above the eighth nature, singing hymns together in praise of God. And then they rise up, in correct order, to the Father, give themselves up to the powers and, themselves having become powers in their turn, enter into God. This is the good end for those who possess the Gnosis: that they become God.

66. But . . . why do you delay? Now that you have received everything from me, are you not going to

those who are worthy of it, in order to serve them as a guide so that, thanks to your mediatorship, the human race may be saved by God?'

67. When Pymander had said this, he blended himself before my eyes with the powers. And I, who was now clothed with power and instructed about the nature of the Universe and about the exalted vision, thanked and praised the Father of all Things. I began to proclaim to the people the beauty of the Gnosis and of the life, dedicated to God.

68. 'Oh, you nations, you men who are born of the earth and who have given yourselves up to intoxication and slumber and to the ignorance concerning God, become sober and stop wallowing in debauchery, enchanted as you are by an animal sleep.'

69. On hearing this, they came to me with one accord. And I spoke further: 'Oh you earthly born, why have you given yourselves up to death, whereas you have power to participate in immortality? Repent, you who walk in error and who have excepted ignorance as a leader. Liberate yourselves from the dark light

and take part in immortality by taking leave of destruction forever.'

70. Some of them mocked me and went away, for they were on the road of death. But others, who had thrown themselves on their knees for me, besought me to instruct them. I raised them up and became a guide to the human race by teaching them in what way they would be saved. And I sowed in them the words of wisdom and they were fed with the water of immortality.

71. When evening came and the light of the sun had almost disappeared, I invited them to give thanks to God. After they had completed the thanksgiving, they all returned to their firesides.

72. I, however, wrote Pymanders benefaction in me, and when I was completely filled with this, a supreme joy came over me. For the sleep of the body became the soberness of the soul; the closing of the eyes the true seeing; the silence became for me as a pregnancy of the good and the proclaiming of the word resulted in fruitful works of salvation. All this has come to me, because I received from Pymander, my Spirit-Soul,

the Being that exists out of itself, the word from the beginning. Thus I am now filled with the divine breath of truth. Therefore, I direct with my whole soul and with all my powers this song of praise to God the Father:

73. Holy is God, the Father of all things.

Holy is God, whose will comes about by means of his own powers.

Holy is God, who wishes to be known and who is known by those who belong to him.

Holy art thou, who through the word has called everything into being.

Holy art thou, after whose likeness the All-nature has become.

Holy art thou, who is in no way formed by nature. Holy art thou, mightier than all might.

Holy art thou, more excellent than all that is. Holy art thou, exalted above all praise.

Accept the pure offerings awakened by the word in my soul and in my heart, which direct themselves to thee, oh, ineffable, oh, inexpressible One, whose name may be spoken only by silence.

Lend an ear to me who prays that I may never be severed from the Gnosis, the true knowledge that belongs to my nucleus being.

Incline thyself to me and fill me with thy power; with this grace I shall bring the Light to those of my race who are in ignorance, my brothers, thy sons. Yes, I believe and testify with my blood; I am going to the Life and to the Light.

Be praised, oh Father, thy son will sanctify with thee, for which thou hast given him all power.'

V

PYMANDER AND HERMES

In order to reveal the wisdom of the *Corpus Hermeticum* to the limit of our capability, we will not follow the text verse by verse. We will try to present a general view to assist you in visualizing the book *Pymander* and the following works of Hermes. If we did not adopt this approach it would be necessary to present a compilation of enormous proportions.

As we explained in the third chapter, the hermetic man is able, because of his inner state and transfiguring life, to enter into contact with the universal field of the Spirit. A structure of force-lines arises in the focus of such a contact: Pymander manifests himself; Pymander appears out of the Spirit.

Understand that Pymander is not a separate entity living in the field of the Spirit, but is an ignition in it, a living reality. Yet this igniting fire is the Pymander of Hermes, for its manifestation is related to the state of being and the qualitative power of Hermes.

It is stated that when Hermes reflected on the essential things and his Spirit-Soul elevated itself, Pymander appeared; he that is and yet, also is not. If the hermetic man ceases for a while to concentrate upon the field of the Spirit, the pymandric figure disappears, dissolves in the omnipresent Light. Then the fire, the fiery flames, fade away.

Pymander is present, nevertheless he is not, because he is completely one with all the Light.

From the first text we are struck by the fact that Hermes reflected on the essential things and that his Spirit-Soul lifted itself up. You should pay attention to this, for this process is a requirement for the hermetic man. It demonstrates the so necessary co-operation between head and heart which defines life. You can remember this as an axiom. 'They cannot be separated', says Pymander and therefore you must get to know the secret of the heart.

Man has four vehicles: the material body, its etheric double, the desire body and the thinking faculty. The etheric body builds and maintains the material body; the desire body defines the inclinations, the type, the character, the ability of man — in short, his essential nature.

The desire body, or sidereal figure as Paracelsus called it, surrounds and penetrates us from every angle and the sidereal fluids enter our material system by means of the liver. There is a continuous circulation of these forces that enter and leave the liver. So the liver is more especially the focus of the desire body. The quality of the head and heart sanctuaries is in accordance with the nature of the desire body, as it has developed since birth. The head and heart of natural man are the slaves of the desire body; the functions of the heart and the mentality are directed by the desire body. Your feelings and your thinking as persons of this nature are regulated by your pelvic sanctuary. Consequently, you live out of your pelvic sanctuary, through your spleen-liver system, bound to matter, desiring and focused upon everything that is of ordinary nature. All sidereal radiations enter the liver in accordance with the activities of your desire nature.

When, after endless roaming on the dreary road of experience, a human being reaches a dead-end in nature-

bound life, it can happen that he begins to desire renewal, to yearn for a liberating solution; that in such a man something like a yearning for salvation develops, an urge to seize one or another approach to salvation — to realize it within himself, that he might climb up out of the pit of mortification. This state of searching for renewal, this increasingly conscious yearning for salvation is the highest form of desire of which nature-born man is capable. You cannot reach higher. What in your heart churns and boils is completely desire and its qualitative pinnacle is yearning for salvation. This is the highest state, the limit of dialectical, astral radiation. When we stand at this border, the Gnosis touches us; not in the liver, but in the heart.

The first touch of the Gnosis always takes place in the heart sanctuary; however, that occurs only in answer to man's yearning for salvation. Therefore, it is out of the question that anyone who would approach the Temples of the gnostic Spiritual School simply experimentally or out of curiosity would benefit in any way. It is beneficial to be in a gnostic focus only when the heart has opened somewhat for the Gnosis, yet only as a result of that highest state of desire, the yearning for salvation.

In the Gnosis the heart is called the sanctuary of love. But because of all kinds of karmic influences, which have been active since the moment of our birth and which inevitably define our way of life throughout the years, the heart of natural man is no longer a sanctuary of love. There is not one particle of real love to be found in his heart; it is a den of criminals, a pit of pestilence.

When in ancient times the heart was called 'the sanctuary of love', it referred to a heart that was prepared for a life-force, a possibility of life that can rightly bear the name of

love. Everything that is lower than the high standard of love is a state of desire, of I-centrality. At first, the yearning for salvation is also a demand for the self. The I is in a tight corner and now it seeks a way out. 'I' seek 'my' salvation. The Gnosis, in its imperishable Love, touches us in an endeavour to help us, because we are such desperately poor wretches.

The Love that is worthy of the name is not to be found in the essence of dialectics. It is of a higher order; it belongs to the new true life. It is Spirit, it is God. That is why Pymander says in the 17th verse: 'The Spirit-Soul is God the Father'. And in verse 19: 'Direct your heart upon the Light and know it'. 'With these words', so continues Hermes, 'He looked me full in the face for a while, so penetratingly that I shuddered under his gaze'. That is the test: what will be present in your heart sanctuary in the future — desire or love. 'Direct your heart upon the Light and know it'.

When the Light makes its abode in the heart sanctuary, your desire-nature must disappear. Then egocentricity, that urge of the I, must be completely extinguished.

We must realize that the heart sanctuary is the basis for the Spirit; the Spirit will have to live there and, consequently, the heart sanctuary will have to be completely prepared in all its aspects for this high state. 'Life is where the heart is', says Pymander.

When the heart is prepared for its duty, we will see in the Spirit-Soul the beautiful, original human figure, the archetype of our human existence, the original principle from before the beginning-without-end.

Dialectical man has made a cavern of desire out of his heart; do see this very clearly. Within him roars the fire of the passion of the I, while in fact the heart is destined to offer a habitation *to the Spirit, to the God in us*, who is potentially present in the proto-atom. Do you understand how intensely

ill we are? How extraordinarily deep we have sunk? The heart sanctuary, the Temple for the God in us, has become a den of criminals.

He who has been enabled to devote his heart once more to His service will also be able to open the head sanctuary for his priestly task in the service of mankind. Then he too will be able to reflect on the essential things. For out of the renewed heart the Mercury-consciousness is born.

The Gnosis considers us as patients because of the psychical condition of our heart sanctuaries. For this reason we are tolerated. The Mercury consciousness, the threefold new faculty of thinking, willing and acting, can be born only out of a renewed heart. When you then reflect on the essential things, it may happen that you are lifted up with the purified heart into the omnipresent field of the Spirit.

Therefore, the hermetic development and the hermetic life base themselves upon the unification and co-operation of the heart and the head — not of the I and the head, but of the purified heart and the head. The world has stranded on this requirement. The chaos and the degeneration are clearly visible, and the I asks: 'What are we coming to?' One experiments in many ways, using an enormous amount of energy and dynamism, but without success, because man forgets to purify the heart sanctuary and to devote it to His service. Only when the heart is purified, consecrated and opened for the Light, will a new mentality arise. Only then will it be possible to place a finger on the sore spots of this world, of this society.

When you are called to the Gnosis, know and fulfil the task and *purify your heart*. It must be emptied of desire and of egoism and it must open itself to the Love. For this is the beginning. Then the head will follow, yes, must follow; and then you will meet your Pymander.

Pymander is born out of God's Love and not out of the urge of the will of someone who is in a tight corner. Hermes Trismegistus tells you that the key to the Gnosis is the purification of the heart. When you go this path and carry out this work, the soft voice also will speak to you: 'What do you wish to hear and see? What is your heart's longing to learn and to know?' What else would you wish to learn and to know than the essential things? In the beginning, the most essential thing you should know surely is the truth with regard to yourself. For if you do not know yourself, how will you be able to fathom the other One?

The hermetic man, during his first attempt to fathom these things, sees a mighty, serene and heart-warming light. Through it he sees, in a downward, spiralling motion, a pool of darkness, terror and misery, intensely pitiful, continually in motion in an inexpressible confusion. Dark red flames shoot outwards on all sides and out of this cavern of confusion, in this pitch-dark blackness, a voice resounds, a silent call, corresponding to the Light that is spread. From out of this Light a Holy Word is spoken and that which is true and pure in the darkness, lifts itself out of the dark cavern of birth and begins to form into an atmosphere. So we see the light, which has risen above sunken nature and the atmosphere, both attuning to the original Light. Below them lies the moist darkness of earth and water, the dialectical state of being of the candidate. However, it is a candidate who is occupied with purifying his heart. The moist darkness of earth and water is moved by the voice of the Word that is of and from the Light, the Word that is turned towards the Light.

'Do you now understand this word?' the Pymander of the Living Body of the young Gnosis asks. And He gives us the answer: 'I am that Light and it now abides in the heart of the

true candidate'. It is God manifested in the flesh — the returning Osiris, the returning Christ.

The luminous field of the Spirit is first and foremost Pymander, the structure of force-lines of the All-revelation. Yet, this mighty light, this fire-flame of God, chooses to abide in the heart. In this way the Deity becomes a Son, for what has slept in the heart for aeons is awakened through this; the son of the Deity is manifested in us. He possesses a mighty power. Pymander calls it 'the Word' or 'the Voice'. When Pymander speaks in the candidate, he testifies in the heart, which is the habitation of God. God and the Son, the Light-field and the descended Light can no longer be separated, for out of their union the new life arises.

Therefore, when you, through the emptying of the I are ennobled to it: 'Direct your heart to the Light and know it'. When we recognize it, we see the grand and glorious faculties of the living Word within us. We experience in the heart a light of innumerable powers, a truly immeasurable world, the Golden Head. And we see how the roaring fire of the lower order is enclosed and restrained with great force and thus brought into balance under the direct guidance of the Light and the Word which is spoken because of the Light.

Thus we experience how the lower nature is devoured by transfiguration, or rebirth, through the luminous power of the Gnosis, which is born in us.

This now is the Arch-Gnosis, the hermetic Gnosis, the Truth which has been spoken to mankind since the very beginning. This is the word of Pymander. Now consider whether this word is in accordance with the word that the young Gnosis has been allowed to speak to you throughout the years; the testimony concerning the human archetype, the original human figure from before the beginning-withoutend, the human figure that was and is until this hour.

VI

THE POSITION OF THE DIALECTICAL ORDER IN THE COSMIC SEPTENARY

The *Corpus Hermeticum* continues by sketching out the original cosmological manifestation, the genesis of present-day world and mankind. Pymander shows Hermes, who has been drawn into the field of the Spirit, which is the omnipresent field of the love of God, the original, eternally existing world-order of the true celestial man. It is our endeavour to return to it, for it is the world-order into which the hermetic man is able to gaze and the halls within which he may sojourn when he enters the Golden Head.

‘And I saw in my Spirit-Soul how the Light, consisting of innumerable powers, had become a truly unlimited world, while the fire was enclosed, restrained and so was brought into balance by a mighty power.’

We discussed this aspect from the point of view of the approaching candidate, as it is seen from below upwards. We wish to emphasize that this original world-order, from the very beginning, has been the world-order of celestial mankind. It will be opened to us once again when we return to participate in the sixth cosmic domain. A question now arises in Hermes' heart, which we will translate into our terminology:

‘How does dialectics fit into the plan of this grand revelation which I was allowed to behold through you, Pymander? What am I to think of the dialectical order, the

dialectical universe? How did the celestial man become imprisoned in dialectical nature and degenerate to what he is now? Is dialectical nature to be explained as coming from the original Being? Then how did this nature-order become so wicked?'

To all these questions Pymander gives an answer. He says: Dialectical nature has been formed according to the beautiful archetype of the world, by progression of the immense creative process. One great workshop was created, one enormous alchemical laboratory, in which man would work for the great projects of the All-revelation. For the creating Deity gives to its children all the divine powers it possesses itself. God not only calls his creatures into existence, He not only places them in a world-order, but He also gives them the task to work for the progress of the All-revelation. To that effect He gives them a gigantic alchemical laboratory, the seventh universe.

Dialectical nature must be considered to be this workshop, just as gnostic philosophy has indicated for a long time. In the dialectical All-revelation one and the same law appears — of rising, shining and fading, the law of continual cycles. A continual transmutation of elements takes place. 'It is a natural ordination, which activity is called destiny', says Pymander, indicating this fundamental law, the essence of imperative circular courses.

In dialectics, as the seventh cosmic domain, we nevertheless may observe a high order, an exalted plan, entirely linked to the six other cosmic domains. This can be immediately understood when we bear in mind that dialectical nature was originally meant to be a cosmic workshop.

The Egyptian, hermetic Gnosis considers manifested nature from this point of view, just as we, too, have done

throughout the years, whereas the Gnosis of Mani sees it in its revealed wickedness. The Gnosis of Hermes looks at the original divine intention arising over the sunkness of our nature-order; the Gnosis of Mani wants to prove that the world detains struggling and suffering man, on account of which the Manicheans, realists as they were, cursed this wicked world. They declared that it could not possibly be from God, but was created by Lucifer.

In view of our experiences in the nature of death, we accept Mani's point of view, but at the same time we see it in connection with that of Hermes. Even in his first book, *'Pymander'*, Hermes uses Manichean language, when he talks to mankind in his new state of enlightenment. In the verses 68, 69 and 70 he says:

'Oh, you nations, you men who are born of the earth and who have given yourselves up to intoxication and slumber and to the ignorance concerning God, become sober and stop wallowing in debauchery, enchanted as you are by an animal sleep'.

'On hearing this, they came to me with one accord. And I spoke further: 'Oh you earthly born, why have you given yourselves up to death, whereas you have power to participate in immortality? Repent, you who walk in error and who have excepted ignorance as a leader. Liberate yourselves from the dark light and take part in immortality by taking leave of destruction forever'.

'Some of them mocked me and went away, for they were on the road of death. But others, who had thrown themselves on their knees for me, besought me to instruct them. I raised them up and became a guide to the human race by teaching them in what way they would be saved. And I sowed in them the words of wisdom and they were fed with the water of immortality.'

This quotation shows that no essential difference exists between the Manicheans and the followers of Hermes Trismegistus. It is frequently necessary to draw attention to the wickedness of nature, in order to place the radiant Fatherland of mankind more clearly before the consciousness. But at the same time, the reminder is necessary that the seventh cosmic domain is the great workshop of heavenly mankind. Consequently, the hermetic Gnosis and the Gnosis of Mani correlate. We deem it our duty to draw your attention to this, as sometimes in the circles of seekers quarrels took place about the extent to which Manicheism and Hermeticism might be in conflict with each other. For instance, in France, from time to time, such questions arose.

Hermeticism posits a philosophical clarity; Manicheism calls for a positive and conscious farewell to the lower nature. It was through this inclination that Manicheism, in its time, had an enormous influence on mankind, and was feared and hated by the enemy and persecuted even more perniciously than Catharism. While the enemies of the Cathars killed them by means of burning at the stake and starvation, the Manichean brothers and sisters were mutilated and tortured to death in unimaginably cruel ways.

Catharism, though placing itself philosophically more on hermetic grounds, has been inspired by the same aim as the Manicheans and was therefore accused of being Manichean, with the preconceived intent to prosecute and exterminate it in the same way. The young Gnosis is extremely indebted to both Brotherhoods. But let us continue our considerations of the book *Pymander*.

In the seventh cosmic domain, that is, the dialectical universe, we observe how greater systems express themselves in smaller systems. The Milky Way expresses itself in zodiacal systems,

these in solar systems and solar systems in planetary systems.

In our solar system, just as in the myriads of other similar systems, a system exists of seven co-operating powers which define each other. To indicate these powers, Pymander speaks of seven regents or rector, which have encircled the sensory world. Consider the circulation of the stars and the activities in the solar system from the geocentric point of view. The sun, the moon and the planets describe their orbits around you and send you their light and their powers. Consequently, they define you and each other. So everything on earth is guided by the seven rector; they determine the destiny of nature-born man.

If you happened to have gone in for astrology, you know that you have to take good and bad aspects into account. Fate determines your way of life and so you are hanging in its web; everything on earth is guided by the seven rector.

In the beginning it was intended that all manifestations of dialectics would be created without mind, would be matter only. For as soon as matter is connected with spirit, an almost impossible situation arises. Then, so the *Pymander* says, an intellectual activity arises and matter, which is subject to incessant change, enters the state of death with its prisoners.

When the luminous spark, the spirit, associates with matter in an incorrect, unscientific manner, matter and spirit merge. Spirit is eternal and invariable, whereas matter is continually changing, converting. When these two are united, matter drags along the spirit — the luminous spark. Due to this unnatural connection crystallization occurs. Matter resists and spirit tries to maintain itself but, through this latter activity, matter crystalizes, for then everything opposes the conversion. In this way eternity is locked up in a sequence of sorrows.

As a modern man who is familiar with natural science, you

know that there is life in matter. There is life and power in every atom of matter, but no spirit in the sense of living mankind. Therefore, heavenly mankind was allowed to use matter as alchemical material to propel it to its aim, but it was not allowed to associate with it. Heavenly mankind had to use matter in such a way that through its life and power, in due course, something would grow, be enabled to rise above matter.

Just think of the story of the sorcerer's apprentice. He begins to experiment and connects himself with forces he cannot control; these forces are then released and begin to dominate him; so he is washed away in the sea of life.

When conscious life, the spirit, is tied to the matter of the seventh cosmic domain, it always leads to sorrow and death. When the spirit tries to maintain itself in matter, a process sets in that we all recognize as crystallization. All the elements of nature, with their activities, powers and potentialities, were once handed over to God's creatures, a heavenly, truly divine mankind, who were active in a divine workshop. Heavenly man entered, as it were, a wondergarden, a paradise. He tried to co-operate with the seven rectors and understood everything that awoke out of nature into natural life. Because this workshop was so marvelously beautiful and lived out of the higher mind, heavenly man forgot his real home, from time to time, and remained active in the wondergarden, seeing himself as the centre of it. When he saw his reflection in the water, he began to love it and wanted to live with it. At that moment the will created a very unwise image and nature — matter — embraced its beloved and interwove itself completely with it. Heavenly man, who had accepted the garden of the Gods as the palace of the Gods, was taken prisoner.

That is why, of all creatures on earth, only man is

twofold — mortal with respect to the body of matter, and immortal with respect to the heavenly principle, the true man. The immortal suffers unbearably on account of being tied to matter, which is transitory. Though the heavenly principle that has sunken into dialectical man is more distinguished and noble than its husk, it has nevertheless become its servant. However, the fatal consequences of the integration of the heavenly man with dialectics, as we experience them now, were not apparent at first. *Pymander* spans many billions of years. The development of these consequences has taken place quite gradually; the history of the Fall lies between the initial phases of integration and the ultimate change and crystallization in the profound depths of matter. It is the history of the world which began with the development of the seven races.

Heavenly man was male-female and able to create out of himself. In this way heavenly mankind procreated seven subtypes, entirely in conformity with the seven rectors, the seven aspects of the solar system. These seven root-races, as they are called in the Universal Doctrine, not only populated the earth, but the entire universe, the solar system, in great glory. As a result heavenly mankind was gradually tied to its own creation and creatures. Later still, one of the sexual aspects atrophied in the newly generated man and because of this separation of the sexes, male-female relationships, as we know them now, came into being.

Pymander confronts Hermes with the extensive history of mankind. However, Hermes did not learn as we at the moment, helped by the book we know as '*Pymander*', but he read in the memory of nature with his Mercury-consciousness and saw the scenes pass by panoramically.

This shows how the series of ideas, *Pymander's* cosmology, the hermetic philosophy, can be retraced in the Universal

Doctrine and in the Holy Language. Consider Paul's hermetic ideas. He talks of God's creature tied to matter and how it yearns for liberation and salvation. Think of his joy when he ascertained how the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. This revelation will be carried out in accordance with the gnostic plan of salvation. It is so grand a scheme that we never tire of talking about it. Just think of the original heavenly mankind, which generated the seven root-races and how, out of these, countless sub-races emanated, with all the myriad entities belonging to the sub-races. In all of them the light-principle was established.

The spark of light which was once perfect light, also lies within us, as the seed-kernel Jesu. We, too, can take part in the mighty plan of salvation. If you so wish, the process of your salvation can come about with great rapidity, if only you dedicate yourself to your calling, if only you separate light and darkness, spirit and matter, the eternal and the transitory, that is — fate. But before undertaking this process, before attempting to cleave the waters, making way for a left and a right to emerge, you should allow the Spirit, Pymander, to enter and purify your heart, thereby permitting the light-principle within you to awaken.

Through this process, all of you should dedicate yourselves to your calling.

VII

SALVATION AND REDEMPTION FROM SIN

Before continuing our explanation of the *Pymander* of Hermes Trismegistus, we deem it desirable to deal with the details concerning the consequences for those who really desire to go the path of deliverance. As an introduction to our reflection, we refer you to John 15:9-17.

‘As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be full. This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you. You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide; so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you. This I command you, that you love one another’.

We once again examine the image which arises from the part of the *Pymander* that we have already discussed. Firstly,

we see the heavenly man in all his glory; secondly, how the heavenly man has merged with dialectics; and, thirdly, how seven races come into being out of heavenly mankind, which could rightly be called the populators of the dialectical universe. Finally, we can establish that all the inhabitants of the planet, in their various shapes and states of being, are formed out of the sub-races of these original seven races.

In other words, the original heavenly principle was ever more divided into all these myriad entities. This division continued until a certain moment, when only one seed-kernel of the original glory of God's children was present in those countless entities. All of us form a part of the host of those who carry only one seed-kernel of the original nature. A still deeper descent into dialectics and, as a consequence, a still greater differentiation of the seed of the Light, is impossible. The Spirit cannot possibly differentiate and radiate, when the possessor of the Spirit is ignorant of it. Countless human beings, who carry within them the seed-kernel Jesu, the proto-atom, are not conscious of this fact. The proto-atom is then sunken in them in a latent form, powerless to divide itself more.

Furthermore, all microcosms, differentiated as they are out of the original seven root races, should remain expressions of the formula of the original dialectical nature from which they have emanated, if they are to maintain themselves according to their nature. This will be the case with billions of entities, in which the seed-kernel is latent, as long as they are in equilibrium with the nadir of dialectical law. To say it differently, the proto-atom will remain present in the mathematical centre of the microcosm as long as the microcosm, tied to nature, is in equilibrium with the law of nature. If the life-conduct of any entity sinks below the law of matter, then, according to the corroding processes of fate, the

microcosm is decomposed and falls apart into the elements of matter. Then not only the personality dies, but also the microcosm which encloses it. Then the microcosm has become powerless to affect matter and to free itself from it. The seed-kernel of the original light has no residence any longer and returns, unrevealed, to its origin.

Therefore, the microcosm can descend to the nadir of dialectics, but if this is not followed by an ascent, the microcosm will remain subjected, for an incomprehensibly long time, to the laws of transitoriness, in a continually repeating vivification of the personality. One could call this situation the state of neutrality. Should the microcosm fall below the law of matter, it would be decomposed; matter returns to matter and the principle of light to the light. This is the state of destruction. The third possibility is deliverance; to begin at the nadir with the homeward journey to the original Fatherland.

The Spiritual School of the Golden Rosycross invites you to make this homeward journey. As a microcosm, you have perhaps been in the state of neutrality for eons, because you have not been conscious of possessing the light-principle. Because of the touch of the School, the light-principle can now awaken in you and make itself felt in your life. As a consequence, you are advised to make it superior to everything in your life and to give dialectics a second place. To this end the purification of the heart is conditional. The heart sanctuary should be completely emptied of desire, the alarming degeneration to which it has been subjected during countless lives.

When you proceed to purification of the heart, the light-principle becomes alive in you and it even comes to meet Pymander. When you offer it a pure sanctuary, it can also be active in the service of your fellow men. If the light-principle

is latent, asleep within you, you certainly will be able to dedicate yourself to the service of your fellow man on a humanistic level, in a dialectical way, but as a child of God you are able to express yourself only when the light-principle in you has awakened and is able to radiate.

Just think of those who have propelled the light-principle into activity and who, in a gnostic sense, exist in the purity of heart. When children are born into the families of such people, then out of the purity of the parent's hearts the light-principle is also ignited in their children. So merely by your life conduct you prepare a place in the Gnosis for your children, even before their birth. If the Light has awakened in someone, such a one can be active in the service of everyone.

Therefore, the third state, that of salvation, is of a very special nature. It is the beginning of the homeward journey to the Fatherland of the origin. It will lead to complete liberation, to separation from matter, to becoming essentially bodiless, to entering the fields of the Spirit, as is the case with the Pymandric man. However, before this final stage is reached, man has to work with matter in several states of being. The light-principle that will be wrapped in ever refined material vehicles, will have to go the way back through matter.

When we speak of the 'golden Wedding-garment' and invite you to weave it, this refers to a vehicle that, compared to our present garment, our present personality, is of infinite refinement.

Enfolding in ever more refined, material vehicles, the entities will go through all the original sub-races and root races, possessing ever greater glory. And what a great wonder will finally occur! Just try to imagine this: the original guilt caused by the mistake and the Fall of a number of heavenly beings will be expiated because a countless host will enlarge

their numbers. For, even if a small spark of light is present in a human being — one seed-kernel of the original light — it can develop into a Deity according to the laws of the Spirit. Therefore, because of the Fall and the mistake of a number of heavenly beings, God's people will be extended to a numberless armada; heavenly men risen out of the depth of death, divine men generated from the countless seed-kernels of light, which in primeval times were scattered over and bound to the fields of matter.

In such a way guilt becomes penance, penance is transformed into a blessing, blessing into growth and growth into harvest. In such a way, even from the depths of hell, the victory of Love is fought. He who is able to understand, let him understand.

Serious seekers, brothers and sisters whoever you are, become conscious of the possession of the seed-kernel of the original nature.

VIII

THE TWOFOLD STATE OF MAN

'Of all the creatures of nature only man is twofold', says Pymander. There exists in the human system the seed of immortality, the spiritual spark, also indicated as the Rose of the heart, and there is the mortal human being, the natural figure. One cannot find another creature of a similar, twofold nature.

In this way the fall of the original sons of God has created the strange situation that the seed of the Spirit is differentiated in myriads of mortal entities, which may cause them, as children of God, to grow into a multitude no one can count. It will happen that everything which was sin and guilt in the beginning, with all its consequences, will finally change into a glory that is more intense, more grandiose than ever could have been the case; a change to a blessing that no one could possibly envisage.

But if this blessing is indeed to take shape, then a strong intervention is essential; a great deal must then happen. However, we also find, as a tremendous potentiality, that out of a fall, out of sin and guilt, such a blessing can come about as a proof that the Spirit, that Love is always victorious.

Whoever reaches insight concerning the nature of his nature-born being is enabled to free himself of his twofold state and to return to his original divinity. Do see this, at

least, if you are aware of possessing a spirit-spark atom, and if you are conscious of your twofold state — your nature-born being and the Rose within you, the original true man. Do see your possibility of deliverance, if you are conscious of possessing a spirit-spark atom.

Then you are not, as a natural being, personally guilty with respect to being in sin, as our orthodox reformed ancestors suggested, for as a nature-born entity you are entirely one with dialectics. The course of things in the seventh cosmic domain is unavoidable for every entity connected with this nature. No, as a possessor of the Rose you can only become conscious of the existential imperfection, of an existential absurdity, of captivity. That, now, is the consciousness of sin as it has been understood in the Universal Doctrine since the beginning: that the true, spiritual man becomes aware of his prison, of his present state of being.

Consciousness of sin according to verse 39 means being conscious of one's absolute immortality; to possess power over all things and yet to suffer the fate of mortals, because one is subjected to fate. To be more eminent than all of dialectics, and yet to be its servant. To know: the Father is within me; He who is without sleep governs me, and yet I am imprisoned in the power of the unconscious.

This is the consciousness of sin and it appears from Hermes' words that the pupil understands it. The hermetic man understands this situation, but for most people the integration of nature with humanity is a very great wonder. Its dramatic aspects are the apparent fall which manifests itself in it and the guilt that arises out of it. Notwithstanding the Spirit desires to conquer and must conquer. It comes to a millionfold splitting through this dramatic event and consequently gives all those millions of people the power to again become God's children.

That is why an astonishing wonder was generated by the mixture of nature and mankind, verse 41 states. Pymander describes this wonder: 'The earth was the matrix; water the procreative element; fire brought the process of genesis to maturity; nature received from the ether the breath of life and created the bodies according to the form of man', this being the simulacrum.

When Pymander speaks of 'man', he refers to the original divine man, the spirit-man. For the rest he speaks only of the body, the natural figure. The body received a sham human image. Then is described how the natural figure was created out of the astral and etheric radiations of the nature of death.

This natural figure is simply called 'the body', and it is this that dialectics calls 'man'. What a mistake! Which is to be explained by the fact that the natural figure, by virtue of its disposition, possesses its own life, its own consciousness, is, in short, a living being.

There are two lives within you: the original life and that of the natural figure. Pymander expresses this by saying: the true man originates from life and light. From the one divine Life the true man has become a soul-being and from the universal Light a Spirit-soul, that is, an inner being of the exceptional soul-state that is linked to the Spirit. The true Man possesses a pure heart, he is the heart. He lives in the heart of the natural figure as a god.

The true Man is also, as we further discover, a hermaphrodite, although masculine or feminine outwardly. The natural figures, on the contrary, were sexually separated. You should bear this in mind, if you wish to understand these things.

The natural figure is either masculine or feminine; the soul-being is both masculine and feminine, though sometimes masculine and sometimes feminine outwardly. So one can

distinguish masculine and feminine soul-entities, although sexually they are not separated. However, the natural figure is always to be seen in the sexual appearance we know, in order that through endless experiences and endless births the plan of salvation can be executed. Through the continuous grinding in the nature of death, through the continual vivification of the microcosm, a possibility to participate again in the original life exists ever again.

You undoubtedly know from newspapers, periodicals, and other literature that man diligently seeks to prolong life. It is expected within a comparatively short time, — within the next hundred years — to prolong the life of man to about 800 years. How can this be realized?

As you know, the atom contains tremendous powers. The life-element, the elixer of life of the human figure is situated in the atom and the fact that we grow only as old as we do is because man does not sufficiently know to make use of the life-element of the atom. It is man's intention to free the life-elixer which has been sought after and has already been discovered. It is his intention to produce it, to administer it by means of injections, and in this way to prolong life. But, if you consider what a terrible mess man already makes in a life averaging from 70 to 80 years, then you will understand, should we live for 200, 300, or 800 years, that during that time the entire social order would go completely to wrack and ruin.

It is beyond doubt that the realization of prolonged life will at the same time herald the termination of life of mankind. Therefore, significant is the law that applies to every true Rosicrucian (think, for instance, of Backstrom's Diploma): 'that he shall not desire to live longer than God allows him'. Dialectical man, impelled by his nature-born state, always

runs the risk of sinking below the level of the dialectical order.

The purpose of the separation of the sexes is to ensure that new beings are continually born; life itself ensures that they are crushed again in time. In this way the plan of salvation can be executed by the hard school of profound experience. In this way the path of self-knowledge can be walked. The separation of the sexes is necessary, because as a consequence the wheel of birth and death incessantly revolves and, so Pymander states, the course through life is the indispensable school of experience. Whoever is spurred-on in this school of life and possesses a heart sanctuary that is able to vibrate in accordance with the Rose, being open to the gnostic light, will one day know himself with respect to his true nature and will deeply feel its twofold state. Such a man will then know that the love for the natural figure, the desires of the carnal prison, are the cause of death with all its consequences.

So we saw how integration was introduced and how the propagation of the species began through the separation of the sexes, exactly as in the animal and vegetable kingdoms. Whoever comes to self-knowledge in this way is led upon the path of soul-mankind. The one who continues to embrace the natural figure, continues to wander about in darkness and will experience death in the natural way.

Perhaps we should draw your attention to the abnormalities, occurring at all times, which result from the separation of the sexes, where sometimes a natural figure comes into being which is neither man nor woman. Such a type of person develops because of the rejection of God's plan, which drives man through matter in guilt and penance, and because of the rejection of the separation of the sexes and its consequences. One refuses to accept God's plan which wants him to ascend again into the original soul-being, but one also shrinks from

inexorable consequence of this refusal — to be compelled to live a dialectical state of life.

In this way the abnormal type of man develops we know as the homosexual man, who is the result of the isolated life of the natural figure and who does not walk the path of liberation, the path of true self-knowledge. Those afflicted with this disease can be healed, firstly, by not living their life according to this aberration, and secondly, by directing themselves on the path in full surrender and walking it diligently. As a nature-born man you can only renounce the natural figure for the sake of your conscious yearning and actual striving to be absorbed in the soul-being. But when you do not seek, or will not take, the path upwards, causing the hormonal passions to remain unchanged and the natural figure to loiter in this hormonal fire, it is inevitable that a development will occur that is contrary to nature. Many who, in the course of centuries, have resigned from life and entered cloisters, have denatured themselves.

There is still another aspect to which we must refer, relating to verse 48 of the book *'Pymander'*. It has often been misunderstood and some have imagined a sort of warning in this extract from the hermetic philosophy. It is said: *'Whoever has loved the body that has issued from the error of desire, continues to wander in darkness'*.

On more than one occasion these words from Hermes have been understood as a warning against marriage and all that is connected with it. But that is out of the question. On the contrary, it is clear from the Arch-Gnosis that the separation of the sexes, with its consequences, is necessary to keep the wheel of life and death in motion. *'Love of the body that has issued from the error of desire'* refers to love for the dialectical nature, which resulted in the existence of the mortal natural figure, of which verses 37, 38, and 39 speak. Whether you face

this either married or unmarried, with a loathing for nature or not, in solitude or in duality, does not make any difference. Whoever wishes to overcome the natural figure will, in accordance with the divine plan of redemption, have to leave the dialectical world and everything connected with it, in order to take the way of the soul, the upward path of return.

Consequently, if future mankind were prevented from following its natural course and the efforts to prolong life were to succeed, this would mean the irrevocable end. Before long the entire emergency order, including mankind, would sink below the level of natural laws. To love and to be entirely wrapped up in one's natural figure, considering it as *the man*, that is the mistake Hermes incriminates in verse 48.

If you understand all this and ask yourself how to achieve the purification of life that is a condition for deliverance, then you must know that the purity man has to strive after always is the purity of the heart, the sevenfold purification of the heart sanctuary, which is the mirror for the universal light. The heart sanctuary is God.

Pymander speaks to the candidate in the heart and that is why every serious pupil of the Gnosis will have to undertake a true, sevenfold purification of the heart. Whenever a man becomes pure with regard to the heart sanctuary, whenever the candidate sincerely and perseveringly strives after such a purification and the light can make its abode in him, then the inner life, together with the mental life, will completely change and life's activities will follow entirely in accordance with this sevenfold purification. Then man is pure in everything he does.

Only then will the hormonal functions change and will the candidate enter 'into the domain of the good', as Pymander calls it; that is, the state of true growth of the soul.

IX

PROPEL THE IMMORTAL SOUL TO BIRTH

The hermetic Gnosis indicates very clearly that we cannot expect any liberation of our natural figure. We live in a nature of death and as nature-born entities we are one with it. Therefore, the entire natural figure is subjected to death. As a natural phenomenon we have emanated from a sad darkness that preceded all dialectics; this is nothing new for pupils of the modern Gnosis. Because of everything the modern Spiritual School teaches on this subject, they are deeply convinced of the fact.

Yet it is important that the Arch-Gnosis confirms all this. It is also significant that Pymander, in his dissertation, points out once more the twofold state of human existence. It cannot be said too often and you cannot bring it home to yourself too much that the man to whom the Universal Doctrine and the holy language refer is an entirely different being than the bodily figure, which in general, and quite erroneously, is taken to be man.

We are beings of duality. Within us the true man, who is imprisoned in his natural figure, yearns for liberation. If you think of this daily, you will do yourself a great service.

Pymander points to another possible mistake in current ideas. The Father of all things does not exist in life and light, but *is* life and light. When something is made out of life and

light, it implies a divided state of being, a limitation; so there is always a possibility that, because of a functional disturbance, a complete void or an extremely violated being would result. However, when it is said that the Father of all things is life and light, this points to imperishability — indestructibility — to the omnipresence.

The true man, imprisoned in the natural figure, is not made of life en light, but *is* life and light. He *is* God. That is why Jesus the Lord could truly say: 'The Father and I are one'. In the Bible it is said to the nature-born man, that is, to us: 'The Kingdom of God, the divine man, is within you.'

Many a pupil hearing about the path and the new liberating state of life, shows astonishment and even disbelief or, in other words, lack of faith in himself, which is expressed in the fatal thought: 'That I will never attain.' They have, in fact, become pupils too soon. Their astonishment or disbelief proves that, because of a lack of life experience, they have not yet discovered the hidden kingdom within themselves. That is why they are not yet able to handle the key to the liberating life. Whoever is not yet able, out of a profound knowledge of experience, to believe in himself, therefore often loses faith in the Spiritual School. In this state such a person will easily come to enmity, as can be proved from the history of the School and that of the entire human race. Think, for instance, of the Bible. When Jesus the Lord, as a hermetically conscious man, testifies: 'I and the Father are one', the theologians of his day thought he was blaspheming or that he was mad, calling him a fool. When the 'parfaits' among the Cathars demonstrated, by their state of life, the secret of the hidden Kingdom, the priesthood of their days, which could not compete with anything comparable, was furious and deliberated on their death.

A problem arises in Hermes, which undoubtedly is also your

problem. 'Tell me', Hermes asks Pymander: 'how shall I enter into the life of the hidden Kingdom?' Pymander replies: 'Let man, who possesses the Spirit-Soul, recognize himself', implying that man, who possesses the Spirit-Soul, knows himself because of it. 'But', Hermes reacts, 'have not all men the Spirit-Soul?' Whereupon the answer comes: 'Take care of what you say! For I, Pymander, the Spirit-Soul, come to those who are holy and good, pure and merciful, to the devout; my presence becomes a help to them, so that they immediately recognize everything'.

Just imagine that through experience, beaten and kicked by life, you have become conscious of the hidden kingdom within you and of its tremendous possibilities; that in the dramatic course through the nature of death, with the consequences caused by the division of the sexes in different states of existence in the microcosm, the developing consciousness has matured to a certainty, whereby you have completely accepted the possession of the hidden kingdom. In such a state the problem arises in which millions are sighing and millions more have been deceived about the way the inner kingdom must be freed; the way in which the true man can live; the way in which the hidden kingdom can be entered.

In the course of life millions of people have discovered such a hidden kingdom and this is exactly why they have been deceived, because with the discovery they also imagine that they already live from this kingdom, have already entered it. Suppose you have a Rose of the heart speaking strongly within you. Assume it lives in your heart sanctuary and that, consequently, the Gnosis touches you in the blood, in every fibre of your being, so that you know: 'It is true what the School of the Golden Rosycross proclaims'. It may happen that from that moment on you think you have already

entered the kingdom. This is a cardinal mistake, for when you, a nature-born man, become conscious of the hidden kingdom, the process has only begun.

The error is explicable, but at the same time fatal. For what are you doing? You are engaged in cherishing, in meditating upon this kingdom with the consciousness of your nature-born I, and you purr with self-complacency like a cat; you tick like an alarm-clock, full as you are of mystical tension. You talk about it for hours on end with your friends; you have made a great discovery and now you are just chattering along. It is not even normal talking you are doing in such a situation. In essence nothing new has been born in you, nothing has as yet happened in you. You are only staring at the picture of the hidden kingdom, the existence of which you have become conscious. And there you are, babbling and fussing.

We express a hard truth here, but you must dare to face it. That is why we discuss Hermes' *Pymander* with you.

To experience the inner kingdom does not mean to possess it. Whoever does not yet possess it will easily bring himself to urge the true man into a still greater captivity. For that is what happens! The natural I will live, shine, glimmer, and laugh on account of the game you are playing of having already succeeded, of having already completely conquered. However, the nature-born man has nothing to conquer in this respect. He must decrease and the heavenly Other one must increase.

If man persists in this error, he is sure to go the occult or the mystical way. This is the great mistake of all those who, on the first discovery of the hidden kingdom, are of the opinion that they already possess it. What then is the secret of success?

Well, you must face the fact that, after having reached that glorious experience, you must first of all proceed to realisation, to the birth of the soul and the Spirit-Soul, as Hermes calls it. If you discover the kingdom within you, it should be given a dwelling place. That is what it is all about. Therefore, if we keep talking about it in the School and leave the philosophical aspect aside for a while and tell you: 'Build the Soul', you must not think we are preaching. This requirement of the path is essential, is absolutely necessary and Pymander testifies of it. After having come to knowledge through experience you have to proceed to realisation, to construction, to the birth of the soul. You do not possess a soul in the sense of the Gnosis as a matter of course. That is the great mistake of innumerable people.

When we meet in our consecrated working-places and a pure, serene understanding arises, then the first task will be to propel the soul to birth. For the man who possesses the soul is able to exist out of light and life, is able to free God, the Pymander in him.

Although you have active fluids in your nature-born system that inspire it and keep it vital, these fluids are extracted from the nature of death. However, the immortal soul and its Pymandric consciousness, the glorious new state of life, come only to the holy, the good, the pure and charitable, to those who live a truly devout life. These things do not come by chance, they must be captured from resisting nature. That is why the modern Gnosis never ceases to testify of this necessity and to explain to its pupils how the entire being has to be purified and sanctified by I-lessness, so that the soul will be born and propelled to maturity.

Growth of the soul ends in Pymander, in the formation of the focus between soul and spirit; then Pymander is a help to the candidate. You should see the greatness of it. The

Pymandric consciousness will be a great aid to you, so that you will immediately recognize and know everything, and pray to the Father in a deed of love. In this deed of love the candidate directs himself to all those who are still imprisoned in the natural birth. Before he surrenders the body to death, he despises all the senses of the dialectical figure. 'Because', Pymander says, 'their activities are only too well known to him'.

When the soul has been born, the soul-power takes the lead in conquering all links with the earth, its actions and consequences. On account of our wrong conceptions, we always distort the facts. If at a given moment a certain trait of character troubles us, we fight against it and so vivify the law of dialectics: rising, shining, and fading. Today we think everything is all right and tomorrow it is wrong again. Therefore, to arrive at real purification of life, you first have to build the soul; the soul-power will then carry you through all difficulties. Everything in your life is changed by soul quality. You will discover that everything you worried about, and that caused you such trouble, gradually leaves you. That is why it is said very decidedly in verse 59:

'Yet, I, the Spirit-Soul, the new state of the soul, will certainly not allow the activities of the body that attack them to practise their influence upon them: for as the Guardian of the Doors I shall refuse admittance to evil and shameful deeds and cut off unholy imaginings'.

What are evil and shameful deeds? Regarding this you should part with the usual moral conviction, for 'the evil and shameful deeds' do not relate to ordinary life, although perversity is certainly a wickedness. For the seriously striving pupil on the path, what is meant here are the always disastrous consequences in the respiration field of jealousy, passion, hatred, slander, criticism, conflict, and similar evils.

Further, in verse 60, it is accentuated in what type of man the soul will never be born, consequently, to whom Pymander will never be able to talk:

`Yet I keep myself far from the foolish, the bad, the corrupt, the envious, the covetous, the murderers, and the ungodly. I leave them to the avenging Demon who, by belabouring such people with the scourge of fire, drives this into their senses and through this equips them for further unholy deeds, so that an ever greater punishment is executed upon them. The desire of these people is continually seeking greater satisfaction, causing them to rage in darkness, without there being anything that can satiate them. In this exists their torment and through this the flame that scorches them blazes ever higher.'

X

THE GOOD END

In verse 60 Pymander indicates the entities from whom he keeps aloof. He explains what the consequences are when in a life-field like ours entities who continue to cling to the natural figure, that is ordinary mankind, and soul-born entities are found in one and the same space.

The world is populated by many millions of people and among them an ever more powerful gnostic group develops, emanating the light of the soul at a certain moment. This soul-fire and the dark-red earthly fire cannot tolerate one another. When the soul-fire cannot be active in a purifying, liberating way, then Pymander says that it always works punitively. That is why it is written:

'Them I leave to the avenging Demon. Such people need the scourge of the fire that scorches and burns and equips them for still more unholy actions. The desire of these people continually seeks greater indulgence and causes them to rage in darkness, without anything being able to satisfy them. In this exists their torment and through this the flame that scorches them flares up higher and higher.'

This is the way of bitter experience and no doubt you will have known it in your life. He who does not learn from bitterness will have to go through continually greater bitterness, until it finally becomes unbearable and man,

broken in spirit, becomes ripe at long last for the great lesson. This long road of experience, this profound blind course in darkness has no other aim than to allow the Spirit to triumph in the end.

Whoever has understood this and knows that the birth of the soul is the first step to salvation, may wonder what is meant by the return into the light-realm of the beginning, the way upwards to the original life. Verses 62-65 of the book *Pymander* give the reply to this question:

First, this body is relinquished to transformation in the dissolving process of the material body, and the form you had will then be seen no more; you surrender your ordinary I, that in the future is rendered inoperative, to the Demon. The physical senses return to their sources, of which they once more form a part, they once more unite with its activities, whereas the passion and desire impulses return to the reasonless nature.

In this way man travels upwards, across the cohesive power of the spheres; to the first circle he yields the power to increase and decrease; to the second circle the proficiency in evil and the artifice that has become impotent; to the third circle the now impotent error of desire; to the fourth circle the vanity of ostentation of the ruler who can no longer be satisfied; to the fifth circle the godless recklessness and insolent thoughtlessness; to the sixth circle the attachment to riches; to the seventh circle the lie that continually sets its snares. Then, when he has stripped himself of that which originated from the cooperative power of the spheres, he enters the eighth nature, in possession of nothing but his own power. He sings, with all those who are there, hymns of praise to the Father and everyone rejoices with him because of his presence. When he has become equal to them, he also hears certain powers

that are above the eighth nature, singing hymns together in praise of God. And then they rise up, in correct order, to the Father, give themselves up to the powers and, themselves having become powers in turn, enter into God. This is the good end for those who possess the Gnosis, the knowledge that is of God: that they become God.'

When the soul is born and the soul-vehicle develops, the old natural figure disappears; it dissolves, as it were. But exactly as in the case of the death of the material body, in this process the natural figure does not immediately disappear. When the soul is born and the golden wedding garment is woven, it is true to say that at a given moment the old nature-born body declines and disappears from sight, but for the time being its powers remain. This twofold process is called transfiguration. The powers which caused the birth and maintenance of the natural figure must also disappear; they must be neutralised, dissolved and referred back to their place.

We have discussed before the 'circle no farther', as it is called in the Universal Doctrine. This circle relates to the microcosm. We observe in the aural being, in the magnetic system of the microcosm seven circles, seven magnetic spheres, corresponding to the seven intercosmic domains. Each one of these magnetic spheres can be distinguished in seven aspects. Consequently, seven times seven, that is, forty-nine magnetic differences exist in the aural being.

When the soul-man is born and grows up and the corresponding magnetic states of the sixth cosmic domain are vivified so that the magnetic firmament radiates, then the seventh magnetic sphere becomes useless and is extinguished. This fact is not only described in Hermes' *Pymander*, but also in the *Pistis Sophia*, as a journey of the soul-man through all the seven aspects of the seventh cosmic domain, the seventh

magnetic sphere. Here he leaves behind all the powers of the old state of life that became dissolved and invisible.

In this way he finally arrives, freed of the old life, in the eighth sphere, the first sphere of the sixth cosmic domain, indicated as 'the golden Head' in the terminology of the modern Spiritual School. He is entirely absorbed in this domain of liberated life with his own, new power. That is why it is stated in verse 65: 'When he has become equal to them, he also hears certain powers that abide above the eighth nature, singing hymns together in praise of God.'

This new hearing has nothing to do with clair-audience. It is the hearing to which the old Chinese philosophy also draws attention. When the light of the Gnosis touches us and starts its cycle within us, it not only influences sight, but also the hearing of the newly born soul-man. Just as he sees Pymander, he also hears him. Therefore, it is self-evident that the brother or sister who enters the Golden Head is equipped with the new senses of the soul. In this way the soul-man also hears the powers that abide above the eighth nature, singing hymns in praise of God. And so he ascends into all the powers of the new state of life and finally enters in God.

Now, this is the good end for those who possess the Gnosis, the knowledge that is of God — that they become God. When the Cathars were together in their service, they wished each other: 'May God lead you unto the good end.' From now on you will be able to understand this expression when you hear, in a gnostic ritual: 'We hope and pray that we may bring everything to a good end.' The good end in the new state of life is at the same time a glorious new beginning. In this way the hermetic man is taught the great process of return of which he has become part and in which he proceeds, step by step, to bring everything to a good end.

Let us assume that you have entered this process, that you

have already taken the first step in the realization of the rebirth of the soul. Then the words of Pymander are also spoken to you, as in verse 66 they are to Hermes:

`But ... why do you delay? Now that you have received everything from me, are you not going to those who are worthy of it, in order to serve them as a guide so that, thanks to your mediatorship, the human race may be saved by God?' And then it says:

`And I, who was now clothed with power and instructed about the nature of the Universe and about the exalted vision, thanked and praised the Father of all things. I began to proclaim to the people the beauty of the Gnosis and of the life, dedicated to God.'

The one who has become a hermetic, soul-born man, cannot be idle any longer regarding everything that happens in the universe. This is the signature to which you should pay special attention. It is absolutely out of the question that such a one could continue to look on idly for years on end, with folded hands and a critical eye how others act in the service of the Gnosis. If a person only looks on, you can be sure this person has no newly born soul. That is impossible. He may have a notion of the inner kingdom and possibly experience the presence of it, but there he has stopped. Such a one has reached a dead-end in an occult or mystical delusion and contemplatively takes delight in it. Such a one keeps his discovery, his inner vision, imprisoned by his I.

In world-history you will find quite a number of people who, in the fullest sense of the word, are indicated as rich young men, laden with treasures. Sometimes they wrote books about it, with at best a few pages giving a glimpse of the Arch-Gnosis. The rest is contemplative, I-central twaddle, often put together intelligently with refined thoughts. But what is the use from the view-point of

liberating service to mankind? After all, that is the issue: we must go out to work in an active way, we must roll up our sleeves, prepared to go through the mud, in order to save souls.

The soul-man, led by Pymander, knows that the number of harvesters is very small and that in this field there is always a shortage of force. He also knows the enormous dangers threatening mankind: negative dematerialization, destruction, the deep experience of sorrow that leads to ever greater grief.

The Gnosis *always* works for the redemption of mankind, either an immediate one or a redemption in an indefinite future, that is, through a fall. In spite of this, no gnostic brother or sister will ever wish a fall for someone: 'Just perish now, then you will certainly learn by bitter experience.' The loving heart cannot but hope sincerely that it might be otherwise. Therefore, a soul-born man does not evaluate whether someone else will pull the chestnuts out of the fire; he gets about the work with determination and puts his shoulder to it. The signature of a soul-born man is invariably an active life in the service of the Gnosis in whatever way, without intermission and with all his efforts.

That is why, at the end of the first book of the *Corpus Hermeticum*, this consequence, applying to all soul-entities, is fully explained in verses 68 to 71. In these verses we discover the well-known aspects of the work in the vineyard. Hermes has to speak to the nations: 'Liberate yourselves from the dark light and participate in immortality by taking leave of destruction forever.'

But this is neither wanted nor understood, for it is thought that the dark light is the true light. When someone, who possesses a very strong I and like a rich young man pampers his property negatively, discovers the inner kingdom, he is

sure to get angry if we say to him: 'Your attitude of life is wrong, you are losing yourself in delusion.' We point this out to you in such detail, because we want to bring you to discovery of the self. The writer of this book heard professor A.H. de Hartog once say, when speaking about the enormous impotence of the majority of people to receive the liberating force of an I-impairing truth in openness: 'If I could swear it into them, I would do so.'

'Liberate yourselves from the dark light and participate in immortality by taking leave of destruction forever.'

These words of redeeming love of the always active Gnosis one refuses to accept, perhaps because they are not yet understood and because one believes the dark light to be the real light. Dialectical man is a prince in the universe, endowed with mighty forces. All the possibilities of dialectical nature can free themselves through him. This royal person does not easily allow himself to be dethroned. Consequently, it is often, if not always, thought that the natural man is the true man. That is why the hermetic worker often meets with disbelief, mockery, and opposition. It is precisely because of this that, without wanting it, the hermetic man drives them often on the path of death, the endless road of experience, of punishment through ever more bitter grief.

However, thank God, there are also those who listen and understand. Together they form the harvest, a group that begins to go the path, from below upwards. This group forms a Brotherhood, a Gnosis and a working-place. In this way a gnostic, magnetic radiation-field grows, a Living Body that becomes fivefold and penetrates into the regions of divine fullness. Through this work of many people, by many people, for many people, the soul-workers learn all the roads and all the means that can lead to victory. And so all are immersed in

the elixir of wisdom, the water of true life. All this is very well-known to the participants of the young Gnosis. All of us are incorporated in such a group and form together a hermetic Brotherhood. The Arch-Gnosis of thousands of years ago, testifying in Hermes' *Pymander*, demonstrates itself again in the young Gnosis down to the smallest detail. We, too, go on from power to power to a certain victory, provided you go with us, drawing the consequences with us, for only then is there sense in the pupilship of a gnostic Spiritual School. A pupilship that negates the consequences only creates danger for the person concerned, because in a negative self-declaration he will unavoidably go the way of ever greater bitterness — the way of death, as *Pymander* calls it.

Finally, let us pay attention to verse 71.

'When evening came and the light of the sun had almost disappeared, I invited them to give thanks to God. After they had completed the thanksgiving, they all returned to their firesides.'

The gnostic-directed group should form, according to the soul, a coherent unity that remains intact wherever the members may be in the world. A group of soul-born people forms a living unity through the wonder of soul-power, even if the participants are spread over the entire world. But always they return to their firesides after their meetings, as indicated in verse 71. This is always the liberating aspect. For every time we go home after a conference, we spread our soul-community over the world. German, French, and Swiss brothers and sisters, those from Belgium, England, Austria, Holland, Sweden, Brazil, and the U.S.A., they return to their firesides. Initially many of them say: 'What a pity we cannot stay together.' But the Spirit of *Pymander* rejoices: How delightful, how glorious that we return to our homes. For

behold, brothers and sisters, in this way we spread together the magnetic field of our soul-community over the world and no one can resist us any longer. It is to life or to death, but always to the salvation of all!

XI

PYMANDER'S BENEFACTION

So we approach the end of the first book of Hermes Trismegistus' *Pymander*. In a quick review of this impressive document we saw the nature of true man and how he lies imprisoned as in a dungeon, chained to the natural figure. In a veiled way the entire history of mankind was explained in this book and we saw the path of liberation — the genesis of the hermetic man, the soul-man who has found his Pymander. Finally we also saw, very briefly, the genesis of a gnostic Spiritual School, the growth of a living Body that will spread over the whole world through the activity of a group of soul-born people.

At the end of the first book we are carried back to Hermes himself who, as a C.R.C., as a Christian Rosycross, is the proto-type of the liberated man, yet possessing his natural figure. He has fulfilled his calling towards the Father of all things and towards mankind, and he is still engaged in doing so in uninterrupted working and striving. As he observes how the gnostic realm is spread over the lands like a broad harvest-field, he is filled with thankfulness and an ever renewing energy. 'I write', as stated in verse 72, Pymander's benefaction in myself. He charges himself with the imperishable and immeasurable power of the Spirit.

Do understand this, because a great glory lies hidden in it,

which can be of great practical value. The first book, *Pymander*, is like the description of one day which, of course, celebrates its end in the evening. All work in the service of the Gnosis is accomplished rhythmically, as if in waves, which have a beginning, a zenith, and an ending. When one wave has run its course there is a period of rest, like an inhalation, after which the new wave rises.

The process and the results of such an inhalation are briefly indicated in verse 72. Valuable indications are given here to all who stand in the field of service and if they are followed there will be beneficial results for all workers. Gnostically speaking, the one who works in the service of the Spiritual School, exhales. He who has radiated the assimilated light can now charge himself with *Pymander's* benefaction. This inhalation, this rest can be also called an intensive activity. The assimilation of gnostic forces, necessary for the work, demands an absolutely different bodily condition than the radiation of gnostic powers. Therefore, the worker must not make the mistake of neglecting his periods of rest. If he does so, he will find that at a given moment, he is powerless from a gnostic point of view and results fail to appear. The body of the servant of the Gnosis, that is the body of the true Johannite man, must respond to the inhalation of power as well as to the radiation of light.

When, before going to sleep, a servant of the Gnosis charges himself with *Pymander's* benefaction, that is with light-power, in great thankfulness for the work he was allowed to do, then the sleep of the body becomes the soberness of the soul; the closing of the eyes the true seeing; the silence becomes as a pregnancy of the good and the proclaiming of the word results in fruitful works of salvation.

Truly, a wonderful subject for closer inspection and consideration. Much is already known about the daytime

aspect of practical pupilship; continually we speak and write about it. But what about the night-time of pupilship? What are serious pupils, who propelled the soul to rebirth, doing during the night? Can anything be made known about this, without falling into speculations about the well-known dream life? Of course, the explanations we will give you* have nothing to do with occultism. We do not ask ourselves: what does one half of the personality do when the other half lies asleep? We will study our subject exclusively from the viewpoint of the new-born soul-state, with the help of the 72nd verse of *Pymander*.

It now becomes necessary for pupils of the Spiritual School to understand all this, so that also during the night half of life the work may proceed in an organized way. He who wants to follow the Gnosis, must know what Hermes received from his Spirit-Soul, so that one day he, too, can say: `All this has come to me, because I received from Pymander, my Spirit-Soul, the Being that exists out of itself, the word from the beginning. Thus I am now filled with the divine breath of truth. Therefore, I direct with my whole soul and with all my powers this song of praise to God the Father:

Holy is God, the Father of all things.

Holy is God, whose will comes about by means of his own powers.

Holy is God, who wishes to be known and who is known by those who belong to him.

Holy art thou, who through the word has called everything into being.

Holy art thou, after whose likeness the All-nature has become.

*See chapt. XVI.

Holy art thou, who is in no way formed by nature.
Holy art thou, mightier than all might.
Holy art thou, more excellent than all that is.
Holy art thou, exalted above all praise.

Accept the pure offerings, awakened by the word in my soul
and in my heart, which direct themselves to thee, oh ineffable,
oh inexpressible One, whose name may be spoken only by
silence.

Lend an ear to me who prays that I may never be severed from the
Gnosis, the true knowledge that belongs to my nucleus being.
Incline thyself to me and fill me with thy power;
with this grace I shall bring the Light to those of my race who
are in ignorance, my brothers, thy sons. Yes, I believe and
testify with my blood; I am going to the Life and to the Light.

Be praised, oh Father, thy son will sanctify with thee, for which
thou hast given him all power.'

XII

THE STRUCTURE OF THE GNOSTIC RITUAL

If you reflect on Hermes' song of praise, expressed in verse 72, you will observe that it begins with a ninefold 'holy.'

Besides the idea of 'healing', so often used in the Spiritual School, the word 'holy' also denotes the idea of purity, perfection, sinlessness. The Father of all things is holy, is perfect. In the Son this perfection comes to us and touches us. In the Holy Spirit this touch heals us.

He who opens the purified heart to the Gnosis opens his being for the Perfect One. He who is allowed to receive the power of perfection receives it for a twofold purpose. On the one hand the touch awakens the true man in his system and provides him with essential food and, consequently, presents him a new possibility for life. On the other hand the obstructing state of natural birth must be annulled and replaced by another vehicle. Therefore, the natural figure carries a cross, the cross of destruction but also the cross of rebirth, of transfiguration. All this rises up from the unwavering, eternal 'holy', which resounds nine times in the song of praise. As you will know, nine is the number of mankind, true mankind that lies imprisoned in the sham-human state of natural birth. It is the number of the exalted universal man, who has risen from his fall to his original splendour.

Symbolically speaking the number nine can be seen as the universal circle, out of which appears one ray of light that penetrates the earth. He who goes the path and liberates the Kingdom of God within himself has become once more a shining pillar in the temple of the circle of eternity. You will understand why the number nine symbolically represents universal man. We perceive how the Song of praise, both in its 'holy' and in its further contents, expresses the symbolic power of the number nine; a ninefold prayer and confession follow the ninefold invocation.

In this Song of praise we possess a magical hermetic ritual of prayer and thanksgiving, in its entirety incorporated in the number nine as a radiant flame from the circle of eternity. If you once again reflect on the text of verse 72 and try to trace the magical form of this hermetic Song of praise, you should allow for the fact that, as always happens, the original text has suffered somewhat in the translation.

We consider it necessary to speak more about the gnostic-scientific frame-work of this wonderful Song than about the text, which needs no explanation. We would like to make it clear that, for the true man, a prayer, a thanksgiving, a song, is not only a group of fine, musical words strung together, nor a phrase that expresses a thought that is both beautiful and meaningful. In practice the use of rituals rises far above all this.

A gnostic ritual in song or prayer firstly expresses a thought characteristic to and necessary for that time. Secondly, it is linked with an inner life attuned to and explained by the moment. Thirdly, there is a mighty impulse of the will behind the ritual to express in action what is written in it. Fourthly, its entirety is borne by a life of action that anticipates the ultimate victory.

However, through this the law of the gnostic ritual is not yet fulfilled; all this is only the beginning. The ritual must also be able to penetrate easily into the regions to which it directs itself, in accordance with mathematical laws regarding sound, rythm, and construction. It must be able to wield power in those regions and evoke an answer.

Hermes's Song of praise fulfils all these mighty conditions. We very much hope that one day we will be permitted to reflect further on the glorious laws of the gnostic rituals in song and prayer.

XIII

THE ASTRAL SPHERE OF DIALECTICS

'I, however, wrote Pymander's benefaction in me, and when I was completely filled with this, a supreme joy came over me. For the sleep of the body became the soberness of the soul; the closing of the eyes the true seeing; the silence became for me as a pregnancy of the good and the proclaiming of the word resulted in fruitful works of salvation.'

The text of the 72nd verse of Hermes' *Pymander* is our basis for informing you of an almost unknown part of serious pupilship — the time when the body sleeps. One third of the day is spent in this way without one being able to participate in it consciously. This is a very unpleasant thought. No one likes to pass through the unknown unprepared and unarmed. Therefore, for the serious pupil it is of the greatest importance to come to an understanding of this situation.

There are dangers and life-processes of which man is completely unconscious, with the result that many are victimized daily. There are also great possibilities in man which, because of his ignorance, remain untried. It is certainly not our intention to speak about the nocturnal experiences of man in general. This is a subject which is very dear to the negatively or occultly inclined man and it

has been spoken and written about very often. Dream-life is a good basis for a psychological examination, for in this way it is often possible to establish the deepest and most subconscious motives of man.

No, we limit our explanation almost entirely to the life of the soul-man during the hours of sleep, and we restrict our discussion to the state of being of the serious pupil; to the birth of the soul in him as a state which is clearly demonstrated through his actions.

When we fall asleep, a splitting of the personality takes place and part of it withdraws. However, what usually escapes the attention of the investigators is that, besides the splitting of the personality, a splitting of the consciousness occurs as well.

Dialectical consciousness results from the organic co-operation of all atoms that belong to the personality system. Accordingly, we can differentiate four manifestations of consciousness: two that belong more to the material and etheric bodies, and two that belong to the astral and mental bodies. When someone enters the condition of sleep and the tenuous part of the personality withdraws, the consciousness also splits. The material aspect of the consciousness remains on the material side, sometimes in a state of latency, of inactivity, sometimes in a state of partial activity. The latter is the case when during the day the body has been unduly strained, or if one is extremely nervous or anxious. The other aspect of the consciousness accompanies the astral and mental bodies that have withdrawn. Since everyone's mental body is organized in only a very elementary and incomplete fashion, the consciousness is almost completely governed by the astral consciousness during sleep. Therefore, as far as present-day man is concerned, one

can safely say that his sleeping consciousness is the astral consciousness.

Without further investigation, one can deduce from this that the nocturnal conscious life of man cannot in any way be compared with the conscious life in matter, when the four aggregates of consciousness are found concentrically within one another, co-operating with one another and so mutually controlling one another.

The night consciousness of man is exclusively an astral consciousness. Whoever really knows what this means will no longer be a victim of the thousand and one mistakes that man has made and will continue to make.

The astral sphere of our planet has become incredibly filthy and complicated. If there is one domain of life on our planet that demonstrates the situation of present-day humanity, it is certainly the astral sphere. Here everything about which one worries in religious, occult, and negative movements is accomplished. One can safely say that all life in the astral sphere is delusion. This does not mean there is no life or movement in the astral sphere; on the contrary, it swarms with life, but this has no real basis, no meaning; it is empty and rotten. It is only a picture, an appearance which is mistaken for reality by all the ignorant. He who is deceived by the dialectical astral life and sees it as beautiful and exalted, is absolutely lost. Let us for a moment revert to our original discussion.

When a new day of manifestation dawns in a period of mankind, after a purification of all world-spheres, and one can speak of a new beginning; when the part of mankind that is still in dialectics is once more brought into manifestation, then the pure astral sphere is only a domain in which certain ideas, teachings, and processes project themselves as a series of pictures. One could

compare it with a useful and instructive film. As each human being perceives astrally during the night-conscious life, the instructive astral viewing will be of the highest importance for him. In a pure personality that is directed upon a high purpose, this nightly astral viewing can have a good effect upon the action-life of the day, and man can know from within how it should and should not be.

Just imagine that the astral sphere is completely pure and clean at this moment and that the universal Gnostic Chain fills this field with its powers and teachings. Imagine that during sleep, when we withdraw with the astral self, we would be able to refresh ourselves with all the wonderful powers, all the series of pure pictures assembled for our sake in the astral sphere by the Universal Brotherhood; upon awakening we would then bring back into the waking consciousness all the glorious help we had received, and be able to profit from it.

But when the astral sphere became polluted and the occultists, among others, made themselves masters of this region; when the reflection sphere brotherhoods constructed their dream castles — the churches built their heavenly cathedrals and innumerable iniquities piled up there — then the astral sphere could no longer serve as an inner instruction-field and teaching the truly seeking man became extremely difficult. In fact, if applied in the usual manner, it would present a deadly danger. Therefore, it became necessary for the Brotherhood to devise other means to be of service to the sincere seeker.

You should become aware of these dangers, for night after night you are in the astral sphere with your ordinary night consciousness, so everything we speak of concerns you directly. It is out of the question that you would be able to dissociate yourself from this astral sphere.

Every group-conscious idea forms a projection, a reflection in the astral sphere. That is the reason why the philosophy of the Rosycross calls this sphere the reflection sphere. Therefore, there also exists at this moment a reflection of our work and our working-apparatus in the astral sphere of the nature of death. This is a reality, a very dangerous reality. For the unholy powers that abuse all projections to delude mankind reside in that so very filthy and wretched astral sphere of dialectics. There are people who are astrally conscious and able to convey their astral impressions to the waking consciousness. It is precisely such people who are victimized. In this way they imagine, for instance, that they participate in the Golden Head and the inner life of the Gnosis. But they delude themselves and often make others fellow-victims.

In many cases the dream-life is a great danger, the more so because those, to whom it is of importance to chain you, come to you in series of images which you so enthusiastically receive. Just as it is possible to make a film that can be shown, so the astral sphere may be compared to a theatre to which you go every night to see what you like most. If in your waking consciousness you endeavour to become a good pupil, but as far as the sleeping consciousness is concerned you cannot yet be a good pupil, then you have come to a standstill. Then you cannot pass a certain limit in your pupilship. When in the waking consciousness you declare yourself positively in your attitude of life towards the School and the Gnosis, then in most cases all the light-powers received during daytime are taken away from you during the night.

Therefore, you should see the adventures of the Pistis Sophia as your own. The Pistis Sophia arrives at the gates of the Brotherhood, but she is sent back in order

to go her path. As she struggles and struggles to advance, she must experience, to her deep sorrow, that she is repeatedly robbed of her light-power by Authades and his henchmen. Whoever has studied the gnostic gospel of the *Pistis Sophia* will certainly remember this.

Every night you have not been able to dissociate yourself from the astral sphere, you are robbed of your light-power and, upon awakening, you return to the same point as you were twenty-four hours earlier. Your system has weakened somewhat, your disillusion has become somewhat greater and your time passes by.

If you understand this, you will know that the automatic sojourn in the astral sphere always entails a deadly danger for every pupil. For this reason we would finally like to ask an urgent question: Is it possible to dissociate from the astral sphere, which must be considered as one of the most important links with dialectics? Is it possible to sleep and yet escape this almost automatic danger?

Yes, it is possible. That is the reason why we must speak about this rather subtle subject. It is possible to free yourself from this great danger that threatens you, in which all of you participate, as a consequence of which you are robbed every night of your light-power and where you must continually begin all over again, just as the *Pistis Sophia*. Therefore, we will now discuss the way in which pupils of the Gnosis can escape this danger.

XIV

ESCAPE FROM ASTRAL BONDAGE

Is it possible to dissociate oneself from the astral sphere of our life-field? This depends entirely upon the state of being of the fourfold natural I. This I, or consciousness, possesses a certain quality that communicates equally to each of the four aspects of the consciousness. Consequently, when a person thinks of something he does not really desire, something in fact, he does not want, interest passes very quickly from his system.

Suppose you did not know the Spiritual School and it was suggested that you become interested in the Gnosis; that it was said to you: 'Read this book and reflect on it.' If you had no real interest in the Gnosis your interest for the book would soon disappear and you would be bored by it; your consciousness would not retain what had been read; for in most cases we consider only what we desire.

Longing or desiring is the thinking of the heart; it is an activity of the heart. Therefore, longing activates the faculties of the system, including the head-sanctuary. Without exaggeration one can say that in the fourfold consciousness the astral consciousness, the desire-body, takes the lead in the human system. We are governed, led and lived by it. If one wishes to distance oneself from the astral sphere of our life-field and all the delusions connected

with it, one needs to decide on a state of desire upon which the astral sphere of the ordinary nature has no hold, to which it cannot respond.

In general, this state of being is indicated as being desireless. You will realize that it is not possible and even useless to force desirelessness. Many have tried it but changed their mind as they failed to make any progress, or achieved only negative results.

If a person does not act as he really is during his waking consciousness, and lives his life, for example, as his environment dictates and against his natural character, he only keeps himself under control. Our civilized habits constrain us in this way. Often a violent stirring prevails within us without our showing it because it is not possible or desirable at that moment. Most people are used to living a life of pretence. Put mildly, this is the reality: they go the way their environment obliges them to go and continually restrain their true nature. The result is tension in the astral consciousness which, during the ensuing sleep, withdraws itself into the astral sphere of our life-field. It is then charged with astral forces and images that agree with its fundamental nature. Upon awakening, the astral consciousness will then take control of life even more powerfully than before. Therefore, but one possibility remains, either to show the true character or to live under cover of a disguise as, in fact, most people do.

We are also reminded of a certain enmity towards the Spiritual School that can slumber in the pupil, too. This enmity can be, yes, will be present, as the momentary astral consciousness in dialectical man possesses a natural and explainable enmity towards the Gnosis. The pupil can be either unconscious or only very vaguely conscious of this

because, for instance, the blood-state or a karmic influence draws him to the Spiritual School and, consequently, to the Gnosis. Such a person could originally be very gnostically sensitive, having already sought contact with the School while still very young, but with respect to the necessary transformation of his astral consciousness he has as yet done nothing. The astral consciousness is then exactly the same as it was years ago; in this respect he is still as the cave man, the original natural man, perhaps fiery impassionate, whereas through a hereditary factor he has become a pupil of the Spiritual School. Then, by virtue of the astral consciousness, he possesses at the same time interest towards the School and enmity to the Gnosis.

Enmity expresses itself at first as a certain resentment, as displeasure or irritability because the School interferes too much in his life; if the School announces a certain arrangement for the good of the work he feels irritated. Because of his pupilship he fights against this enmity for a long time and he considers these things with the help of trusted friends, who are adroitly drawn into a conversation. But the enmity grows. If you try to hold the astral consciousness in check, tensions develop and at a given moment the storm breaks loose, just as in the highest heat spheres.

We see the same development when a pupil has come too much under the control of a group or a power from the astral sphere. Then such a pupil, even if he or she is not fully conscious of it, is used every possible moment against the School and its pupils in order to check the work and, if possible, to damage it, to neutralize the harvest of the Brotherhood.

In this way (speaking in the language of the *Pistis Sophia*) 'the power with the lion's head', existing in the astral sphere of the nature of death, tries to imitate the Gnosis and dis-

tributes stones for bread with a lavish hand. If you have received a lot of this substitute bread in your astral consciousness, you imagine to possess the Gnosis and you feel irritated when the School fails to recognize you.

It also can happen that some, who are open to it, are used to radiate hostile astral forces within the School. If we were to allow such pupils to pursue this course, the School would suffer great damage and those concerned would become laden with guilt.

Apart from the consequences for the School, it would be uncharitable to allow this. In such cases we tell those concerned to leave as soon as possible, because it would be best for them.

The karmic guilt, with which a person burdens himself when he fights against the Gnosis, is extremely great. Thus one must not keep people in the School who are obviously dominated by the astral consciousness through misplaced sympathy or stupid humanism. In fact, this would give them the opportunity to commit an unforgivable sin. Therefore, it would be rather out of love, out of far-seeing sympathy for a potential sinner, not to admit such a person into the School. At the beginning of their activity the workers receive the strictest instructions from the Spiritual Leaders to observe the so necessary minimum suitability when admitting new pupils.

On this point strict adherence is of special importance for both parties, as the astral sphere of our life-field becomes more chaotic every hour and an important factor in the Great Play*. The enmity towards the Gnosis increases to the extent that it reaches its aim. Perhaps it sounds hard, but it must be said that people who have allowed themselves to be led from

*See J. van Rijckenborgh *Unmasking*, Rozekruis Pers Haarlem, The Netherlands.

their youth by the astral consciousness, in an unbridled way, by the wild, ferocious animal in them, may not expect to become free of it, not even with the help of the School. These people must first become completely entangled in the net of bitter experience; only then can they be helped.

The Spiritual School does not help with a 'come to us and everything will be all right'. Every pupil must begin by helping himself and to this end the School shows him the path. Only when he really and truly goes this path does he receive the power, the radiation and the help of the Gnosis. The key to the path of liberation lies in the possibility to give a different direction to the astral consciousness. No other key will fit the door of the path.

The astral self will not change when you have been taken along to the Spiritual School by your father or mother, or by a friend or acquaintance, or because one makes an appeal to you or sympathizes with you. Your astral self must spontaneously, out of necessity, seek this path and behave accordingly. We are not in need of people who simply seek but of people who, after having found, behave themselves accordingly.

The majority of people live from the liver-spleen system, from their ordinary needs and instincts. The astral self is established in this system, especially in the solar plexus and the functions of the heart and the head are entirely subjected to it.

The heart and the head can be extraordinarily well cultivated; the heart, for example, as to fine taste and feeling, and the head with respect to intellectual understanding. Yet, as long as the astral self lies imprisoned in the solar plexus and man, as a result, is one mass of self-maintenance, of I-centrality and is completely earthly inclined, the pupilship of the gnostic Spiritual School is useless. The **School can only**

meet a person, can only give a helping hand when this person gives evidence of freeing the astral self from the solar plexus to draw it up into the heart.

When one is engaged in doing this — one cannot will this, the time must be right for it — he proves that he has reached a dead-end as far as nature is concerned; that he realizes that dialectics is without prospects. He then begins to rise above his instincts, which have made him so happy and which are so completely one with nature.

When one is engaged in drawing the astral self up into the heart, where in fact it belongs, he will make a strange discovery. Now that he views the world, not from the solar plexus, but from the heart, he finds corroborated what he perhaps subconsciously suspected: the absolute lack of prospects of the nature of death. You can repeat this or hear somebody else say it, but you will discover it for yourself as soon as you begin to draw the astral consciousness up into the heart. Then you will not establish it on the basis of some faith or other, or on philosophical reflection, no, then you will know it. The consciousness can be deluded by the astral sphere and its almost unlimited faculty of projection as long as it lies anchored in the liver-spleen system. However, if the consciousness draws itself up into the heart, the delusion is over. Since the astral consciousness always desires, is always directed upon some form of attainment, a new desire will develop — the yearning for salvation.

Yearning for salvation from the solar plexus is nonsense, is always a label. In reality it expresses the continual desire for gratification of the I at the expense of others. The true yearning for salvation awakens in the heart sanctuary; a desire, unknown until that moment, born on the basis of rejection of dialectics. Only then is a new direction given to the astral consciousness.

The astral sphere of dialectics can always answer a person and satisfy him as long as his desires do not rise above the level of the I. However, if man frees himself from that level, then deliverance is in sight, then the Gnosis comes to meet him on his path. Then, the very first task is to purify the heart.

However, as we said before, the heart sanctuary, and no less the head sanctuary, have been so much abused that when astral consciousness is drawn up into a sanctuary that is extremely damaged and decayed, it must be conscientiously restored and purified.

XV

THE WAY TO ALIENATION

When we awaken in the new, gnostic morning, the purification of the heart must be taken in hand in a very serious way from that moment on. Therefore, it is worthwhile to describe the average pupil of the Spiritual School of the Golden Rosycross. One can say that nearly every pupil is engaged in drawing the astral self up into the heart. In this way, he draws the drape from a window, as it were, where he can see a new light, shining as a rising dawn.

As soon as the pupils are able to look through this window of the heart, they come to know that real inner happiness can be found only on an entirely different spiral of life. The Rose of the heart begins to speak because a new state is entered, the gnostic light has penetrated into their blood and developed entirely different motives in their system, so they stand at the gate of an entirely new process of development. Or, speaking in the language of the gnostic gospel of the *Pistis Sophia*: they stand before the gates of the thirteenth Aeon.

If you are in this situation, the old process of development has not yet left you. At least, the old life has left its marks deeply in your heart sanctuary and that is why it must be purified. As long as the heart has not become pure according to the standards of the Gnosis, the new direction you gave to the astral consciousness will be only partially possible. The

latent possibilities of the heart cannot yet be freed; the old state of life continues to play an important part in your life and the consciousness, during sleep, returns to the astral sphere of the nature of death with all the ensuing consequences.

So you are, to a great extent, by virtue of your state of being, subjects of interference to the reflection sphere, even to a higher degree than might be considered normal, because its inhabitants know that they are about to lose you. It is obvious that your life, for the moment, is more difficult, because in this situation both the Gnosis and nature have a role in your life. It is clear that the inner conflict may become more acute. You can read of these things in the gnostic gospel of the *Pistis Sophia*, which is completely inspired by the experiences of the pupil who wakes up in the heart and seriously considers the consequences of it.

Whoever draws the astral consciousness up into the heart, penetrates into the holy halls of the universal Gnostic Brotherhood. However, the candidate, just as the *Pistis Sophia*, is sent back to purify the heart from numerous stains in various stages.

Pupils of the Spiritual School seek the pure light, a liberating life — and because you have drawn your consciousness up into the heart, you know from within that the pure light exists. It is the pure, original sidereal substance, the pure astral force, just as it exists in the universal Gnostic Chain. The important thing now is that you reform the sidereal body, the desire or astral body, in accordance with the standards of the Gnosis. What each pupil must achieve is the transfiguration of the astral self. It must be made pure, just as the gnostic light is pure. According to inner knowledge you can cherish the hope of achieving this

necessary purification, this first aspect of transfiguration. That is why it is stated in I John 3:

‘We know that when He appears we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is. And everyone who thus hopes in Him, purifies himself as He is pure.’

Therefore, you must now radically take yourself in hand, yet without forcing yourself, for that only causes extra tensions. Then the grand and glorious process, about which we have spoken in detail, develops. In the purified heart the immortal soul is born, the basis for an entirely new type of man. This soul basis consists of four principles of consciousness: the new material, the new etheric, the new astral and the new mental consciousness. First the astral consciousness must develop, then the mental and finally the etheric and material consciousness.

In this way the new soul-state will make itself felt in the blood and in the nervous fluid and, further, will manifest itself powerfully in the astral fluids of your being, upon which your new birth depends. Finally, on this basis the renewing principle begins to establish the new mentality with which the new state of consciousness has become complete. This entire process is indicated as the new sidereal birth.

This new sidereal birth and all the connected processes form the work with which we are engaged in the Spiritual School. If it is well with a pupil, irrespective of how he formulated his motives, he has come to the School because his astral consciousness was engaged in freeing itself from the liver-spleen system and struggling to draw itself up into the heart.

On this basis he is welcomed in the School and he should then enter the workshop of the heart sanctuary and in a persevering life of action achieve the sidereal birth, the new reality. That is why one of our rituals testifies: ‘Today we

dedicate our Roses so that they may become a crown that you, oh Gnosis, will put upon our heads.' This ritual was used by all previous Brotherhoods and the serious candidates, those struggling in the School, also demonstrate this in resolute, daily striving.

The crown draws attention to the new state of consciousness. To dedicate the Rose of the heart to the gnostic process, to the path of the Pistis Sophia within you is not only desirable, a possibility held out in prospect, but it is an absolute necessity for every one who wishes to manifest himself successfully in the School of the young Gnosis, for every one who wishes to rise out of the fierce burning of his tensions unto liberation. You should deal with this process with all your strength.

If your astral consciousness is drawn up into the heart you are, consequently, the subject of interference of two worlds. The old and the new one seize you; it is a situation even more difficult to endure because of the tensions it provokes. Therefore, take your cross, your rosycross, on your shoulders and go the path that leads from Bethlehem to Golgotha, so that you may walk in the new light even as He is in the light.

To this end, it is necessary that the astral consciousness, during the hours of sleep, is not found again in the astral sphere of the nature of death. This is the first task. Imagine that you could free yourself for several nights from this astral sphere; you would then experience what an enormous blessing results from it.

Therefore, apply your new possibilities by living out of them, by taking them into account every hour of the day and by drawing the necessary consequences. Do not allow yourself to be dragged along in common behaviour, either as an individual, or with others, but direct yourself to the great

aim and bring your being in harmony with it. When one is young one strives after maturity and social success. In the promising youth of gnostic pupilship, standing before the gates of the new life, you likewise need to prepare for this life and become mature as to the soul-man and arrive in the soul world.

Of course you will still have to carry out your social tasks. We all have our duties and responsibilities which demand fulfilment and which weigh heavily. Do not neglect your duties. However, when you realize the eternal importance of propelling the soul-man within you to life, then everything social, everything dialectical, however necessary to occupy yourself with for some time, will become of secondary importance. We do not mean that it does not matter any longer, only that the great aim will predominate in you by day and by night.

All the rest becomes spontaneously subservient. While you are occupied with whatever it may be, the voice of the soul will be heard and you will be able to listen to its rejoicing. When the astral self, drawn up into the heart, sends out its longing for the new life, all the rest will recede into the background as a matter of course. This longing needs to resound in you by day and by night as one continuous tone. Then you will go the way of self surrender, the logical way of transfiguration, directly and in practice.

You know what longing is. What have you not longed for in your life. When you look back on all those multifarious desires you know that a certain desire can be so strong that it becomes completely dominant. Well, when your longing for liberating life, for the Gnosis, has that kind of depth and intensity, the astral self will become devoted, in self-surrender, to `It', to `Tao', to the Rose of roses, to the Gnosis.

In this way you will sing your thirteen penitential songs, oh Pistis Sophia.

If you stand in this process without any force of will, then your astral self will no longer thrive, no longer breathe in the astral sphere of the nature of death. Then the natural astral self will die and the astral sphere of the nature of death will have to let you go, as a matter of course, because it can no longer reach you. Then, with respect to the astral self, you have died according to nature.

What will happen, then, when what was said of Jesus the Lord becomes a reality for you, too,: There was no place on earth where He could lay his head.

Do you realize what a delightful indication this is? The ignorant religious man experiences this as something terrible. Jesus the Lord who had no place where he could lay his head.

However, what is meant here is an incomprehensible blessing. When your astral self can no longer enter the astral sphere of the nature of death; when a splitting of the personality is no longer possible and the condition of sleep, normal to dialectical life, can no longer take place, what is going to happen then?

Then something else opens to you. The young Gnosis possesses a group body, a new field of life, a new, pure astral sphere which the group keeps drawn around it. This becomes your resting-place, which is in equilibrium with the necessities of your upward course of development; a delightful, pure place where you can spend your nocturnal life, completely safe in the Living Body of the Gnosis.

We need to clarify yet another aspect. Until now we have viewed the sidereal birth only in connection with the individual course of development. However, the one who

goes the way of development of the soul will not stop at this, but will increasingly demonstrate the typical characteristics of the soul-man, for instance, by an unceasingly impersonal force of love, completely disregarding his own interests in a spontaneous and absolute serving attitude of life. Whoever gives priority to the soul's life-course will adjust all the ever-recurring duties and responsibilities harmoniously. When you live out of the soul, when you are renewed in the astral self and your deepest and highest longings are directed toward the School and its exalted aims, it not only becomes still within you, but this silence, this harmony also radiates into your immediate surroundings. Then something new is manifested around you. Here also, silence, rest and harmony develop. Everything that excited you previously and caused tensions disappears. It will become as the tripping of a bird on your roof, or the buzzing of a fly against the window. For everything that is relegated to a secondary place will no longer hinder you. It will no longer cause difficulties, no longer create conflicts, for you will have entered into the grand and glorious life of the soul. You will look at each other with the glance of the soul and you will understand the struggle of those who perhaps worry or who are in a tight spot because of one or another tension and, consequently, act wrongly, or differently from what you are used to.

Whoever begins to live out of the soul, contributes to the establishment of true harmony in all the circles of life in which he moves. Service to humanity, emanating from the soul, keeps all aspects of life enclosed within the soul. Whoever is absorbed in all this has become a complete stranger on earth. He who is transfigured in the astral self does not feel like a stranger on earth, but he is one. No longer does a place of rest exist on earth for his inner being; he is as one ostracised.

For him the home of the soul opens, the Golden Head of the Living Body, the new gnostic astral field. For him the sleep of the body becomes the soberness of the soul, the closing of the eyes the real seeing; the silence becomes as a pregnancy of the good for him and the proclaiming of the Word will result in fruitful works of salvation.

XVI

THE AWAKENING OF THE SOUL (I)

In previous discussions we explained that the fulfilment of pupilship makes the pupil fundamentally a stranger on earth; you should thoroughly understand the meaning of this. We certainly do not mean that the pupil should develop an attitude of excentricity towards everything the School designates as dialectics; nor that this alienation would mean a certain indifference towards all that lives and exists. Most certainly we do not mean a revolutionary attitude of life with regard to society.

No, the estrangement from the world is a fundamental state of being. It is a state of being which occurs because of the change of the personality. As soon as this change happens there is no longer any rest for this man in the nature of death. When, during sleep, the inner, more tenuous part of the personality withdraws, there is no longer a place to be found in the nature of death where it can rest. Because of this he will feel like an outcast.

Every pupil who has drawn the astral consciousness up into the heart, supported by a consequent pupilship, a continuous purification of the heart and a self-negating, ministering life will arrive at this situation. Then he gets into that peculiar situation, sometimes fortunately of a very short duration, that when trying to sleep he is actually unable to

enter the sleep-state. As soon as bodily fatigue would send him into sleep, the tenuous part of the personality stands, as it were, before a wall and is forced back into the body again as it cannot find a life-field, a respiration-field for the astral consciousness. This, in fact, proves that the personality is beginning to change. If the pupil does not know how to act in such a situation, physical difficulties could arise. That is why it is being discussed.

Many pupils already know this alienation and, thank God, an ever increasing number will enter the peculiar situation just described. They then must know how to act. They should realize that there is a home for them, a gnostic astral field that has been prepared for them. Only then will the candidate fully realize what the School means for him or her. The Spiritual School as a Living Body, as a gnostic group, maintains such a merciful place of rest for its pupils.

Just as there is an astral body around the physical body, so is there an astral body that surrounds the Body of the Spiritual School. The Living Body of the School also possesses an astral aspect; it is fed with the astral bread of life of the pure, gnostic Nature. This astral field breathes in the Universal Gnosis, in the original sidereal substance. This is the soul-home for all those who, as a result of their growing soul-state, discover themselves strangers on earth.

We have tried to show that the soul possesses a very clear, positive astral aspect. This is the most striking quality at the genesis of the soul. It is wrapped from the beginning in a vesture of astral substance. If the pupil supports the growth of the soul by a very determined, positive attitude of life; when, at a given moment, he is unable to breathe, is unable to live any longer in the nature of death with its great dangers, then it is apparent that no vacuum must occur, but rather that a new home for the soul should take up the pupil.

It should be observed: to the extent that the new astral vesture is formed, the old astral vesture disappears. You should thoroughly realize that on the gnostic path there is no question of an astral culture, of a desire ethic with which one so frequently shows off. In dialectics, one tries to escape ever again from multifarious tensions of desire by adopting a kind of ethics indicated as asceticism. However, a pupil in the Spiritual School does not practice asceticism, nor any other kind of desire ethics but perseveres in the process of an astral transfiguration.

When someone practices certain ethics and, consequently, does not feel at home here, or at least feels a stranger to some extent, he will quickly return to that sense of 'belonging' upon relinquishing the ethical practice. For example, when one has adapted oneself to the habits of a certain environment for one single day, one can resume one's life-habits again and, if desired, change into opposite habits.

No, in the pupil a transfiguration occurs, the transfiguration of his astral being, which precedes the development of the new mentality. We must point out that when certain subjects are discussed in the School, the time of realization has arrived. That is why the foregoing is an invitation to the fulfilling life of action for all those who strive after a serious pupilship. The Upper Room has been prepared and the young gnostic Brotherhood invites: 'Come in, if you are ready to fulfil the conditions!'

Let us assume that you have drawn the astral consciousness up into the heart and that you are a serious and dynamic pupil, one who perseveres, who does not quake under compelling consequences — one who does not seek to compromise, Then, the soul has been born in your heart. When you steadfastly continue to purify the heart, permitting

the new-born soul room for expansion, the new astral vesture will unfold accordingly. Then, the quality of your personality can be readily distinguished from that of your fellow-man. As soon as you venture upon your pupilship, transfiguration begins and continues to that certain critical point which we have indicated as being a 'stranger on earth'. The structure of your body is then quite different from that of your dialectical fellow-man. Then your entire personality unmistakably experiences new astral necessities of life.

There are many proofs that the host of pupils of the young Gnosis very clearly experiences these new necessities of life. An example of this is the pace in which the number of visitors to our conferences is increasing. The pupils, by virtue of their inner urge are seeking contact with the foci, the Temples and the group as often as possible. And where better can that contact be made than during a stay at one of our conference centres.

If you understand all this, you can decide for yourself whether you are already living out of these new astral necessities of life, whether your entire being already longs for the new life-elixir. Just ask yourself: is there one continuous urge in me to attend every single conference, if at all possible? The need for astral nutrition of a special nature could be fulfilled by the School, until recently, through Temple-services and conferences. • In proportion to the astral transfiguration taking place within the pupils, there is an ever increasing need for gnostic sidereal food, of building materials for that growth. This can be fully furnished by the innate astral field of the young Gnosis.

That is why you should not only be with us in one of our Temples during your day-consciousness but, in accordance with the development of the work, it has now also become necessary that, as soon as you are ripe for it, you are with us in

the consecrated holy halls of the young Gnosis during the sleepstate — in the day-consciousness of the soul.

When you read about the new Jerusalem in the Book of Revelations*, you will understand that for the new-born soul there is no longer day or night — there is one uninterrupted life in the Light.

The astral necessities of life of most pupils are increasing at an accelerating pace; their lives are moving very clearly in the intended direction. So, for all of them the compelling question arises: 'How can we enter the new astral field, the new Body of the School?' 'How can we make use of this great mercy?' Well, in order to participate in the gnostic astral field of the Spiritual School, it is necessary that you completely free yourself, inwardly, of the ordinary daily grind in the life-signature of mankind and that your entire day-life be in the sign of the soul. Your day-life should be one continuous experience of pupilship in selfless service, borne by the undeniable love of mankind of the true soul and supported by complete absence of conflict. You cannot impress it too deeply into your consciousness that the normal life-attitude of conflict — being continually possessed by all kinds of passions, irritations, moodiness and similar mental states, completely destroys everything that has been built up in you of the new astral consciousness. Therefore, a life without conflict is absolutely necessary.

Such a day-life, in itself, is already an intense grace, a dynamic environment for the growth of the soul. It is to a high degree instructive to be an objective person, able to let pass the things that used to take hold of you compellingly, to stir your temper to the boiling point, and simply to observe without reacting — not on account of indifference, but because of the state of a new birth of your soul.

*Revelations 21:23

When you see a person do something stupid or nasty, you can posture with Pharisaism, haughtiness, or indifference; with a 'Thank God I'm not like him', or 'There but for the grace of God go I'. However, you can also observe that person objectively and send him, through inner compassion, the entire love of your soul. Then, you will not only avoid a binding with his state of being (which would have occurred in the first case), but also support him in that very moment with the radiation of your soul. In this way you will help your fellow pupil from moment to moment and lighten his way on the so often rocky path that leads to the breakthrough, to the living state of the soul.

He who knows the blessings of such a day-life also understands the attitude of life of a soul-born man: apparently seeing nothing, apparently reacting to nothing, apparently letting everything pass, yet he is very active in a highly positive way. He who knows the blessings of such a day-life will no doubt at night be able to repeat from within Hermes' words: 'I, however, wrote Pymander's benefaction within me; and when I was completely filled with this a supreme joy came over me.'

When a man lives from the soul he is conscious of the great goodness and love of the Gnosis every moment of the day. When you are soul-born and take part in the Gnosis, nothing can happen to you; then, nothing can cause you sorrow; then, according to the Bible, not a hair on your head shall be harmed. To be allowed to take part in a life-field in which there is nothing of the disintegration of dialectics, in which there is no enmity, in which the fiery tongues of hatred, criticism, slander and conflict are entirely lacking, gives an experience of unlimited joy — **of which many soul-men have borne testimony throughout the history of mankind.**

For each soul-born man it is necessary to end the day in this way. When, after completing the day's work we retire to our bedroom for the night's rest, our thoughts and our considerations must not be allowed to dwell upon the many aspects of dialectics, for dialectics is always a scourge. It usually tends to sadness and the urges of the I of nature. No, having arrived at the end of the day, we write Pymander's blessing in ourselves. We allow the intense current of gnostic blessing to go through us, to permit pure joy to fulfil us, even during those hours in which, dialectically speaking, there would be ample reason to worry or complain.

If in this way we have brought ourselves into harmony with the living salvation of the Gnosis and our respiration has acquired the quiet rhythm of inner satisfaction and thankfulness, we can fall asleep like a child, entirely directed towards the true light. Then the sleep of the body becomes the soberness of the soul, that is the complete awakening of the soul in its own world, the gnostic astral field.

The sleep of the body, as we said, should not start in a general, dialectical I-inclination, even if it is of an innocent nature — but in a complete soul-inclination. If you live daily out of the soul, if you subordinate everything else to the soul-inclination, it will be relatively easy; the soul-consciousness is nourished and the soul awakens in the field destined and prepared for it. It is almost an axiom that: he who goes to sleep soul-inclined, awakens the soul, makes it conscious. After what has been explained, you will see the great significance and the enormous advantage of this.

What is especially important is the inclination, the vibration of the astral self, when the body falls asleep. This determines our entire nocturnal experience. Whoever knows of this will have experienced that man awakens as he went to sleep. A brooding man will **say, when talking about his**

cobwebs: 'I go to bed with it and I wake up with it.' That speaks for itself! But he himself calls it into being; it is his faulty inclination that keeps him imprisoned in this way. The vibration of the astral self when falling asleep is the same as when you awaken. It is a destined inclination that places you in surroundings during sleep that are similar to those when you arise. If a person is of a worrying disposition and feels justified in being angry with someone else, the following happens: After a day of sulking and brooding, his body is exhausted and he goes to bed. In the reverie-state just before sleep, he dwells once more on all his troubles and sorrows and on the one who has angered him; in this state of mind, he falls asleep.

The next morning when he awakens, his consciousness will be occupied with much the same situation. His bodily vitality has been partially restored and the body is charged with new vitality. But as soon as the image of his enemy returns, the burning pain of everything that keeps his anger alive flows into his emotional being. And with his new vitality he decides: 'Today I'll do this. If he says this, I'll say that. I'll take this or that attitude towards him.' Consequently, upon awakening in that state, he is again prepared for the fight. The same struggle starts anew and so he never gets rid of the enmity!

However, the same law can be applied in a liberating sense. He who goes to sleep soul-inclined sends the soul to the home of souls, prepared for him in the School. Like attracts like.

Now, when going to sleep you should not ask yourself anxiously: 'Am I sufficiently soul-inclined tonight?' And don't worry about whether you have employed the right method. You should change the centre of gravity of your day-life! Your entire day should be in the sign of the soul, in a life of service. Then in the evening too, before going to sleep, you

will be soul-directed and feel a great thankfulness. As soon as you fall asleep, the soul will enter the astral field of the School in a state of soberness, with a quality of consciousness that conforms with the level of soul development the pupil has attained.

Of course, there is a difference in soul development. There is a variety of matured souls, maturing souls and newly awakened souls among the pupils. But whatever your soul development may be, it is certain that, as soon as you go to sleep soul-inclined, the soul will direct itself to the home of souls, the gnostic astral field. It will be there immediately in the state of consciousness that corresponds with your level of soul development. Everything experienced in this situation, the soul brings back into the body as a treasure, in the morning. In the meantime, the body has recovered its vitality and you are ready to direct the new attitude of life to greater glory. You will have the strength not only to think about it, to yearn for it, but to break through to the deed. A more powerful new faculty will fill your entire being and the process of transfiguration will accelerate accordingly.

You will no doubt see the imperative truth of all this and you will realize that you yourself have the responsibility and the means for your gnostic development. Your fate is in your own hands. In dialectics, man is the plaything of the fate that governs him; in the Gnosis he has his fate in his own hands.

The path of the Gnosis does not require any heavy methods that are difficult to understand; neither breathing or other exercises, nor countless prayer instructions. It requires only that you stand in the soul-directed life. This is the key to your salvation.

If you see this clearly and elevate yourself to a true soul-directed life, the life of the soul-born man, you will also write

Pymander's Benefaction in your heart and look forward in measureless joy to the daily hour of the awakening of the soul. Once you have experienced this, it will never leave you. Such an experience is not like dialectical joy — giving rise to shouting, soon to pass away as the dying of a single sunbeam in a heavy cloud. No, it is a constant joy, a perpetuating sense of salvation replenishing the serious pupil completely.

XVII

THE AWAKENING OF THE SOUL (II)

The subject to which we now turn relates to such new aspects in the development of pupilship that we think a short summary is needed.

We discussed the meaning of the 72nd verse of Hermes' *Pymander*, in which, among other things, is written: 'The sleep of the body had become the soberness of the soul, the closing of the eyes the real seeing; the silence had become for me as a pregnancy of the good and the proclaiming of the Word resulted in fruitful works of salvation.'

We asked ourselves: 'Where does the tenuous part of the personality stay during sleep and what happens to it?' We saw that the nocturnal man, if we may so express it, resides in the astral sphere of dialectics during the nightly hours and we examined its nature.

The astral sphere has a strong imaginative faculty. Thoughts, desires, feelings and objects of the will project themselves in it. It is clear that the astral sphere of dialectics has become polluted and complicated to a high degree because of the reflection sphere life and the general conduct of mankind. It is all delusion and fatal to any gnostic life, as the astral material is extraordinarily magnetic. Everything that does not agree with its nature is removed from the tenuous

personality entering the astral sphere. Instead it receives the astral substance of the astral sphere. That is why we read in the gnostic gospel of the *Pistis Sophia* that she was continually deprived of her light-force.

The astral sphere of normal life is full of unholy forces, the aeons, which can be defined as natural forces.

The word 'aeon' means not only an immeasurably long period of time, but is also used to indicate formations of unholy forces of nature. With the help of this conception it becomes clear what aeons are with respect to the astral sphere. Aeons are astral forces, astral activities which have been formed throughout long periods of time and which have become very powerful; for instance, projections of human desires and thoughts which were fed to such an extent that finally they were propelled into life in the astral sphere.

Suppose we form a certain image. We agree to maintain this image throughout the years; to impress it on our children and on all those who are willing to come along with us; that our artists will draw, paint or carve it and that our poets will chant it. So you can imagine how aeons are formed in the astral sphere. They are projections of constant currents of human desires and thoughts, which are finally vivified to such a degree that they begin to dominate mankind. These aeons, which increase in force because they are continually fed by mankind, deprive each gnostic directed man, who enters the astral sphere, of his light-force. Normally, this happens to every pupil as soon as he falls asleep.

Important consequences result for all those who take their pupilship seriously. Among other things, there is a logical and compelling demand that they withdraw from the astral sphere of the nature of death. If one ascertains that he experiences the disastrous influence of this sphere every time he enters it during the nocturnal hours, the following

question is obvious: 'how can I protect myself against these influences and in what way can I become free of them?' This is the first consequence.

The second is that he directs the tenuous part of the personality to another astral field in which those pollutions and dangers do not occur. You will no doubt agree that these are elementary demands from which no one can escape. Without their fulfilment each gnostic pupilship is an illusion.

One cannot force oneself in this; should we try for one or more days we would not be able to sustain it. It would be a struggle with the prospect of certain defeat. In the first place, it is necessary to draw the nucleus-principle of the I-being out of the liver-spleen system up into the heart. This can happen only when one is ready for it, when at last the course of life causes one to reach a dead-end in matter, in the nature of death; when you discover that for a man who moves on the horizontal plane there is no prospect of deliverance.

The man in the liver-spleen system, in the solar plexus, is the stone-hard, I-central man who clings to matter and consequently expects everything from it. However, the moment will come, sometimes after many lives in the microcosm, that he reaches a dead-end in the nature of death and finds that his existence is a circle without end. However, as long as he lives out of the liver-spleen system and, consequently, in self-maintenance and I-centrality, pupilship in a Spiritual School is completely useless. Only he who is able to draw the consciousness up into the heart will surmount his natural instincts. Only then does one begin to see the world as it really is.

A new desire, a yearning for true, essential liberation, which in the holy language is called yearning for salvation, then emanates from the astral self. Only this desire opens the heart of man for the Gnosis, for the light of the Holy Grail,

the consequence being that the Rose is touched. Because of the yearning for salvation, the pupil will stand before the gate of an entirely new state of life.

Many millions of people are standing before this gate; throughout the ages people have been yearning for a true, liberating life. The result is that these millions have also created an aeon, which the gnostic writings call the 'thirteenth aeon'. Between this thirteenth aeon and yearning man an interaction came into being, because of which the fire of desire became ever greater and the realisation of the state of confusion increased.

Mere yearning for salvation is not sufficient; the astral self will continue to reside in the astral sphere of the nature of death during the nocturnal hours and will return from it the next morning robbed of its light-force in such a way that the disorder is greater than ever before. This is the reason for the ever recurring penitential songs of the Pistis Sophia.

So we understand that, next to yearning for salvation, self-purification is also necessary. One who truly desires to be sanctified will try to do everything possible and even everything impossible to approach this sanctification. You will realize the logic of this. A vigorous self-activity should always prove that the fire of yearning for salvation is chastening. This self-activity will always emanate from the heart and will influence the entire state of life. That is why in the School of the Rosycross the necessary purification of the heart is always discussed.

You know of the dismal, negative cravings of those who keep crying for help and praying for assistance for anything and everything in the household of dialectics. However, man should understand that to reach true salvation he will have to sacrifice himself and his entire state of being. Next to yearning for salvation the self-sanctification needs to develop.

The birth of the soul is in the first place the birth of a new astral being. A soul-being is an astral being that, after having been born, communicates to the blood, the nerve-fluid, the internal secretion and the mental faculty. As soon as something of this new soul-being enters you a new quality comes into existence. A new force then circulates through your entire being and influences all your normal human faculties.

The fourth step lies entirely within your reach: to hand over the guidance of your life to the new-born soul within you, to the new possibilities within you. That is, you surrender no longer to your ordinary nature, but let the soul rule your life. A completely equipped new sidereal body will reveal itself and the old desire-being will disappear.

In this phase, you are already engaged in transfiguration. To the same degree that the new development continues, you are dying to the astral sphere of the nature of death and at a given moment you no longer even have access to it. You will find no place for your new astral self there. Then the new astral field of the Living Body opens: the stranger in the earthly regions is welcomed into his new home.

Our previous discussions were particularly meant to explain that such a new house exists, specially prepared for the young Gnosis through the exertion of many. Consequently, there is no question of a speculation on a future salvation or, perhaps, an imminent liberation. No, a home of liberty exists and everyone can enter it, if only you are willing to use the required keys and to face the consequences.

The condition is the possession of the true soul, demonstrated during your daily life, a life of consistently applied, practical pupilship, in I-less service, borne by the unmistakable love of mankind.

Every soul-born man, after having completed his daily

tasks, should place his life completely in the sphere of the soul and, consequently, before going to sleep not be preoccupied with the aspects of dialectics. In this way the sleep of the body becomes the soberness of the soul. He who goes to sleep soul-directed awakens it, makes it conscious. The vibration of the astral self, when going to sleep, determines the nocturnal life and the ensuing day-life.

Those who enter the new astral field prepared in this way experience daily, with ever greater clarity, that the sleep of the body means the awakening of the soul, involving a true seeing, and posits a new development that is crowned by the new state of consciousness, called in the holy language the 'unfading crown of glory.'

XVIII

THE REALITY OF LIBERATION

The astral field of the Living Body of the young Gnosis is characterized, outwardly, by colour and vibration. The colour of this field can best be defined as gold, mixed with violet; not a reddish or bluish violet, but a constant, very special colour producing a golden violet lustre.

Gold is the colour of the reborn state of the soul. That is why we speak of the Golden Rosycross, and sing of the golden wonderflower. It is ancient knowledge that gold, as to its lustre and vibration, is associated with the reborn state. Only think of the ancient art of painting. That is why the Renova Temple has been dedicated to these two colours, violet and gold. Pure violet is the basic colour of the new spectrum of soul mankind, in which the reborn soul, the golden wonder flower, can be taken up into a new state of life.

You may have wondered why we spoke in previous chapters of an astral field of the nature of death and of a newly constructed astral field of the Living Body of the Spiritual School. Perhaps you thought it too earthly to visualize the two fields existing adjacent to each other, yet separated and protected in different ways. No doubt you will think differently if you bear in mind that it relates to vibration.

The sidereal or astral substance has a vibration range in the

seventh cosmic domain of about 450 trillion to 700 trillion cycles per second. These are some of the figures given by the Universal Doctrine. Within this vibration range, the different astral phenomena, forms and activities connected with the seventh cosmic domain manifest themselves. Expressed in colours, they are bright red, the lowest vibration, up to bluish-violet, the highest vibration possible in the dialectical life-field. The radiations connected with all this have, according to the Universal Doctrine, a wave-length of 666 to 428 nanometers*. The fastest vibrations have the shortest wave-lengths.

As soon as the limit of vibration is exceeded in a negative sense, when a slowing down or a weakening aspect occurs that continues below the limits of the seventh cosmic domain, breaking, crushing, explosion and the death of dissolution follows.

As soon as these boundaries are exceeded by man in a positive manner, that is upwards in the direction of the sixth cosmic domain, this domain is entered and a new shape appears: the soul man. The transition from the seventh into the sixth cosmic domain irrevocably involves transfiguration. This is a scientific necessity.

If a personality — a microcosm — is maintained by a constant vibration, as a consequence of which its vehicles remain concentrically within each other, a special vitality is added and life maintains itself via the available possibilities of the personality. If the personality weakens, it involves a slowing down of the life-vibration. At a given moment, it is slowed down to such a degree that the personality cannot maintain itself in the body any longer and dies. In short, this is the cause of bodily death.

*A nanometer is one billionth part of a meter.

The other possibility is that we are touched by a field of a higher vibration than usual. The issue is whether we can respond to it. If we react positively, this field increases in vibration by means of a process. Because of this increase in vibration beyond that of the dialectical, the microcosm and the aural being change, as well as the personality. In other words — transfiguration. At a given moment transfiguration is a scientific necessity for man.

In the first case the result is death by dissolution; in the other, death by rebirth; two kinds of death in the dialectical sphere of life. But what an immense difference. The one death signifies countless repetition, chained to the wheel of birth and death. The other death you will experience only once. When you die this death, you will arise in eternal life.

The new astral field of the Spiritual School is a concentration-field of astral substance, in which vibrations are maintained of which the lowest limit exceeds 800 trillion hertz per second, whereas the shortest wave-length is about 375 nanometers. If you reduce the wave-lengths and increase the frequency you can form an idea as to the cosmic domains surpassing the sixth. At a given moment time also ceases to exist in these domains and a new situation develops which can be approached by the idea eternity.

A sidereal field, which qua vibration and wave-length rises above the seventh cosmic domain, is inaccessible for a being of this domain. In this way the new astral field of the Spiritual School protects itself and is essentially unassailable.

Still, this astral field of the Living Body shows activities through which it apparently endangers itself from time to time. You will understand this by thinking of a flame which, for some reason or other, burns lower and shows periodically a reduction of light. A gnostic astral field intentionally brings

about a reduced vibration, that is a reduced wave-length of its radiation, according to certain laws of periodicity, because of which the boundaries of the seventh cosmic domain are exceeded. Then the radiations of the Gnosis, of the new astral field, virtually descend into the dialectical life-field, the field of space and time. Consequently, many who live near the vibration boundaries of the seventh cosmic domain will eagerly make use of the removal of these barriers in order to enter the sixth cosmic domain.

In this way a situation arises as outlined in *The Alchemical Wedding of Christian Rosycross*. If we may compare the new vibration-field with an initiation temple which, of course, it is, then, as a result of the reduced vibration, a number of unauthorized persons also enter the sanctuary. They are inclined to force themselves to the front and upon seeing this C.R.C. are greatly disillusioned. Then the weighing of the candidates takes place; to put it another way, the vibrations of the temple-field are brought back to their previous intensity. The vibration-level rises again and whoever cannot bear this light-force is proved too light and must leave the sanctuary.

All these fluctuations in the vibrations of the new astral field are to enable those who are worthy of it to enter the holy halls of renovation. This is why the Bible reveals the fact that the Lord of Life comes to meet the pilgrim. Do not think of a venerable figure who meets a poor, tired pilgrim on his way, but of a reduction of light-vibration which will envelop the concerned and draw him up into the new life-field.

We emphatically point this out because there is so much dialectical magic imitating the work of salvation of the Universal Chain, for instance with the help of music. In various dialectical magic temples a certain tone is produced, which gradually rises in vibration, to descend afterwards,

with the intention of capturing those who enter the temple, to admit them into a vibration-field and then to draw them up in the more tenuous regions of the reflection sphere for special purposes.

You may now understand something of the great sacrifice for mankind by the Gnosis and its servants. When a person has passed beyond the boundary of the seventh vibration-field, the seventh cosmic domain, there is no question of suspension, the person goes farther and higher into the universal light and vibration-field. An ever more mighty and brilliant vibration comes into being, the results of which we can imagine only mathematically. However, this would mean that all those who are to follow later would no longer be able to achieve the connection because of the immense gap which separates their vibrations and wave-lengths from those of their predecessors. That is why there is always a gnostic brotherhood, or a part of such a brotherhood, that undertakes to maintain the connection; its members are indicated as 'guardians at the border.' Our friend and brother Antoine Gadai was one of these guardians. He was the patriarch of the previous Brotherhood, who made it his task to wait for us.

The guardians do not go on with the group they belong to, but stay behind for the benefit of those coming later. We may now understand the words of the Lord, quoted from the gospel of John:

'I go to prepare a place for you. It is to your advantage that I go away for if I do not go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go I will send him to you. When the Counselor comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness of me'

From the sidereal field of the guardians of the border a

vibration emanates which is attuned to all truly striving men, so that they are able to follow the cord of connection in order to get out of the labyrinth of dialectics. That is why in the gospel of John is written: 'When I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also'.

Do understand these indications of the gnostic science of salvation and realize that it was applied in each epoch.

When we speak of the astral field of the Living Body of the young Gnosis, we mean that for everyone who is sincerely seeking liberation, once again a place is prepared that is adapted to us and our epoch. Once again a consoling, helping radiation emanates from the immaterial initiation temple of Brother Christian Rosycross. It enables you to exist in two worlds, when you possess the new soul. You exist by virtue of your natural birth in the seventh cosmic domain and by virtue of your new soul birth, at least during sleep, in the initiation temple of C.R.C., the astral field of the Living Body of the Gnosis.

You can compare all this with inhalation and exhalation. From the new, gnostic initiation temple an astral radiation, a sanctifying, power giving impulse is sent out daily. Whoever reacts positively and co-operates with it in faithful, daily ministration is, as soon as he falls asleep, carried along by the inhalation into the gnostic astral temple. He experiences the blessing of awakening, laden with pure force, to progress on the path. In this way the link between the soul and the gnostic astral field becomes ever more powerful, until it approaches the unbreakable and continues during the day-life of the candidate. Being non-resident in the seventh cosmic domain he has become, at the same time, resident in the sixth. He has gone beyond the borders of death. Whatever can happen to him now?

The death of the material vehicle is no longer an emptying of the microcosm but only a liberation from the natural, whereas the essential remains imperishable. That is why the death of nature no longer brings separation in these circumstances. The sadness and emptiness that accompany dialectical death disappear.

So we shall presently distinguish in the Living Body soul-men without dialectical vehicles and soul-men who still possess them. A living contact between both types is possible. We tell you this to impress on you the fact that sadness with regard to death is misdirected when your pupilship and that of the departed friend or relative is seriously experienced. A living contact is possible between both types of soul-men. However, to prevent any reflection sphere misery, the soul-man living on earth should lift himself up into the soberness of the soul and become completely awake in it, because the soul-men who have cast off the material body will no longer be able to make themselves known in the material sphere because of vibration and wave-length differences. For they manifest themselves only as radiation.

As we serve together, all the brothers and sisters of the Universal Chain who have proceeded us are always around us and with us, sending their light to us.

XIX

THE PRACTICAL EDUCATION OF THOUGHT

The human brain has many wonderful faculties, among them the faculty of memory.

All braincells are able to receive and store certain impressions, sometimes many impressions of varying nature, simultaneously. This especially applies to the memory-centre. The type and quality of our senses depend on our character and inclination. When a group is together at a Service, it is certain that no two pupils listen and experience in the same manner and so, afterwards, they will not be similarly attuned. That would be desirable, but in our present state of being it is not yet possible.

Our impressionability depends on our character and purpose and these depend on the state of the lipika, the net of magnetic points of the seventh ring of the aural being that was revived at our birth. This magnetic net, in which all the karmic influences are present, projects itself in the brain and keeps the braincells in a preset condition. It not only projects itself inwardly, but also outwardly into the astral sphere. So there is a close relationship between the different aspects and forces of the astral sphere on the one hand and the human personality on the other, because the magnetic system is connected with the astral sphere and the brain.

Furthermore, a fire burns in the head-sanctuary, the flame

of the mentality, the common brain-thinking. This flame develops out of seven foci which are found in the seven cerebral cavities. When the personality is fully grown it possesses a mentality entirely in agreement with the nature of the braincells, with that of the lipika and with the astral sphere of ordinary nature. Consequently, the natural mentality is in complete equilibrium with the astral sphere of the nature of death.

One could say that the astral sphere and, more particularly, some of its forces or aeons, control human thought. When, during sleep, the personality splits and the astral body and the mind stay in the astral region, it is a normal procedure that the braincells are recharged with and attuned to forces and influences which agree with the natural state of being. This is self-evident because, during the daytime, all braincells are charged with inclinations which are concentrated in the memory.

Besides the mentality the faculty of the human will is situated in the head-sanctuary. In the will-centre we also find a powerful concentration of astral radiation, permeating like a fire. Consequently, we find two fires in the head: the flame of thought and that of the will, both originating from the astral field, the field of sidereal radiations. In a normal human being, thinking comes before willing or desiring. Thought affects the braincells and the activity of the braincells influences in turn the organ in which the will is situated. In this manner the will or the desire to act or not to act is awakened. Thus, it is always the thought that defines our desire or will. That is why the Universal Doctrine gives a serious warning to all the candidates on the path: 'Five minutes of ill-advised thinking can undo five years work.'

It is perfectly clear and easy to remember; the pupil needs to watch his thoughts. Wrong thoughts should be ex-

tinguished before desire is ignited. You sometimes feel the fire of desire or will flare-up in you; it drives you to actions you regret; you hate it that it can happen to you, but ... thoughts came before the desire.

That is why wrong thoughts must be purged before desire can be annulled. Before essential changes can take place in the system of the striving person, thoughts need to be altered. It is out of the question that the average man has his thoughts under control. We just think away chaotically.

Who are `we'? It is the I that, in ordinary man, is situated in the liver-spleen system. The I simply thinks away. Our thoughts are in harmony with our natural inclination and control our willing, desiring and acting — consequently, the blood-condition and the entire state of being. With the help of the mentality the personality is directed by astral influences and is kept in a certain state. He who is not able to control his thoughts cannot consider himself to be a true pupil of the Spiritual School.

For instance, when you enter a Temple, you sit there with different and mostly rather strange trends of thought. If instruments could be found to measure and reproduce your thinking you would be astonished to hear what your thoughts were from the moment you entered the Temple; general thoughts and thoughts about your fellow-pupils. The wheels in your head keep turning without any control. That is why we said: he who cannot keep his thoughts under control, he who is unable to modify his mentality, should not think that he is a true pupil.

When you are together in the Temple in this way, with different lines of thought that are to be explained from your natural state of being, you cause a chaotic whirlpool of astral radiations while you are sitting apparently very peacefully.

Your mentality originates from the astral sphere and in the midst of this chaos the work must be done. Do you understand how fatal your civilized habits are? In fact, you are not at all civilized. Indeed, you dress as fashion dictates, you adopt the prescribed attitude in every situation, you playact with the best of intentions, but in general there is no question of mental cleanliness, of mental purity.

There is much in all of this on which to reflect; however, we will discuss only a few aspects connected with the subject that occupies us. The point at issue is: how can one most quickly and effectively protect the system against the influences of the astral sphere of dialectics and how can one most expeditiously enter the sphere of the new astral field.

Upon reading this, you should consider your reaction. Do our words have merely theoretical interest to you, about which you do not ruffle a hair, or do you feel a profound concern when we posit this problem? Do you experience an earnest desire to be able to contact the new life-field?

You might also find the nature and the consequences of a stay in a different astral sphere very interesting, allowing you approach our point of view from only scientific curiosity. But by that you would prove, in fact, that nothing has yet begun to change in your state of being.

We explained how the astral sphere, the net of magnetic points in the aural being, the brain, the blood and the body form a unity affecting thought, will and desire; they form the basis of overlapping processes which are active like streams feeding a single river. Therefore, quite a lot is needed to intervene in the organism and to give it another direction.

If your keen interest is directed to the topic of entrance into the new astral field and participation in the glorious, divine astral life; if a profound desire emanates from you, your

situation is hopeful. Why? Well, if thoughts of interest radiate from you towards the Gnosis and its salvation, if an action of the will is connected with your desire to partake in the new astral field, then these thought and will actions are not to be explained from the natural state. They are then influenced by something unmistakably non-dialectical.

We said that our being and its activities — initially the mentality — are imprisoned in the nature of death via the astral sphere. How then is it possible that our desires and thoughts go out to the Gnosis? Do you realize that this is a vital question? It is vital, too, to consider the gnostic life. Hence, the emphasis by which we draw your attention to it.

A keen interest in the Gnosis is not to be explained from ordinary consciousness, for our dialectical state is guided by the nature of death. How, then, do these other, non-dialectical thoughts and feelings arise in us? They can have come to us only from outside by breaking into the system and propelling the mentality into another direction. If you recognize this situation as your own, you are engaged in drawing the consciousness up from the liver-spleen system into the heart; only such a consciousness is able to assimilate gnostic influences. The heart becomes open for the gnostic radiations; they mix with the blood, penetrate via the blood circulation into the head sanctuary and have a remarkable influence on the mentality, causing thoughts to arise which do not correspond with the horizontal line of ordinary life. In this way, the Gnosis breaks into the system and renders it a new faculty. At first, perhaps, only as a thought-flash, after which an impulse of the will and the desire goes out, wanting to seize the salvation hidden in the Gnosis.

When the Gnosis awakens thoughts in you which are neither born out of karma, the lipika, the astral sphere, nor out of the blood of nature, but of God, then, from that

moment on, you can listen to the voice of the soul; or mystically stated, to the voice of God. Then you are connected with the new astral field, with the Gnosis, with the Universal, gnostic Chain.

Now you can prove for yourself whether you possess something of all this. If so, rejoice with us, for you have the key to the path in your hands, in your system. Indeed, with the new faculty you can stop thoughts which emanate from the natural self and give them a different direction, in accordance with the demands of the path.

If you are unable to do this, you may absorb intellectually what we tell you and perhaps be able to repeat it literally, but it is of no use to you; nothing will change in you. You need to use this new faculty immediately, even if you possess only the first aspect of it, to take hold of your thoughts and give them another direction. If you succeed, you may rest assured also of getting will and desire under control. In other words, you are able to control your activities according to the demand of the glorious new influence in your life.

Self-sanctification, self-liberation, the path of healing begins with your thought-life. Whoever is not able to begin with this has to wait until the consciousness has been drawn up from the liver-spleen system into the heart.

However, if you possess the new faculty and do not make use of it, you will ruin the process of your pupilship. Therefore, keep in mind the warning of the great ones: five minutes of ill-advised thinking — uncharitable thoughts full of criticism, envy, hate etc., undo the work of your pupilship.

This is why a practical redirection of thought is urgently necessary for all those who want to go the path. This is the intellectual education to which you need to submit in the Spiritual School. The way to self-liberation is purification of the thought-life; to think truly. Do see the significance of this,

as your self-revolution should begin in this way. Whoever begins the purification of his thoughts begins to break the ties between the personality system and the lipika and, accordingly, the astral sphere. These ties make us into harlequins, as it were, because they induce us to act in accordance with the impulses emanating from the astral sphere. When one begins to change the mentality in the power of the Gnosis, then one is gradually freed from this fatal influence.

In the meantime the heart opens increasingly, you become alienated from the nature of death and its astral sphere and the gnostic forces enter your system in great waves. Your new faculty becomes more vigorous and through this self-sacrifice you transfigure your astral body quickly. Thus, you are placed before a completely new beginning.

Now ask yourself once more: does the profound longing to approach the Gnosis, to enter the new life, really exist in me? Is this longing genuine? If your reply is a firm 'yes', then you have already entered the new beginning and received the new faculty. Then, the issue is whether you will make consistently use of it. Only then can we speak successfully and with good reason of the soul-life in the new astral field.

Finally consider this: Do not worry about dreams of a dialectical nature, which could make you think you have had no participation in the new astral life during the night. Disregard this uneasiness; a great many dreams, if not all, are due to the unloading of the brain-cells, especially those of the memory-centre. For instance, if you have a strong imagination and have been thinking about banalities, letting yourself go, then the brain-cells charge with many forces. During the sleep of the body the brain-cells discharge and cause dreams which to a high degree are confused and fragmentary, having affinity with your **day-dreams**.

Another example is that, possibly, you have been very busy with your social responsibilities, so that you fall asleep dead tired. Then the brain-cells are overcharged and when they discharge at night they produce several dreams. Therefore, don't worry about it, don't pay attention to your dreams, even if they seem to be important. Just enclose them in the silence of your being and soon you will know what to think and expect of them.

XX

THE SIGN OF THE SON OF MAN

When the pupil stands full of joy in the phase of the new beginning and cherishes the precious jewel in the heart in a devoted, persistent endeavour to fulfil his pupilship, his openness to assimilate the gnostic prana in the heart sanctuary constantly grows. He prepares to live daily out of the gnostic-magic preparations known as 'bread' and 'wine', or, put in another way: the Holy Grail.

The Brotherhood of the Holy Grail is a priesthood which manifests itself through all gnostic groups to transfer the universal prana of God, to those who are ready to receive and live from it; the water of the river of life flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb, in two concentrated, magically prepared conditions.

Throughout all ages the Brotherhood of the Holy Grail has been formed of those who are designated as 'the guardians at the border.' They are brothers and sisters who wait for everyone to return. They will continue to wait until the last pilgrim has crossed the border of the new state of life.

They offer two magically prepared forces to all those who wish to live from them; to those who wish to receive the prana of God as nourishment. You will understand that one can and will feed on this bread if the system desires to do so, because it needs it.

Secondly, one can receive the prana of life as wine. The bread of the Holy Grail feeds the new mystic man who is dedicated to the new life; the wine represents the magical aspect.

The new magic aspect of the active ministration is placed next to the new mystic aspect of dedication. Those who are allowed to receive the Grail in its duality go the path of dedication and ministration. The twofold Grail — the prana as the food and the prana as a redeeming element — is meant in Revelations 22: 'He showed me a pure river of the water of life, clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb.'

When you are told about these holy forces in a temple of the Gnosis you, too, are confronted with this holy priesthood and the Holy Grail is offered you by those who represent it, as if with the prayer: 'Brothers and sisters, may the bread of life and the wine of true ministration be food and drink to you forever.'

The man who lives out of this twofold, concentrated, ever-flowing stream of God, becomes a soul-man. The twofold gnostic light has awakened the Rose in the opened heart and all the life fluids of the system are permeated by this light, with all its consequences. The light breaks into the head sanctuary after having found its way via the heart and the blood. It glows in the respiration field and starts the transfiguration of the astral body of the candidate. If only the candidate continually minds the warning of Great Ones: 'Five minutes of ill-advised thinking may undo five years' work', very soon the moment will come when he contacts the new astral field of the Spiritual School. This contact is also twofold, in harmony with the mystery of the Holy Grail: one link is made with the man of daytime, living in the body; the

other link is made with the man living outside the body during the night.

The outward aspect of the astral field of the Living Body can be seen as a golden field, mixed with the violet of the sixth cosmic domain. The pupil who proceeds positively in the process of the twofold gnostic light soon begins to show this golden attire, the golden radiation of the prana of life, in his respiration field. That is why the Bible testifies of the golden Wedding Garment. Whoever proceeds on the path of life in a positive way and approaches the Gnosis, receives the qualities of the astral field of the Living Body. These light-forces break into the heart, mix with the blood, penetrate upwards into the head sanctuary and spread through the body.

You will now understand the words of Revelations 3, verse 18: 'I counsel you to buy from me gold refined by fire, that you, too, may become rich'.

The changing astral body of the candidate takes on the form of the golden radiation. The astral body of the cultivated, dialectical man is of a vague, nebulous, red-violet surrounded by an oviform orbit of pastel-blue. The other colours of the spectrum sparkle in all kinds of nuances over this form, like the rippling of water. When the sun shines and a light breeze makes the water surface ripple, all kinds of colours manifest, slide over the water and are reflected by it.

You can now imagine how these shades of colour sparkle in the red-violet form of the astral body. They reveal what occupies man and the quality of his character. Each thought, each desire, each active object of the will displays a corresponding shade of colour in the respiration-field. That is why, to an observer, man is like an open book.

When the respiration field of the candidate is touched by the Gnosis and he begins to live from this touch, the

respiration-field will receive another undertone — a beautiful golden colour. That is why the observer pays no attention to what one says, nor to the attitude he assumes but whether, gnostically speaking, he is really engaged in weaving the golden garment; whether his astral attire is really becoming golden and the blue of the aural being gradually disappears. When this phenomenon is observed, one may say that the aural attire is submerged in the golden glow of the wedding garment.

The respiration-field of dialectical man is characterised by ever changing shades of colour, which disappear from the respiration-field of the gnostically directed man who goes the path. The red of life directed to material things disappears, as does the turbid green of one who expects all help and salvation to come from living and striving on the horizontal level. The same applies to the violet of the common ethers which give way to a golden radiation.

Furthermore, and this is important, a fiery sign appears, corresponding with the forehead and the crown of the head; it is the third eye. This fiery sign, this flame, covers the cranium from the forehead to the crown.

It is the sign of the Son of man of which Revelations 7 speaks. It is not a mystic indication, but a scientific fact. It is the sign of the new-born soul. When a pupil opens his heart to the Gnosis, when the prana of life enters and mixes with the life fluids, penetrates into the head sanctuary and the pupil perseveres and places a guard on his thoughts, this flame begins to manifest itself: the sign of the Son of man, the golden wonder flower of which we sing in our Temple songs.

When this sign begins to show, when the pupil begins to attain his new soul garment, a close communication is effected between the candidate on the one hand and the new

astral field of the Living Body on the other. Of course, there was already a link between the gnostic astral field and the human heart, but now it also exists between this field and the head sanctuary, between the astral field and the golden rose.

The man who wears the sign of the Son of man upon his head is a saved man, connected with eternal salvation. Also in his waking life the indissoluble tie exists and when the third eye — the golden rose — develops, he is able to see in the soul world; so for the awakened soul darkness need no longer exist. This seeing is called gnostic intuition. It is the seeing of the soul and the beginning of the new consciousness connected with it, because the centre of the third eye is associated with the pineal gland. In Ephesians 6 this is mystically indicated as 'the helmet of salvation', while the Hermetic philosophy speaks of 'Pymander'.

The foregoing has always been known and this ancient wisdom has always been linked with humanity. However, just as the degeneration of everything original and true occurs in dialectics, so does it with the helmet of salvation. Just think of military horsemen. On their heads they wear a helmet with an enormous plume, the degenerated imitation of the helmet of salvation. One may laugh, but at the same time it is tragic. When, at royal receptions and other official occasions, one sees the authorities arrive, they wear an array of imposing ornaments on their heads as a sign of their dignity. It is an external show, a senseless imitation of the helmet of salvation. With regard to the heart sanctuary, we see how the breast is covered with rows of orders of knighthood, tokens of dignity and merit. Here, too, a degeneration of the wisdom of deliverance is shown, a display of ignorance of the Arch-wisdom of antiquity. Then mankind was still aware of the imperishable riches of which the heart sanctuary radiated from the man who, conscious of his origin and destination,

opened his heart to the Gnosis and, in complete self-surrender, took the road back to the eternal home of the Father.

You need not worry when we show you the glorious result of the gnostic process of sanctification. It is well to see this result in the imagination, to know: I am beginning to go the way of salvation. If you see, daily, the elementary demands of the path and truly strive to realize these demands, you may be sure that a thread connects you with the new astral field of the Living Body. However, there is more, much more. The sleep of the body becomes the soberness of the soul. Therefore, we now turn our attention from man during daytime to man during the night.

The candidate who is busily weaving the new, golden astral garment enters the new astral field during sleep, to be helped and guided in the new state of being. The new centre behind the frontal bone begins to establish itself and the light of the Gnosis starts to burn; the helmet of salvation forms itself and, basically, the sign of the Son of man is constructed. At first there is no question of a conscious soul life, of being really awakened. No, there is only a soberness in the sense of youth and purity, of becoming free of the delusion of matter.

When the candidates arrive in the astral field of the Living Body in their new born soul-state with its corresponding astral body, they are far from being able to react. The Bible calls them 'still sleeping souls'. That is why the light-forces of the Holy Grail are poured over them, the greatest gifts the Living Body can give. You will understand that this light immersion will have a great and glorious effect.

The workers in the new astral field need not release them when the nightly hours are over, as the connection of the new astral field with the golden Rose, the third eye, Pymander,

has come into being simultaneously. By this continual, intuitive stream the high priests of renewal are able to help the candidates by day and by night. In such a situation it may happen that the new born soul awakens from its sleep and remembers nothing at all of the bath of salvation it was allowed to receive in the new astral field. Yet, it appears how much this lived through, but not yet consciously experienced time contains a pregnancy of the good, as Pymander expresses it. The light-bath of the soul pursues certain aims in this situation, to which the candidate should react in his waking life which, no doubt, he will do.

The light-bath results, among other things, in the etching of powerful impressions into the nascent astral body. At a suitable moment the impulses established in the astral body on this basis come to the candidate via the gnostic intuition, or from within via the activities of the astral body. They stir the head, heart and blood and the candidate often has the impression that he rediscovers what he already knew long ago, or acts in accordance with an earlier decision, or on the basis of a conversation he has had with someone sometime, somewhere.

When you approach the series of truths of the 72nd verse of the book *Pymander* in this way you will understand why Hermes, on surveying these truths, exclaims:

`And all this has come to me because I received from Pymander my Spirit-soul, the Being that exists out of itself, the Word from the beginning. Thus I am now filled with the divine breath of truth. Therefore, I direct with my whole soul and with all my powers this song of praise to God the Father'.

XXI

THE LIGHT-BATH AND THE CONSOLAMENTUM

There are two aspects of the subject discussed in the preceding chapter we would like to bring to your attention.

We talked about the light-bath that the still unawakened, unconscious new-born soul receives in the new astral field. Now, one could ask: what is the nature of this light-bath?

The astral field possesses a descriptive faculty of assimilation. The universal, Gnostic Chain projects into the astral field of the School all the aspects and forces of the path, every nuance of the process of salvation that is of importance to the pupil. In this way the entire Gnostic Chain makes itself known to the new astral field of the School by projection. Therefore, one can say that this astral field contains a Universal Doctrine, a gnostic philosophy in a series of impressions and symbols. Everything of importance to the candidate is etched, is projected into his astral body during sleep, during the light-bath. So one could say that he awakens with the message of the Brotherhood etched into his astral attire. Of course, these impulses also have their effect on the waking life of the candidate.

The astral substances of the respiration field circulate around the body and also pass through it*. The liver is

*See J. v. Rijckenborgh, *The Coming New Man*, Rozekruis Pers, Haarlem, The Netherlands.

important in this process. The astral forces leave the liver, go upwards around the body and return again after completing their circulation. It is clear that all the impulses given to the astral body during the light-bath of the School also, at a given moment, are released to the brain. The result usually is an activity that contributes to the advancement of the pupil on the path. At the same time it produces a greater openness to the gnostic light-forces in the intuition centre, the golden rose, the sign of the Son of man, as a result of which the School comes into an even more direct contact with the concerned soul. You may rest assured that, if it is at all possible, the Brotherhood of the Holy Grail is active for you and with you every day.

We would like to draw your attention to the still sleeping souls who have lost the material body because of death. They are taken up, process-wise, into the light-bath of the gnostic astral field, which will invariably contribute to their ultimate awakening and save them from a renewed immersion in matter.

However, if this large and wonderful work is to succeed, the School should have at its disposal an ever increasing group of workers who are able to become active in the Golden Head. The Universal Doctrine, which is etched in symbolic characters into the astral substance of the Golden Head, can be liberatingly active only when there are enough trained workers who can take care of a liberating projection of the symbols into the astral body of still sleeping souls so that their awakening may follow.

Everything possible is done to smooth your entrance into the gnostic astral sphere. The outward aspect of the Living Body of the School is an exact reflection of everything that manifests itself **in its astral sphere, just as with every gnostic**

Brotherhood. Think, for example, of the holy mountain of Ussat. This immense system of caves with their various meanings is an exact replica of the symbolic characters that also manifest in the astral sphere of the Living Body.

That is why we sincerely hope that you will realize what an exceptional privilege it is to participate as God's children in the new astral field and through this to have crossed the borders of death.

You can imagine what a privilege it is for those who have left behind the earthly body. They live in the new astral field and are able to be active there. We are allowed to reveal that, if you persevere in serious pupilship in the way described above and you enter the process of sanctification, we will be able, following the example of all preceding Brotherhoods, to end all remaining uncertainties by the sacrament of the Consolamentum.

The Consolamentum establishes every brother or sister in the new life-field. It will bring the certainty of becoming incorporated in the new astral field of the Living Body to every serious pupil who reaches the point that he will put aside the earthly body. For such persons death will be nothing more than joyful ascendance beyond the earthly vale of tears.

XXII

LIVE OUT OF THE NEW SOUL PRINCIPLE

We would now like to reflect upon the conscious, awakened life of the soul and ask ourselves: how does this consciousness develop in the new astral field, how is this life carried out and what are the results?

To be able to answer these questions we should first form a valid idea of the concept of consciousness, life and soul.

Consciousness occurs when the animating principle, causing life, occupies a central position in the system. There is much natural life where, indeed, there is evidence of an animating principle, but this principle does not exist within the life-system, but influences it from without. As a result, no consciousness can be present in such a life manifestation. We think here, for instance, of plants and insects. Indeed, with most species of animals there is no question at all of an individual animating principle; they exist out of a group-soul.

Other animals have a kind of half-consciousness. The animating principle only partially dwells in it; it does not lie concentrically in the physical vehicle but hangs and vibrates partly outside of it. With some of the higher species of animals such as horses and dogs, the animating principle approaches almost the indwelling condition, as is the case with human beings. Were this evolution of the animal species to continue as to their nature-born state, dogs, horses and

human beings would stand on an equal footing. Then would occur what many authors during the course of history have phantasized: the manifestation of thinking, consciously living animals and the forming of animal communities. Think of *Gulliver's Travels*, by the well-known author Jonathan Swift. Gulliver comes upon a community of horses who act, think and live as humans.

Indwelling animation, situated concentrically in the vehicles of the personality, makes thought possible, that is, a brain activity in a natural human sense.

The material body is built up of cells and atoms. It lives and remains vital because it possesses an etheric double. This etheric double continually propels a fourfold life-force into the organism. If this etheric vehicle did not function properly, all kinds of physical difficulties would arise.

The material body with its etheric double are vivified by an animating principle. When the thread between the animating principle and the organism is broken, in some way or other, death occurs and the organism disintegrates because it can no longer maintain itself in the system. We ascertained that life originates out of the co-operation of the animating principle, an etheric double and a material body.

Consciousness occurs when the animating principle is indwelling. It is possible to distinguish various conditions of consciousness, half-consciousness etc., which are caused by the relationship of the soul to the organism. The question is whether the soul principle is situated concentrically or only partially in the vehicles. Our investigation makes it clear that the soul principle transcends life, is superior to mere form and appearance. Everything stands or falls on the basis of the soul principle with its animating activity.

What, then, is this soul principle? It is of an astral, or sidereal,

nature. One can associate it with the astral vehicle of the personality that is drawn around the material body, with its etheric double as a mantle.

The astral vehicle is composed of atoms of a higher, finer gradation than the ether and material atoms. So there are material, ether and astral atoms which correspond with the three spheres: the material, the ether and the astral sphere. An ether sphere surrounds the material body of the earth and the astral sphere re-encircles the ether sphere. The astral body of man resides in this sphere during the night; it is drawn up into it. The astral body exists in three conditions, in three grades of density, in three different vibration frequencies.

In dialectics (please pay attention to this, for then you will understand what transfiguration is) one of these astral conditions works positively and the other two negatively. The positive pole of the astral body corresponds with the liver-spleen system, more particularly with the liver, while the two negative poles correspond with the heart and the head. In practically all dialectical people the seat of consciousness is centralized in the liver-spleen system and the emotional and thought life are attuned to it. This condition is fundamental to all nature-born people. From this brief introduction we are now able to draw sufficient data for further consideration.

We wish to enter into a new soul birth, that is, we endeavour to realize a new astral principle. The principle that has animated us since our birth is of dialectical structure. In the Spiritual School, in the young Gnosis, we come together to receive a new soul principle, and to propel it to powerful activity.

If you achieve what you strive after in this way, you will discover that it has immeasurable, glorious results, which can nevertheless be traced scientifically. As nature-born entities

we are animated by an astral self of which the atomic composition is created from the nature of death. However, because of the life-situation of many of us we begin to draw up the consciousness from the liver-spleen system into the heart. Even this first beginning brings about a remarkable disturbance in the process of life. Not only does one open the door of the heart for the gnostic light but, what is more, one disturbs the astral self, the animating principle which until then has governed life, out of its polarization, out of its magnetic order.

In this respect, think of the gnostic gospel of the *Pistis Sophia*. When the Pistis Sophia sings her thirteen songs of repentance and journeys through the various life spheres of the nature of death, she disturbs the order of these different regions. Similarly the serious pupil of the Spiritual School must disturb the order of his own nature-born principle that animates and causes him to live. He accomplishes this by drawing up the consciousness from the liver-spleen system into the heart, by an intense longing for the liberating light and by seeking it with perseverance.

Examine yourself to see whether you know this longing, this seeking after the light. If so, the gate of the heart is opened for the light of the Gnosis and the magnetic order of the positive liver-centre and that of the negative heart-centre will be disturbed. Consequently, the grip of the astral world of the nature of death is weakened, while at the same time the possibility is created that another soul-principle will develop. The primary question for a positive pupilship is whether the candidate will be able to bring about the transfiguration of the soul. This is the key to success on the path.

If the pupil follows the way of the reborn soul he is, at first, **in the same state as the plants and animals; as long as the**

astral principle is not yet centred with respect to the remaining vehicles, there can be no new consciousness. The new soul principle works and drives to many different attitudes of life, but the new consciousness fails to appear because it has not yet adopted a central position with respect to the other vehicles. The new soul does exert an influence upon life, so, thank God, there is a new nascent soul life, but as yet it is uncontrolled, unconscious and therefore inexperienced. That is why the School insists that the pupil, by self-sacrifice and a ministering co-operation, lives in accordance with the standards of the new soul. Most pupils, if not all, are touched and marked by the light. For this reason the School speaks unceasingly to them: 'Whatever you possess of the new soul power, live out of it. Then, sometime, you will really live'. When in the gospel Jesus the Lord says: 'I shall come to you and abide in you', this means that the new, immortal soul principle must take a central place with respect to the other vehicles. The renovating soul must be able to take up its habitation in the candidate. Just as the old soul was positioned centrally, this must also become the case with the new soul.

However, there is the difference of reversal. In the nature-born soul the positive pole lies in the liver-spleen system and the negative pole in the head and the heart. In the new soul this is reversed and we see the positive pole established in the head and the heart, while the negative pole rests in the liver-spleen system.

When you accomplish this reversal and live consistently out of the new soul power, the new soul consciousness will also grow and one may speak of a conscious, awakened soul life in a gnostic sense.

So we can state that the soul, through which one may live in the new astral field, relates to an astral vehicle of a reversed

polarization. Turning towards the gnostic light means at the same time a reversal, a turn-around in a literal sense. In this connection, think of the story about Mary, the mother of the Lord, of whom it is written: 'When the Holy Spirit came to her, she turned around and saw Him'.

Until now we have not mentioned that the astral vehicle, the soul being, is connected to a fount from which it is fed. For nature-born man this fount is to be found in the astral world, with the nature aeons. However, in the transfigured soul, in the reversed soul, the candidate reaches the original, basic life and only out of this beginning true, eternal evolution, eternal genesis is possible. In this soul there no longer exists a link with the nature aeons, but exclusively with the Spirit, the original, life-giving power of the All-revelation. Only in this soul does the link with the original Pymander become a fact; that which once was broken is restored. The eternal Spirit will manifest itself in the state of life via the immortal soul principle.

That is why it is a holy, universal law: whoever renews the soul will find and meet the Spirit.

XXIII

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONSCIOUSNESS IN THE NEW ASTRAL FIELD

The new astral field of the Spiritual School of the Golden Rosycross, indicated as the Golden Head, can be distinguished from the dialectical astral field because it has an immense higher vibration. It is the astral field of the sixth cosmic domain, the basis for the original beginning in which the Spirit is able to manifest itself, in which man can live together with the Spirit.

This astral field is composed of atoms of exactly the same nature as those of the seventh cosmic domain; however, they exist in a higher vibration and demonstrate completely different characteristics. Therefore, in the life-field of the sixth cosmic domain a different universe develops, a different sphere of life for entities of our disposition, a different earth — the Holy Earth of the beginning.

We mention with emphasis the astral field of the Living Body of the School. We do this to make it clear that a concentration of astral substance of the seventh cosmic domain is intended which has been brought into a higher vibration than the encircling astral field of the nature of death. This enclave, if we may call it so, is, in fact, connected with the sixth cosmic domain and the Spirit can manifest itself in this astral field of the Living Body. Yet one must speak of an exceptional state; indeed, it is the field of the

Spirit-soul which the young Gnosis has drawn around itself, while in other respects it fully manifests itself in the nature of death.

The Living Body of the School manifests itself in two cosmic domains: on the one hand in the nature of death, if necessary into its deepest depths, as divine Love will penetrate into the middle of hell to help a lost wretch. On the other hand, it rises, as far as possible, into the highest regions of the astral sphere in a state that corresponds with the astral sphere of the sixth cosmic domain.

You might ask how it is possible that such an exceptional field is able to manifest itself, a field identified with two cosmic domains? It can be explained from two facts.

A radiation-force exists which emanates from the sixth cosmic domain into everything that encircles it, a radiation from the beginning. This means a radiation of the Spirit, of pure astral fire, of divine ether; the holy forces and material forces other than we know here.

Secondly, there is the necessity of striving human beings who, from below upwards, accomplish transfiguration, in accordance with ancient gnostic methods. Those who accomplish this draw, as it were, cosmic forces from the sixth domain downwards. They hold on to them and raise themselves up to them. (Think in this connection of the rope with which C.R.C. climbs out of the pit of death). Whenever this happens to many, working in close relationship, an extraordinary result will manifest itself. In addition, it is certain that during such a process the preceding gnostic Brotherhoods offer wonderful loving help.

The School of the young Gnosis possesses such an exceptional astral field, which is maintained by soul-power freed within the School. As this soul-power increases, greater possibilities are called into life. If the participants in the

group go their way according to the lines of conduct intended by the Universal Gnosis then, and it cannot be otherwise, the possibilities of the collective light-garment will lead the group to ever more glorious manifestations. A procedure of extension and fulfilment, which means an ever closer link with the sixth cosmic domain, will ensure a home-coming, an incorporation in this domain. You will realize that the state of the astral field of the School is in harmony with the soul-quality of the pupils who have brought about this field. Therefore, this is all the more reason for the pupils to exert themselves to make the possibilities greater, for the astral field is a field of the soul and it is always completely attuned to the state of the soul.

It is clear that everyone who stands in the process of soul reversal also has a corresponding part in the new astral field, while those who have not begun this process stand, as yet, outside. Furthermore, the new soul consciousness is possible only if the soul is resident within you. The possession of soul consciousness means more than being a participant in the astral field, more than forming a cell in the Living Body of the School. The purpose of pupilship is to lead the attained new soul to soul consciousness.

The task for the pupil is threefold:

1. To participate in the new astral field of the School;
 2. to make the soul ever more resident in one's own life system by intensified new soul life; and
 3. to attain the soul consciousness which is bound to follow.
- Whoever has become soul conscious can speak with his Pymander; just as Hermes Trismegistus he comes into contact with the Spirit and is of service in all the inner aspects and regions of the Living Body of the young Gnosis.

Imagine two pupils of the Spiritual School; one still **possesses**

the material body and the other has already lost it through death.

The first will, as long as the new soul is not resident, be helped as much as possible by the astral field of the School during sleep, for he certainly will sejourne there during some hours of the night. For the pupil, the period of sleep can be divided in three parts.

In the first period the pupil stays in the astral sphere of the nature of death. Daytime life is often so busy, so fully occupied, so full of aims on the horizontal plane that, at first, it is difficult for the pupil to free himself from this sphere. As soon as the body is rested during the earlier hours of sleep and the balance, especially that of the nervous system, has been somewhat restored, a contact will develop between the astral field of the School and the pupil during the second period of sleep.

Near the end of the night's rest, during the third period, the pupil usually returns to the border regions of the astral sphere of ordinary nature. In the sleeper a mixture of impressions remains, both from the astral field of the School and from that of ordinary nature. Dreams usually develop, half gnostic, half dialectical; all sorts of images and situations that usually mingle into inextricable threads. Therefore, sometimes a truth can be found in a dream, but more often it is miserable and confusing. That is why you should take great precautions with respect to dreams and our advice is: attach no value to them. Make a mental note of what could be useful or necessary; later you will learn from experience what even-tally comes of it.

Accordingly, as the process of soul reversal progresses, the middle period of the nightly experience will be enlarged. The period of unity with the astral field of the Living Body becomes greater. The borders widen until, at a given moment,

the complete rest of the body means a link with the astral sphere of the Living Body.

For the second pupil, who is already dead as to the body, the situation is of course different. If the soul was awakened before the demise of the body everything is simple; the soul-man who possesses the golden wedding garment, the astral body polarized in the right manner, having become an immortal vehicle, goes on from power to power. Let us assume that the new soul, although conceived, is not yet awakened, as is the case with many pupils of the Spiritual School, and that in this situation the dialectical body dies. Then the situation becomes more complicated. A soul that is not awakened is, of course, inactive. The nascent new soul faculty is inactive until it is the absolute centre in the pupil; he is then able to make use of it. The still unawakened soul cannot be active as yet and must be taken care of. When, after death, a microcosm is emptied of the material body and its etheric double, a very complicated astral vehicle remains; in fact two astral vehicles, one astrally directed upon dialectics and a second one astrally directed upon the new life-field. This twofold astral vehicle is not yet polarized; it had only partially begun the process of alteration. In such a condition the deceased is attracted by two astral fields — that of dialectics and that of the Spiritual School.

It could be that the dialectical astral directedness is stronger. In such a case the entity is lost for the new life-field and a new immersion of the microcosm in matter must follow. However, the new soul potential that has already been acquired cannot be lost. It remains etched into the aural being as a centre of power. The past life, although it has not brought complete salvation, has not been totally unprofitable and it will benefit the new manifestation of a personality in the microcosm.

It can also be, as is often the case, that the new soul-state of a pupil, at the death of the body, is still quite young, so that the soul benefit is relatively small. However, if this pupil is directed toward the new life and the Johannite self-sacrifice; if he is absorbed by the School in such a way that, in principle, dialectics is rejected, it is certain that at the death of the body this person will be incorporated in the new field.

This process is supported in the School of the Rosycross by a sacramental Service for the deceased. All the brothers and sisters who remain behind endeavour, by means of light power, to propel the pupil concerned upwards into the astral field of the School, to safe-guard him as far as possible from all sorts of hindering influences.

Let us put it this way. The soul-aspect of the pupil concerned is still ninety per cent dialectical and only ten per cent aimed at the new astral field. Upon arriving in the Golden Head, he will experience this greater, dialectical astral consciousness as weak and whereas the astral field of the School does not correspond with that ninety per cent dialectical consciousness, he has the sensation of a blinding light. He can observe nothing, undergo nothing, there is only light. This sensation of light becomes gradually weaker during the development of a strange process, unless the help that is given fails to succeed.

We have earlier explained that the consciousness of the new soul is related to a new polarization of the astral body. In man's dialectical state the positive pole of the astral body is centralized in the liver-spleen system and the negative pole in the heart and the head. During the development of the new soul these poles are reversed; the positive pole corresponds with the heart and the head and the negative pole with the liver-spleen system.

Naturally, the astral field of the Spiritual School is

polarized in the same way as the new soul-vehicle. The astral field of the Living Body, the astral sphere of the sixth cosmic domain, is oppositely polarized from that of the astral field of the seventh cosmic domain. The sleeping soul that is led into the astral field of the Living Body is straightened out, as it were, by the powerful polar currents of this field. One can actually see this happen when, for example, the arms and the head reach in the direction of the positive pole of this field and the legs in the opposite direction. The new soul, placed upright through these polar currents, is inspired and animated by them; it will awaken and become completely conscious when this raising up is successfully completed. At the same time the old state of the soul will be extinguished. That which perhaps takes years of struggling in dialectical nature takes a relatively short time there. The moment that the soul is raised up it is awake — living and conscious. The great, most glorious wonder is that the microcosm is then liberated from the wheel of birth and death; the last manifestation of the personality is ended. Then it is no longer necessary for a new immersion into night, death and anguish, unless the soul later descends again, voluntarily, driven by an imperishable love that continually goes out to seek and find that which is lost, in the service of Jesus Christ our Lord. However, the polar currents of the astral field of the Spiritual School are not automatic. These currents of the Golden Head need to be aroused and continually maintained. This work is being carried out by the workers in the Golden Head — brothers and sisters who devote themselves to this work to serve all their friends. It is the work of the inner temple, a work that requires ever more servants. As the workers go out into the harvest fields and the harvest is gathered, the barns filled and an ever increasing number of entities are attracted, it is obvious that many harvesters will be needed.

Finally, yet another question will arise in you. What happens to the soul that is led to an awakening through the polar currents of the gnostic astral field? It enters at once, as if in a lightning flash, into contact with the Spirit, with its Pymander; for the Spirit is also a radiation.

As soon as a soul is awakened and raises itself up in the new astral field, in the Golden Head of the gnostic Living Body, the Spirit unites and becomes intimate with it in a fraction of a second. From that moment on the concerned is self-creative, he becomes, in the highest sense of the word, a freemason, a fellow servant, a builder in the home of the living soul.

We hope this explanation contributes to a clear vision of the salvation which is reserved in the Gnosis for everyone.

`To all who receive Him, He gives the right to become children of God again.'

Understand this awakening call to life. If you know yourself to be an inheritor of salvation, accept you heritage without delay.

XXIV

THE WEDDING ROOM: THE GOLDEN HEAD

We have discussed the way in which the consciousness of the soul-man will develop in the new astral field; how he is led to an awakening in the garden of the gods, the basis for true human life. Indeed, in this field of activity, in the soul-field, the broken unity between Spirit and soul has been restored once again; Pymander and Hermes have become one again. Let us now go further into the question of how this soul life manifests itself in the astral field of the School.

Let us again take the example of a seriously orientated pupil who goes the path of self-surrender and its accompanying soul birth and who, because of his astral transfiguration, is attracted by and taken up into the astral field of the School — the Golden Head of the Living Body. In this case it is not important whether this pupil has already died or is still making use of the dialectical vehicle; whether he has broken through or, as a sleeping soul, is allowed to penetrate into the astral field of the School for only a few hours, a stay that will give him only soul-revealing impulses for his existence in matter.

The prepared soul that enters the new astral field sets foot in the sacred halls of the sublime gnostic initiation-temple, the Golden Head, the initiation-temple of our Father Brother C.R.C. It is a temple which weakens its vibration-power from

time to time and brings it into harmony with the limit of the vibration-range of dialectics, as a kind of welcome to enable an approaching group to pass through. As soon as this wedding-hall is filled with guests, the great feast of the Alchemical Wedding begins.

From the Biblical parable about the wedding-hall and from the communications in *the Alchemical Wedding of Christian Rosycross* you will know that again and again guests, who do not possess a wedding garment, force their way in. They are either sent back immediately or are weighed and found wanting, to be sent away with the damage of judgement. These apparently romantic stories are based on reality and will keep repeating themselves. So in our day, too, those who do violence to the truth will be removed from the wedding-hall.

You can imagine this wedding-hall, the Golden Head, the astral field of the School, the initiation-temple of C.R.C., as an unlimited space which, nevertheless, forms an organic unity and which makes no concession to the dialectical way of representing sublimity. You do not enter, as in the reflection sphere, mighty etheric cathedrals with domes and towers and majestic halls shining in white and gold. There is no question of this at all. Such representations may appear of significance to some people in certain situations in the ordinary astral world, but in the wedding-hall of the Gnosis there is only an unlimited space which is, nevertheless, experienced as an organic whole.

On entering the 'Cathedrale' at Ussat-Ornolac you see only a cave and you experience a chilliness and darkness. However, this cave is bathed in the light of the gnostic astral field. Those who are ripe for it experience the vibrations of a very special nature, of which we have spoken to you and which make themselves felt in the unlimited space.

If you wish a comparison after all, you may think of a spherical field into which the candidate is admitted. In this field polar magnetic currents appear of a different nature than those in the astral field of dialectics, currents which are diametrically opposed to the dialectical astral currents. This field of unlimited space is the all important gate of the gnostic mysteries. Whoever succeeds in passing through will not be liberated but is liberated. To understand this consider the following:

Upon entering the new life-field the soul is straightened by its polar astral currents. However, we now add: or it is not! This straightening of the soul is possible only if the soul and its vehicle comply with the organic state of the golden wedding garment.

That is why in the new life-field no mystification can take place any longer; only he who is truth can be connected with truth. If a person only talks about truth and pretends about the rest, he will be rejected from this field. All pretentiousness can only appear in an order of mystification. In this existence we are surrounded by delusion on all sides and one can be misled by it. As soon as you have gone through the gate of the mysteries, every mystification ceases. He who, because of his state of being, cannot comply with the demands of passage, will not be able to maintain himself when the polar currents are accelerated to a higher vibration.

In this way we find the holy tales and legends fully confirmed in practice. Just think of what happened in the initiation-temple of C.R.C. In the front rows were originally seated numerous kings, emperors, princes, barons, the noble and ignoble, the rich and the poor. At first things are far from sublime and most people are terribly noisy. C.R.C. modestly enters, thankful that he was able to pass through the gate just in time. When at the question: `So, brother Rosycross, are

you here too?' he replies: 'Yes, brothers, the grace of God has allowed me, too, to enter', they scoff at him. In fact, to enter these brothers did not exert themselves at all. These brothers will disappear as soon as the weighing begins, that is, as soon as the polar currents are raised.

For those who 'withstand all weights' this straightening of the soul means an awakening, a becoming aware. Further, it means a completely new life, as a course through eternity. The candidate has been led to this by a gnostic, healing force, the power of the Holy Spirit, the Healer, the Paraclete. Whoever awakens in this way, finds himself again as a new-born son, as a child of the Divinity, of the Spirit. Indeed, the entire astral space of the Golden Head is simultaneously filled with the radiation of the spirit.

What is the spirit? That cannot be explained. The spirit, to be distinguished from the Holy Spirit, the Universal Logos, God, fills the space of the soul-world with its holy presence. Therefore, the soul world is to be associated with the Kingdom of Heaven, the realm of the mankind of Christ. Just as Jesus Christ said of himself: 'The Father and I are one', so the soul-man, coming home to the Golden Head, can say the same, for this field is inspired and irradiated by the Divinity. Spirit and soul, Father and Son, God and soul-world are one there.

In dialectical life, as we may know from experience or else certainly from the Holy Language, severance from the Spirit prevails. Consequently, man changes over to an experiment; he himself creates the delusion of evil and daily life becomes a road of pain and sorrow. Therefore, we cannot compare the spirit-field of the Golden Head with examples taken from dialectics.

The only thing we possess in dialectics is the spirit of the

Paraclete. The only thing sent into this vale of tears is the spirit of the Comforter, the light-force of the Holy Spirit. It is a sanctifying and healing light-force from the soul-world — from the sixth cosmic domain, which breaks into the seventh cosmic domain. It is the light-force that never unites with dialectical nature, but which nevertheless exists and has but one task, to bring man home, to lead him out of dialectics unto the living soul-state.

That is why theological, ecclesiastical and sectarian circles seek the Holy Spirit so diligently but never find it and time and again end up with spiritualistic nonsense. Whoever tries to realize the Kingdom of God on earth on the horizontal level, will never be able to find the power of the Paraclete, even though one virtuously speaks about following Christ.

The soul that is ushered into the new life-field by the spirit of the Paraclete, the spirit of truth, in which life-field soul and spirit become a unity according to the revelation of the spirit, experiences the truth in the words of John 14: 18-20,; 'I will not leave you desolate; I will come to you. Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me; because I live, and you will live. In that day you will know that I am in my Father and you in me and I in you.'

If you could raise yourself up consciously to the dwelling place in the Father's house of many mansions, you would see and experience that which we, hesitantly and sketchily, have tried to make clear. You would experience the field of unity of the spirit and the soul, the field which is eternity, immortality, omniscience, complete love, absolute goodness and unity, without any notion of separateness, one unlimited space that is still experienced organically, consciously and intelligently. The candidate who has entered here has become a Spirit-soul, a partner in the original spiritual order of Jesus Christ.

You will be able to imagine now how correct it is that Jesus the Lord said of John the Baptist: 'Among those born of women there has risen no one greater than John the Baptist, yet he who is least in the Kingdom of Heaven is greater than he.'

You are called to this Kingdom of heaven, to this realm that exists in the living present and every assistance is offered you. For the spirit of the Paraclete is active in every focus and in the entire Living Body of the Young Gnosis.

'The issue is the living present,
the issue is the now of to-day.
That is why we direct our steps now to
the work that the Gnosis demands.'

XXV

SECOND BOOK

PYMANDER TO HERMES

1. Well then, be still, oh Hermes Trismegistus, and do not forget what I shall tell you. I shall tell you immediately what has occurred to me.
2. `Much has been spoken from many aspects about the All and about God, but the opinions contradict each other, so that I have not discerned the truth in it. Will you, oh Lord, explain this to me? For I shall believe only what you will reveal to me.'
3. `Just listen, my son, how God and the universe are related to each other: God, eternity, the world, time and genesis.
4. God makes eternity, eternity makes the world, the world makes time, and time makes genesis.
5. Goodness, beauty, blissfulness and wisdom form, as

it were, the essence of God; the essence of eternity is invariability; the essence of the world is order; the essence of time is changeability; and the essence of genesis is life and death.

6. Spirit and soul are the actively revealing powers of God; durability and immortality are the manifestations of eternity; the return to perfection and denaturation are the manifestations of the world; increasing and decreasing are the manifestations of time; genesis has as its manifestation the faculty.

7. So is eternity in God, the world in eternity, time in the world, and genesis in time.

8. Whereas eternity rests round about God, the world moves itself in eternity, time is accomplished in the world and becomes the genesis in time.

9. Therefore, the origin of all things is God; the essence is eternity and the world is its matter.

10. Eternity is a potential force of God. The work of eternity is the world which has had no origin, but is in a continual genesis through the activity of eternity.

That is why nothing in the world will ever perish, for eternity is imperishable, neither will anything ever be destroyed, because the world is entirely surrounded by eternity.'

11. 'But what is the wisdom of God?'

12. 'it is goodness, beauty, bliss, all virtue and eternity.'

13. Eternity shapes the world into an order by penetrating matter with immortality and durability. The nascency of matter depends on eternity, just as eternity itself depends on God.

14. There is genesis and there is time, in heaven as well as on earth, but they are of a different nature: in heaven they do not change and are imperishable, on earth they change and perish.

15. God is the soul of eternity; eternity is the soul of the world and heaven is the soul of the earth.

16. God is in the Spirit-soul; the Spirit-soul is in the soul; the soul is in matter and all this through eternity.

17. This vast body, comprising all bodies, is filled from within by a soul full of spiritual consciousness and full of God, a soul which vivifies the All and is surrounded by it from outside.
18. Outwardly: the vast and perfect life that is the world; inwardly; all living creatures; above, in heaven, it lasts invariably, always remaining equal to itself; below, on earth, it brings about the changes of genesis.
19. Eternity maintains all this, either by what is called fate, providence, nature, or whatever one may think of it now, or later. But he who brings about all this by his activity is God, the revealing, active power of God.
20. God, whose potential power is unsurpassable and with whom nothing human nor divine can be compared.
21. Therefore, Hermes, do not think that anything from here below or above would be equal to God, for you would then deviate from the truth: nothing is equal to the Incomparable, to the universal, one God.

22. Neither should you think that he shares his potential power with whomsoever. For save himself, who is creator of life, immortality and change?
23. And what else could he do but create? God is not inactive, otherwise the entire cosmos would be inactive, for everything is full of God.
24. Consequently, there is nowhere inactivity, neither in the world, nor in any other being. Inactivity is an empty word, with regard to the creator as well with that which comes into being.
25. And everything must come into being according to the influence, natural to every place.
26. For the creator lives in all his creatures; and he does not abide in one of them separately, and he does not create in one of them alone, but he creates all of them.
27. Whereas he is an ever-active power, it is not sufficient for him to have created beings, he also takes them into his care.
28. Look upon the world which displays itself to you

through me, and imbibe deeply of its beauty: a pure and imperishable body, inwardly strong and young, and ever increasing in force.

29. See also the seven fundamental worlds, which are created according to an eternal order and which together, each according to its own course, fulfil eternity. Behold, *everything* is full of light, without there being fire anywhere.
30. For the love and the fusion of the contrasts and inequalities have become light, radiating through the revealing force of God, the creator of all goodness, the ruler and prince of the entire order of the seven worlds.
31. Behold the moon, the forerunner of all these worlds, the instrument of natural growth, re-creating matter here below.
32. Behold the earth, situated in the centre of the All, set as a basis of this beautiful world, foster-mother and provider of everything that lives upon it.
33. Mark you, how numerous the host of the immortal

beings is, and how large the multitude of the mortals, and behold how the moon describes its orbit between the immortals and mortals.

34. Everything is full of soul, all beings are moved as to their own nature: some of them in heaven, some of them on earth. Those who must be on the right-hand side, do not go to the left; those who must be on the left-hand side, do not go to the right; those who must go upwards do not go downwards; those who must go downwards, do not go upwards.

35. That all these beings have been procreated I need not point out to you any longer, my beloved Hermes: they are bodies, they possess a soul and they are moved.

36. However, all these beings cannot possibly become a unity without someone bringing them together. Thus this one must exist and he must be absolutely the only one.

37. For as the movements differ and are manifold, and the bodies are not equal either, whereas all the same

there is one speed common to all, put jointly before them, there cannot be two or more creators.

38. If there were more of them, the unity of the order would not be maintained and jealousy would occur on account of the mightiest.
39. Suppose there was a second creator for the changeable and mortal beings, then this one would also like to create immortal beings, whereas the creator of the immortal beings would also like to create mortal beings.
40. Moreover, suppose there were two creators, while on the one hand there is matter and on the other the soul; to whom would creation belong? And if both of them were to take care of it, who would have the larger share?
41. Know then that each living body is composed of matter and soul, the immortal as well as the mortal, the one equipped with reason as well as the one devoid of reason.
42. For all living bodies are animated. That which has no

life is simply matter, whereas the soul, the cause of life, remains in the hands of the creator. Therefore, the creator of the immortals is also the absolute creator of life; hence of the other living beings, the mortal ones as well.

40. Moreover, suppose there were two creators, while on the one hand there is matter and on the other the soul; to whom would creation belong? And if both of them were to take care of it, who would have the larger share?

41. Know then that each living body is composed of matter and soul, the immortal as well as the mortal, the one equipped with reason as well as the one devoid of reason.

42. For all living bodies are animated. That which has no life is simply matter, whereas the soul, the cause of life, remains in the hands of the creator. Therefore, the creator of the immortals is also the absolute creator of life; hence of the other living beings, the mortal ones as well.

43. How would that which is immortal and creates

immortality not make everything that belongs to the living?

44. It is clear, therefore, that there is someone who creates all this. That He is the All-one is self-evident, for one is the soul, one is life, one is matter.'

45. 'Who then is this creator?'

46. 'Who else than the one God? Who else but God alone has a right to create animated, living beings? That is why there is only one God!

47. It is really laughable: if you admit that there is one world, one sun, one moon, and one divine nature, would you then expect God to be plural?

48. Thus it is God who makes all things. Is it so surprising after all that God creates life — the soul, immortality and change — when you yourself perform so many different actions?

49. You see, you speak, you hear, you smell, you taste, you feel, you walk, you think, you breathe. It is not so that one man sees, and another hears, and yet

another speaks, another tastes, and another smells, and another walks, another thinks and another breathes? It is one being who does all this.

50. Well then, neither are the divine activities to be separated from God; just as you would cease to be a living being if you were to cease all your activities, likewise, if God were no longer to fulfil His activities, He would cease to be *God*.

51. If it is proved that no being can exist in inactivity, how much more does this apply to God!

52. If something really exists that God does not create, He would be imperfect. However, as God is not inactive, but on the contrary is perfect, so He is the Creator of all things.

53. If you will just be attentive, oh Hermes, you will surely understand that God has only one aim: to call into existence everything in gestation, everything that was gestated in the past, everything that will come into being in the future.

54. This, my beloved, is life. This is the beautiful, this is the good, this is God.

55. And if you want to understand all this from your own experience, just see what happens in you when you want to procreate. Indeed, when it concerns God, the action of creation is not equal: God certainly does not experience a perceivable joy; and there is no one who co-operates with Him.

56. As he acts entirely alone, he is always *resident* in his works and he is himself what he procreates, creator as well as creation. For if his creatures were to be free of him, they would collapse and inevitably perish, because they would have no life of themselves.

57. But as everything lives and life is one, God is decidedly the All-one. On the other hand, as everything, in heaven as well as on earth, is alive, and life is one in everyone, life is created by God, and life is itself God; therefore, everything is called into existence through the work of God and life is the union of spirit and soul.

58. As regards death, this is not the destruction of the united elements but the breaking of the cohesive unity.
59. Thus eternity is the image of God, the world the image of eternity, the sun the image of the world and man the image of the sun.
60. Relating to the change, the ordinary man speaks of death, because the body is dissolved and life departs to the invisible.
61. However, I explained to you, my beloved Hermes, that the beings disappearing in this way are only transformed: every day a part of the world is transformed into the invisible, but by no means to be dissolved.
62. Of this the suffering of the world consists: the cycle and the disappearance in what is called: death. But a cycle is repetition, wheel-rotation; disappearing is renewal.
63. The world possesses all kinds of forms. Not that it

has enclosed the form in itself, but in and through the forms it transforms itself.

64. Thus as the world has been made universal of form, how then will its Creator be? We cannot say that he is without form! And if he, too, should be universal of form, he would be equal to the world. And if he has one form? Then he would be less than the world in this respect.
65. Upon what will we decide? For our conception regarding God must not show a void!
66. There is only one figure that is God's own, a figure that the material eyes cannot observe, an immaterial figure that reveals all forms throughout the bodies.
67. Do not be surprised that an immaterial figure can exist; just think of a word that you speak! The same is the case with images: one sees in them mountain-peaks, elevating themselves high into the air, while in reality they are smooth and flat.
68. Just consider once again, but more deeply and completely what I have told you: Just as man cannot

live without life, so God cannot live without procreating that which is good. For this is, as it were, the life and movement of God: to give movement and life to everything.

69. It is necessary to approach some things with special understanding, as the following:
70. Everything is in God: however, not as in a definite place, for a place is corporeal and immovable. That which has an appointed place, has no movement; the things appear in the incorporeal in quite a different manner.
71. If you think of him who has enclosed everything in himself, just consider, particularly, that nothing is in a position to encircle the incorporeal, and nothing is quicker and mightier than he. He is the limitless one, the quickest and the mightiest!
72. Consider yourself: order your soul to go to India and it will be there even before you have ordered it.
73. Command it to go to the ocean and, again, it will immediately be there; not as if it had made a journey

from one place to another, but as if it were already there.

74. Even order it to rise up into heaven: it will need no wings. Nothing can hinder it; neither the fire of the sun, nor the ether; neither the lawful movement of the firmament, nor the bodies of the stars; it will cleave all space and in its flight elevate unto the outermost celestial body.

75. Furthermore, if you were of a mind to break through the vault of the universe itself to see what is outside — if in fact there is anything outside the world — then you are able to do so.

76. Behold, what power, what speed you possess! If you can do all this, would God not be able to do so?

77. That is why you should see God in this way: he keeps as thoughts everything that exists enclosed in Himself: the world, himself, the universe.

78. If you do not make yourself equal to God, you cannot understand him: for only those who are alike understand each other.

79. Grow up to unlimited greatness, rise above all bodies, transcend all time; become eternity. Then you will understand God.
80. Penetrate yourself with the thought that nothing is impossible for you, consider yourself as immortal and in a position to understand everything, all art, all science, the nature of all that lives.
81. Become higher than all heights and deeper than all depths.
82. Collect in you the perceptions of all things created: the fire and the water, the dry and the moist, and imagine yourself to be everywhere at the same time: on earth, in the sea, in the air; that you are still entirely uncreated; that you are in your mother's womb; young, old; that you are dead, that you are on the other side of death. If you are able to contain all this in you consciousness at the same time: periods, places, events, qualities and quantities, then you can understand God.
83. But if you keep your soul imprisoned in the body, if you pull it down and keep saying: `I do not

understand anything; I cannot do anything; I am frightened of the sea, I am unable to rise up into the sky; I do not know what I once was, neither do I know what I shall be'; what have you to do with God?

84. For you cannot embrace anything of what is really beautiful and good, as long as you love the body and are evil. *Absolute* evil is to deny the divine.

85. But to be able to know the divine and having had the will and the powerful hope to that extent, is the direct way unto goodness; an easy way. Everywhere it will meet you on your course on the path; everywhere it will make itself known to you, even when you do not in the least expect it; whether you are awake or asleep, on water or on land, by day or by night; whether you speak or are silent. There is nothing that he is not.

86. Will you then say: 'God is invisible?' Who reveals himself more than God? He has indeed created everything so that you will know **him through all creatures!**

87. That is the gloriousness, the miraculousness of God; that he reveals himself through all his creatures.

88. There is nothing invisible, not even with those who are incorporeal: the Spirit-soul reveals itself in the living contemplation and God reveals himself in his creative activity.

All this I had to disclose to you, oh Trismegistus. Consider further everything in the same way, and you will not go astray.'

XXVI

THE LIVING KNOWLEDGE OF GOD

We are now going to place before you the second book of the *Corpus Hermeticum*. Just as the first book, it involves a conversation between Pymander and Hermes Trismegistus, concerned with the being of God and particularly with the question of whether the being and the work of God can be known and understood.

You will agree that such knowledge is of great importance and indispensable for everyone. By God, we mean the source of all things, the highest being from which all existence emanates. All who wish to go the path of return, as it is contained in the highest being, all who know themselves to be called to the sonship of God, ought at least to know and fathom our heavenly Father. That is why the knowledge of God has always been the objective of the true gnostic. From this knowledge all other things can be ascertained.

In natural religious societies God's name is on everybody's lips. They evoke and worship him in the most beautiful mystical terms. Addresses are delivered daily and rituals are celebrated, the theme of which is God, and there are many thousands who call themselves theologians.

Yet, from the results of life and from the contradictory views and ideas of countless trends, it is clear that human knowledge of God is sadly lacking, that in fact there is no

divine knowledge at all. All things considered, the pious words and books and the reality of natural religion is speculation and senseless imitation. Whoever turns his attention to it, whoever studies literature in this field, ends up knowing nothing of what he really wanted to know. It is an ocean of words in which one drowns; dogma, theology without any real basis.

Throughout the ages numerous people have discovered this; the growth of atheism and the denial of God burgeoned. One denied consciously and positively what the religious masses said about God. The arrogant authority, where the theologian expounded: 'It is this way and no other', was also denied. Opposition to those church groups arose who, in addition to their presumptuous authority, also resorted to coercion, cruelty, instruments of torture, including burning at the stake and imprisonment.

It also became clear that the Church-fathers had no scruples against stealing and concealing original writings, so that those who came after them could not take note of them.

The most precious authentic traditions of many gnostic brotherhoods are stored, scattered all over the world, in many libraries. These writings are kept strictly under lock and key, so that the contents will remain unknown, or because one hopes to make material profit from them. Further, in the course of time the refined tactics of certain ecclesiastical institutes were discovered whereby the contents of authentic writings were thoroughly mutilated to create false impressions and, apparently, to prove the tenets of the Church-fathers.

Unfortunately, as a consequence mankind has been exposed to many lies in the sacred writings. As a result, he cherishes in his heart a sacred language laden with the scars of mutilation. So everything of truth, reality and originality,

which was intended to break through to mankind, has been sifted and censored. A group of authorities was founded upon whom titles were conferred; one spoke of doctors of theology. Until recently these theologians had a tight grip on the masses. However, everything that is made to look genuine in this refined manner will find its end in accordance with the fundamental law of dialectics; for he who prefers death to life, will indeed find death.

As already stated, countless people discovered the great deceit in the course of time. Unfortunately, they converted to atheism and cut themselves off radically. The result was the origin of historical materialism, an appalling downfall with terrible consequences, wherein it, too, left a trail of blood wherever it set foot and exerted its will. Present-day mankind is still weighed down by its consequences.

Whoever asks where the guilt lies must undoubtedly end up with those who formerly set themselves up as priests, as authorities over the masses. As priests, purporting to know God and to walk the ways of God, they neglected completely to demonstrate this but, on the contrary, spilled the blood of innumerable people.

'Atheism', as a despairing theologian once said, 'is one of the unpaid bills of the church.' Indeed! In this way the results of all mistakes irrevocably return to the originators. The descendants of the traitors have this horrible inheritance on their hands.

Those who in our time observe that no true knowledge of God exists within the official religions do not need to turn to atheism and materialism, for they can free themselves completely from the disseminated delusion and treason and seek the knowledge of God themselves. Whoever really seeks will find, for the truth is imperishable and indestructible.

It is an impossible task to imprison truth. Whoever wants the truth will liberate it. It is incorrect to speak of God as the unknowable, as is stated often. This is a dogma behind which theology likes to hide.

When Jesus the Lord said: 'No one has ever seen God, but the Son of man has made him known to us', it was not intended that the Gnosis is the private property of only a single man, but that everyone who returns to the Gnosis, to the origin of the divine-human race, to the soul-mankind of the soul-world, becomes once again a child of God. For such a person the divine mystery is clarified completely. The Hermetic philosophy, whose author was such a child of God in a supreme sense, does not introduce, in the second book of the *Corpus Hermeticum*, the vague tenet that one should worship and thank and honour Him in the places of worship. The theologians have brought man to such a state that he thanks God for everything he has to endure and suffer in dialectics. Nothing happens without the will of the heavenly Father! That is why the most absurd things are attributed to God, to divine guidance, either as a blessing or as a punishment, either as a reward or as penance.

No, the Hermetic philosophy informs us about the method by which God, the source of all things, with all His qualities and activities, can be known. The prologue of the second hermetic book states: 'God is and makes eternity, the world, time and genesis.' Because of this, one is able to penetrate into the being of God, into the divine fullness itself.

Perhaps many will say: 'We haven't noticed much of this. Mankind has spoken, written and studied for centuries about the various phenomena of creation, about eternity, the world, time and genesis. But all this has not yet brought us knowledge of God; on the contrary, it has, if possible, only made the dissension greater.'

The *Corpus Hermeticum* replies in verse 6, that the being of God can only be understood spiritually, that Spirit and soul form the revealing power of God. That is why this problem is broached only in the second hermetic book, after it was explained in the first book *Pymander* how the Gnosis, the revealing knowledge of God, comes to the candidate who goes the path and who, as a reborn soul, will find his spiritual image.

Only he who travels the path of rebirth and finds and is reunited with his Pymander, his lost spirit, will mature and be able to penetrate the knowledge of God. Whoever, in this way, becomes a child of God in the true sense of the word has the right to know the Father, who is in everything.

As long as one lacks the spirit, as long as one is absorbed in the nature of death, nothing will be found of the Spirit. However, what has the world made of this? Dialectical thinking, mortal consciousness, the I-man, has been declared to be spiritual. To chain man through this monstrous doctrine has been the greatest crime ever committed against mankind. That is why the Spiritual School of the Golden Rosycross, following the Gnosis of all time, points out to the deceived man the necessity of soul rebirth. Only the reborn soul-man will meet his Pymander.

As soon as the spirit has become alive in this way, the knowledge of God is revealed.

XXVII

GOD'S UNIVERSAL LOVE

Only the soul-born man, who has again come into contact with the spiritual field and has found his Pymander, is capable of penetrating into the real knowledge of God. Let us now try to elevate ourselves in consideration of this, to gain a little understanding of the second book of Hermes. We need to reflect, from this perspective, upon God, eternity, the world, time and genesis.

'God makes eternity, eternity makes the world, the world makes time and in time there is genesis. Goodness, beauty, bliss and wisdom form the essence of God; the essence of eternity is invariability; the essence of the world is order; the essence of time is changeability and the essence of genesis is life and death.'

There are five manifestations in the All-revelation: God, eternity, the world, time and genesis. God, as the source, is the universal spirit, in which there is nothing else, from which nothing else emanates but goodness, beauty, bliss and wisdom.

What originates from this arch-source of things is eternal and invariable, in power as well as in ability. God and eternity, one may say, are themselves.

Eternity, as the primary manifestation of God, reveals goodness, beauty, bliss and wisdom, that is universal love,

paramount happiness, complete, omnipresent knowledge. These are values that are endless. God posits from himself eternity and the latter possesses values which, together, may be indicated as love.

The universal love of God is omnipresent. In the eternity that encompasses us it exists as a radiation-fullness, as an all-embracing field. Do not think of eternity as being far away. Eternity, therefore, universal love, is here and existentially you would be able to obtain and partake in it fully in the present. This is different in our dialectical state.

Goodness, beauty, bliss and wisdom are omnipresent in eternity, just as a space can be filled with perfume of roses or with light. One cannot imagine a place where this perfume or that light would not be present. In this way the All-revelation is pervaded by God, is filled with God. This is eternity in the sense of durability, everlasting, in an invariable state.

We can discuss it like this, but as soon as you attain something of the soul you will also experience it. In dialectics this is impossible. However well off we may be, never compare dialectical things and relationships with the eternal, universal love. That is something quite different.

As soon as you attain openness of the soul you will understand that such a mighty, omnipresent spirit-field, with such values, has an aim. That is why we say in one of our prayers: 'Love must needs impart itself; it is the basis of its existence.' The universal love that is of God, always tries to give. Its objective is genesis and from this a lifting up to itself in order that what is born in love will enjoy and spread the highest and most glorious happiness in eternity. Finally it will lose itself in God's love, it will lose itself in objectives which we are unable to trace from our present state of being.

Because God's love seeks a shape in one way or another,

the world is developed out of eternity, so Hermes Trismegistus said.

`Eternity shapes the world into an order, by penetrating matter with immortality and durability. The nascency of matter depends on eternity, just as eternity itself depends on God', so it is stated in verse 13. Every atom is potentially loaded with the universal, eternal values of the Logos. So space is developed out of eternity. In this space original matter is contained and out of this original matter the systems of stars and also the world are formed.

Do not make the mistake of thinking primarily of the dialectical world. The world meant here is not the earth as we know it, with its calamities and its woe. No, here is intended the sacred earth of which the gnostics spoke, the sacred earth as a part of God's universe, which splendour can be seen by those who are elevated to the world of the living soul-state. It is clear that such a revealed universe will know its order, that it has to answer to the laws of radiation, to foster and attain the one great objective. That is why the essence of the world is order, an order in harmony with the Logos.

Each world knows and possesses such an order, which is harmoniously attuned to the whole, so that the law which binds everything together, will not be disturbed. So we understand how such a world, established in its own order, will also know its own time. Each world has its own time and is the expression of a process that must be fulfilled.

A law or order serves a definite purpose, a development to a good end. The object of a law is often to keep something within bounds. But in the universal life a law is directly connected with a certain aim that is directed to the fulfilment of eternal love. If, by virtue of its being the love of God must impart itself, because this is the basis of its existence, then the

world and the time of the world will serve to attain this one objective. Consequently, the essence of time is change.

You are thinking perhaps that you know this essential change very well. But do not be mistaken, for this idea, too, should be approached and understood spiritually.

In the Holy Language it is stated: 'There is God's time and the time of men.' So we should distinguish two sorts of time. When one speaks of God's time, the religious man is of the opinion that things may happen in our lives, or that processes may be enacted through forces and powers from outside over which we have no control. When, suddenly, sometimes by explosion, drastic or unforeseen events reveal themselves, one speaks in religious circles of God's time. With the help of this view the theologians teach the host of laymen fright, on the one hand, and acquiescence on the other; resignation in suffering and fright for punishment, for the irreparable.

However, the laws of radiation rule the All. They are periodically enacting changes, by which, finally, the one life, which is love itself, may be realized and, consequently, the objective of God may be attained. That is the incarnation of the Word in the highest sense.

The object of genesis, the essence of birth, is life and death. That is why there must be a divine time, with as its being a processing change, because of which the one thing is transmitted into the other, always higher, always more and more glorious, issuing from force to force and from glory to glory.

There is question of two kinds of dialectics, the one we know with its change, its solution of an untenable life in death. It is the well known dialectics with its rising, shining and fading. But there is also a hermetic dialectics which can be understood only spiritually and which relates to a process of eternal nascency. That this dialectics is present, that time,

which is no death but change, exists, can easily be proved.

When the sun shines and light is radiated, the beams of light that touched us yesterday are not the same as those of to-day. The beams of yesterday have fulfilled their purpose in our being, and have performed a certain activity in it, at least if we are open to it. Consequently, these light-rays of yesterday are submerged in us, have died in us, have disappeared, have dissolved. Today new rays of light will come to us.

If one uses this example as a gnostic image, one will know at the same time that the light of the Gnosis dies in us daily, after having attained its purpose, that is, change. From this continuous offering of light an unceasing, changing life comes about, an eternal nascency from glory to glory, from power to power. That is why Pymander said that the essence of genesis is life and death.

Whoever opposes this process, whoever neither knows nor desires the genesis of the soul, will always be seized by the dialectics of the nature of death. Not life but death will then become his share. This is not the divine dialectics, of which Pymander speaks, but the dialectics of the nature of death.

Therefore, the candidate can conquer only through Christ, only by the light of God's nature; only by the light of the living soul-state can the one life be realized. The light of the Gnosis radiates continually. It is the universal light of the universal sun and it sacrifices itself continuously, exactly as the light of dialectics.

That is why it is said that the death and sacrifice of Christ means life to us. When we put aside the theological exegesis, we will understand this completely. The light of Christ is eternal; it gives itself daily, it expires in us to transform our entire being. Everyone who opens himself for this, participates in the hermetic dialectics.

XXVIII

THE SECRET OF OUR ORIGIN

`The essence of God is goodness;
the essence of eternity is invariability;
the essence of the world is order;
the essence of time is changeability;
and the essence of genesis is life and death.'

When we consider this hermetic axiom, as we did previously, we will understand the aspects raised. But the intention of the *Corpus Hermeticum* is that we should also fathom the meaning of these aspects in a new sense, that is, as the root and the true essence of life. The hidden intent of Hermes Trismegistus is to explain the secret of our origin.

If one asked a number of people: 'What is life?' it is quite possible that they would give the most divergent replies. Various philosophers have speculated about this theme through the ages. It appears that none of their opinions tally with Pymander's reply.

Pymander, in response to this question, said: 'The working of genesis, the working of birth, is the attribute.

A strange reply indeed. It appears that the hermetic Gnosis does not consider our state of life, our phenomenon of life, as a whole, autonomous, but only as an attribute of another life, a result of a certain existing life. The essence of the birth of the

fourfold personality, so the Gnosis indicates, is nothing but an attribute, a revelation of 'the' life. One should bear in mind that the basis of this consideration is not the natural state, but the living soul-state, for only the living soul is able to understand in a spiritual way.

So, we should now understand that true life, as meant by Pymander, is the life of the Spirit, of God, the life that really deserves this designation. There exists a very close contact between the attribute — the phenomenon of life — and life itself; that is, between God and man. The personality-state is only an attribute, a revelation, of the one life. Why should the life of the Spirit acquire such attributes?

These attributes should serve to extend the one life, to make it more powerful, more majestic. The course of development unto manifestation of attributes, from goodness through eternity, from eternity through the order of space and time, through change to birth, the gigantic genesis of attributes, simply means an extension, a breaking out from the Spirit into attributes, to manifestation of the glory of the divine state. That is why it is stated in verse 6 of the second book: 'Spirit and soul are the active revealing powers of God.' Pymander, the Spirit-Soul, is the true nucleus of life, the spiritual flame, the spark of the Spirit. This nucleus is the Life by virtue of its real nature; it is inspired. Pymander and Hermes, Spirit and soul form God. The soul forms the light, the form aspect of the spirit. Whoever is reborn of soul can speak of 'Christ within me', of the light-born God within me. Spirit and soul, Father and Son, Pymander and Hermes, are one. The light-soul forms, together with Pymander, the child of God. With Pymander, the soul is called the thrice great Mercury, Hermes Trismegistus, an indication alluding to the manifestation of the new state of consciousness in the greatest possible glory.

All this relates to the soul-man of the beginning. That is why the working of eternity is immortality.

Now the question may burn on your lips: 'How is it possible that the soul-man has entered into such a hellish mortal state?'

The answer is comparatively simple. The working of eternity is immortality. Even so, the soul-man has to proceed with his revelation. When the spirit becomes light and, consequently, becomes a soul, when the Father has generated the Son, the soul-man should go forward to become a life-giving spirit.

Something that is animated must manifest itself further. That is why we say that something burns in the soul. He who is ensouled by something must reveal it. Consequently, as soon as the spirit becomes light, as soon as the Father has generated the Son, then the Son — the Soul — the light-force — must continue to reveal itself. Then there is a fire that must break out. Therefore, to be inspired by something is never an aim in itself. The soul burns in order to reveal itself, to do something. The condition of the soul is a possibility, a concentration of forces towards revelation; it is only a focal point and a means to the end.

As soon as the spirit becomes light, something is bound to happen. That is why an existentially continuous desire is a condition of the soul. If the spirit-spark possesses the attribute of the soul, the process should go on; there is no stopping it.

Perhaps you have read II Corinthians 3, verse 17: 'where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty'. The life of the spirit, the principle of the spirit is freedom. In the spirit compulsion does not exist. That is why the soul should reveal itself further in this liberty to demonstrate that which inspires it. Whatever

takes place under coercion can never be genuine. It can never be Spirit, for where the Spirit is, there is freedom. In the All-revelation, the essence of freedom is maintained in a practical manner. Everything we experience in grief and sorrow, viewed microcosmically, is generated and maintained by ourselves. Grief and sorrow are the results of the countless stupidities we have perpetrated in this life, or that have been committed by personalities that formerly lived in our microcosm. It is this immense burden of debt — karma — which, in accordance with the essence of freedom, must be neutralized by man himself, who is chained to the `wheel.'

It is wonderful that the possibility is granted us to nullify the karma in the radiating light of grace of the Gnosis. If we should remain tied to this debt and have to atone for everything amassed in our microcosm as a burden of sins during the course of eons, our situation would be practically hopeless. That is why the Gnosis, the love of God, speeds to our rescue. Is it not delightful to know that we will be able to shake off our entire karmic burden, if we truly venture on the gnostic path? Therefore, it should be clear what is further stated in the second book:

`The return to perfection, or denaturation, are the functions of the world; time has as its functions the increase and the decrease, and genesis has as its function the attribute.'

The spiritual soul is sent in freedom into the seventh cosmic domain — the garden of the Gods — the alchemical workshop — in order to be guided by the spirit-spark, to bring into manifestation that which inspired it. In the universe of the seventh cosmic domain absolute freedom exists to establish or to nullify. Here, one is in a position to cause every process to increase or to decrease. Because of this, every spiritual soul can prove its autonomy, can manifest its

high state. In the spirit, the plan of God, the omniscience, the complete method is contained. When the soul, with its dynamic urge, associates with the spirit, everything can be realized in freedom. Self-realization is fully possible.

To equip itself with the attribute which we call the instrumentarium — the personality — is one of the qualities of the spiritual soul. The spiritual soul is sent into the seventh cosmic domain, primarily, to obtain an ideal personality, a complete instrumentarium, to prove and propagate the great plan of God. In the legend of the Adamitic man who entered the paradise of the Gods, it is told how he was instructed to give a name, that is a power, to every creature. For a name is a force, a signature. Do you understand how great is God's plan for the world and mankind?

One may see the personality as an attribute of the spiritual soul and determine whether the attribute of birth proves that, during the process, incidents have occurred and that, consequently, there is something that does not tally, or even that the great alchemical work has been realized.

In this connection it is useful to consider our ordinary state of being in the nature of death. Our personality, as such, is an instrumentarium, but it cannot possibly be maintained that, by virtue of our natural state, we are attributes of the original Spirit-soul! True, there is a soul in us, our personality is indeed ensouled, but that soul is not a manifestation out of the spirit! There are quite different forces influencing us, and the result is matter, the horizontal line, dialectics, the nature of death. By virtue of our natural birth we, as attributes, do not realise the aim of the original soul.

The soul that originally enveloped the spirit-spark in our microcosm misused its freedom, due to which the pymandric link with the spirit was severed. The Spirit is eternal; the spirit is perfect. When the soul of the spirit stands in the

imperfect state and misbehaves with respect to the great aim, the contact is severed. The soul without the Spirit becomes mortal: 'The soul that sins must die', as the Bible admonishes.

That is why it can be said that, at a certain moment, there were no more living souls. In order to provide for this, the dialectical process of maintenance came into being. The soul always possesses the ability to split itself, to multiply itself. The natural maintenance process makes it possible, again and again, for a soul that became a mortal soul to invite the rebirth of the original soul through the endura. Then the contact of the Spirit, the contact with Pymander, is restored. This is what, in the Spiritual School, is called 'the emergency-order of God.'

The original soul misused its freedom as an expression of the Spirit, the result of which was death. But, as the soul was out of God, a living attribute, it went on and created a personality as the aim of the soul.

To the extent that the first souls deviated from the path, the connection between Spirit and soul was gradually severed. Then, the soul lived unimaginably longer than the present mortal soul. It received the opportunity, under the influence of the cosmocrators, to create a personality, which gradually deteriorated into the present state. So, now, the spirit-spark lies silent in the heart of the microcosm. This is why you should see how logical it is that our personality is mortal. When the sinful soul, the I, is perishing in the endura, it will provide the possibility, by rebirth of the original soul, a renewed union with Pymander. The latter will then light up again in the heart of the microcosm and, as the Spirit-soul, speak to the hermetic soul. In this way the original mistake, the error, will be corrected.

Therefore, we should not dwell too long on the sinful

nature of contemporary man, but point to the way back, the path of transfiguration. Through that process the mistake is corrected, the error is nullified. And if we then stand upon the basis of the soul-world, the human soul-state, we shall prove once more: 'Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.'

So the error finally becomes only an incident in the framework of eternity. Therefore, do not dwell on your primitiveness and your sinful inclinations, but go the path of transfiguration resolutely and dynamically and you will nullify every mistake.

We should learn that he who wants to penetrate into the Gnosis, into the knowledge of God, will have to transmute himself, on the path of transfiguration, into an attribute of the Spirit-soul. Then, the knowledge resulting from this will show him that every quality of the Spirit-soul is immediately to be traced back to the Spirit, to the original source, and that the whole of spirit, soul and body truly is: God revealed in the flesh.

Every reborn soul should discover, meet and follow the God within itself. Whoever has been allowed to acquire this Gnosis can ask as Hermes: 'Speak to me now of the wisdom of God. What is the wisdom of God?'

XXIX

LET US BE STILL

'Well then, be still, oh Hermes Trismegistus, and do not forget what I shall tell you.'

This is spoken by Pymander, according to the beginning of the second book. Hermes replies: 'Much has been spoken from many aspects, about the All and about God, but the opinions contradict each other, so that I have not discerned the truth in it. Will you, oh Lord, explain this to me? For I will believe only what you reveal to me.'

In previous chapters we have reflected on the explanations given by Pymander to the questions of Hermes. The issue is that every candidate, like Hermes, will learn to understand Pymander's words from within; therefore, we would like to advise you on the way that Pymander introduces his comments to Hermes: 'Be still.' The Bible frequently refers to this special stillness. Consider Psalm 4: 'Commune with your own heart and be still'; and in Psalm 62: 'My soul waits still upon God'; and further on the striking words of Isaiah 18: 'I will quietly look for my dwelling'; whereas Paul, in the first letter to the Thessalonians, advised his pupils: 'aspire to live quietly.'

This stillness points to a certain condition of the heart. The heart of our personality coincides, approximately, with the centre of the microcosm. In this centre we find the Rose, the

spirit-spark atom, the primary meeting-point of the Gnosis and the pupil, the Spirit with the soul and Pymander with Hermes.

However, in the natural human state the heart is the place where such divergent desires, fears and passions seethe and stir. In the ordinary state of being, the human heart is anything but still.

If you want to become a hermetic one, one who can be called Hermes — Mercury — you should become still of heart. The concept of Hermes, or Mercury, indicates the one who begins to awaken in the new soul-consciousness, the one to whom the divine wisdom is open and who, consequently, raises the head-sanctuary to its high vocation. But this vocation cannot possibly be fulfilled if the pupil has not first learned to open his heart in stillness to the Spirit. The task of realizing the stillness of the heart is given to all those who are truly seeking the Gnosis. It points to the purification of the heart, to the opening of the heart, making it completely quiet and harmonious. You have probably heard of the lesser blood circulation. This forms, as it were, a special blood connection between the heart and the head. The heart and the head are completely one; consequently, we should always consider them in their mutuality. It is imperative for the pupil on the path to attain equality of heart and head with regard to thinking, willing, feeling, acting, reacting and understanding.

However, when your heart is restless, you can think neither freely nor well. When your heart is full of fears and conflicts, your sensory organs function irregularly and impurely. You cannot possibly see and judge men and situations correctly and usually this leads to criticism and all its consequences.

If the heart remains in its ordinary state of natural impurity (and that is the case when you remain attuned, with your entire being, to the nature of death) you cannot listen

correctly, either, and so you can never understand properly. The essence of the nature of death is always chaos. So, in the head-heart system of the nature-directed one great tensions break out which lead him into wrong actions.

In the head-heart system, man possesses a safety-valve, that is the larynx, which is connected with the throat chakra. This chakra and its true function have never been spoken about in the School, because the time was not yet ripe for it. Therefore, in this connection it is sufficient to say that dialectical man misuses the larynx to work off his accumulated tensions. The larynx is a creative organ. Continual talking, the endless conversations that have no real substance, or that are otherwise questionable, are the means by which man tries to drain off his excess tensions. This draining-off always takes place at the expense of others. Therefore, the necessity of becoming still — of the purification of the heart — should be understood even more clearly from this perspective.

When you make your heart still and pure, you also free your head for the functions to which it is called. Then the sensory organs function quite differently. Only then will you be able to listen. The brothers and sisters of the Arch-Gnosis made a custom of reminding each of that necessity. That is why, at the beginning of their meetings, they always said: 'Let us become still for the Lord, so that we may truly listen, so that we can truly understand.'

As we discussed, in the light of the Hermetic Philosophy the personality of man is an attribute of the microcosm, a result of the spirit-soul. As such, the attribute is the embodiment of the plan that is in the Spirit and which makes itself felt in the soul as a *spiritual impulse*. Consequently, in the **attribute or**

embodiment, Spirit and soul, together with the body, form a trinity.

Besides its own nature, the nature of the soul and of the attribute — the body — are also enclosed in the Spirit. The Spirit is reflected in the soul and the attribute, the body, projects itself outwardly. The three have grown into one, so we see three times three, or nine aspects; the classical ninefold man. So we understand why nine is always called the number of humanity.

We also find three sanctuaries, which are called to honour the true human trinity in the body. The head should be the sanctuary of the Spirit; the heart should be the sanctuary of the soul and the liver-spleen system, which we indicate as the pelvic sanctuary, or the sanctuary of the body.

These three temples should harmoniously co-operate with one another, each according to its state and calling. The pelvic sanctuary has the task of organizing and attending to all the natural processes of the personality, according to the nature of the soul and the Spirit. If the main line of concentration follows the biological, the dialectical, the horizontal line, as is the case with most people, the heart and the head become subordinated to it. Then, a crystalization process appears in the personality, the heart becomes a chaos of astral disturbances and the mentality becomes active and suitable for only the natural, animal life. Then the heart cannot become still for the Gnosis, for the Lord, but it will reflect the struggle for life which always ends in death.

Because the biological heart almost coincides with the heart of the microcosm, and in that heart the silent observer, the Rose, the divine man within us, lies imprisoned; because a call continually emanates from this Rose and resounds in the entire being to liberate the true, silent Sphinx from the sands

of the desert, it is clear why the School of the Rosycross repeatedly tells its pupils to move the emphasis in their lives from the pelvic sanctuary to the heart sanctuary.

For the heart sanctuary is the temple of the soul! The soul must be the light of Christ. The soul must become the Son of the Father. That is why the heart should celebrate its Bethlehem, its rebirth, again. This does not mean that the pelvic sanctuary is deprived of its glory; on the contrary. If your soul-temple becomes light again, all the biological processes will flourish from it. At the same time you will open the door to the Holy of Holies, the Supreme Temple, the door of the head sanctuary, the temple of the Spirit, of wisdom.

So we can see how the key to the gnostic mysteries lies in the heart. The king, who is the Spirit, must be freed there and re-established on his throne in the head sanctuary, accompanied by the light of the soul.

Therefore, these words should also sound for us continually and with deep meaning: Let us become still for the Lord; so let us turn our hearts. Let us open the altar and cherish the Holy that is hidden there in the light of the universal sun. Let us stop the service in the pelvic sanctuary and let us move the positive altar service to the heart.

If we succeed in this, the light-waves of salvation will flow into us. They will fill our entire being and spread a garment of new light around us, as a respiration-field, as a golden wedding garment. Surrounded by this immense sphere of light the entire personality will be led to transfiguration.

After recovery of the soul, contact with the living Spirit, confrontation with Pymander will be the result and, finally, regeneration of the attribute, the instrumentarium, the personality. In one of our rituals the following is written of this process: `This is the one and exclusive mystery which the Gnosis posites us. From the trunk of the Tree of Life, cut-off

for us nature-born ones, a small shoot will grow, the contact will be restored. Only then can the great work of regeneration commence.'

This beginning must be celebrated in the heart. Open your heart, after having anchored in it the central interest of your life. Cleanse your heart, that the pure light may enter. In this purity, this harmony, the great work can be accomplished.

Let us be still before the Lord so that the ninefold man of the beginning will rise from the grave of nature.

XXX

WHAT IS WISDOM?

What is wisdom? This is indeed a classical question. Hermes alludes to the wisdom underlying the universal existence and the hermetic Gnosis gives a reply. In this reply the figure of Apollonius of Tyana appears before us, of whom, just as of Jesus the Lord, it can be said: 'Out of Egypt I have called my Son.'

What is the wisdom of God? 'It is goodness, beauty, bliss, all virtue and eternity. Eternity forms the world into an order by penetrating matter with immortality and durability.'

As we read in the twelfth and thirteenth verses, the fact is pointed out that the wisdom of God is also unconditionally connected with the arch substance, with matter, with every atom. Abraxas, with his four emanations — the universal sun out of which arise love, will, wisdom and activity — pervades every atom. The attributes, called personalities by Hermes, are created from original matter, in which God Himself is immersed. In the construction process a variety of forces and elements appear; matter and forces are continually converted as a result of which the personality is subjected to continuous change and glorification; until, finally, the personality arrives at complete equilibrium with the Spirit-soul and the soul, with Pymander and Hermes. Then the entire being stands in invariability.

We see how God, eternity, world, time and genesis merge into one. God and creature are, in this state of being, united in the most absolute sense. God is in the Spirit-soul, the Spirit-soul in the soul, the soul in matter and all this through eternity.

The fact that God and creature are one being in the All-revelation, viewed hermetically, makes it clear why group unity is spoken of in the gnostic Spiritual School. Please reflect seriously on this. When we see how the field of the Spirit, the field of the Soul and the field of original matter exist undividedly, it should become immediately clear to our consciousness that division — a separate existence — is an absurdity in the light of the Gnosis. Separate existence, aggravated individualism, the 'I am', especially characterising the Western European, clashes with the nature of the Logos. After all, we can read in verse 17: 'This vast body, that comprises all bodies, is filled from within by a soul full of spiritual consciousness — full of God — a soul that vivifies the All and is surrounded by it from without.'

The All-revelation is a glorious, beautiful group unity. Not a group in the sense of a flock, such as the totalitarian systems of church and state covet, and as the Great Play, which we discussed in *The Shadow of Things to Come*, will try to create. Therefore, it is not a compulsory group unity, but a unity of true intelligence, in complete freedom, as the golden mosaic of free souls; the unity of the light, the unity of the divine reality of the seventh ray, the unity and the reality of the absolute Seven-light.

There are cosmic radiation laws, as you know. The radiation fullness, which at present is about to gain control over humanity and to which the young Gnosis wants to react is the law of the seventh ray, which will lead us into true group unity.

`See, the light is all in all.' Because of the activity of God, the creator of all goodness, the ruler and prince of the entire order of the seven cosmic domains, in this light all contrasts and inequalities have become fused into one, bound together in love.

That is why we do not strive for a brotherhood in a civic sense, a brotherhood which is called a democracy in this world, but we strive for the love of which Jesus Christ spoke. The candidate of the gnostic mysteries is enabled to see this mighty new world-picture and, above all, how everything is filled with soul; how everyone is moved according to his own nature, but nevertheless in total unity, by the rhythm of the radiation-laws. The unity of everything in all, of all in everything, should become completely understood by every pupil of the gnostic Spiritual School; yet, it may still be very difficult to visualize it.

The uplifted gnostic man knows that this unity exists; with those from the right-hand side, as well as with those from the left, as verse 34 reveals. The path of the right-hand is the way of the positive, conscious, God-seeking life, the way of self-renunciation, soul-birth and final liberation. The path of the left is the way of deviation from God, the way of deception, blindness and delusion. Principally, we do not want to have anything to do with all those who are of the left-hand side, as we wish to conform to the universal law, which rules over the living soul-state. However, practically we cannot feel ourselves detached from anything or anyone, for everything and everyone form a unity. That is why the love of God also speaks to all the disharmonious, to everything that deviates from the universal law and never releases it. It goes with man right through everything, until he regenerates himself through its force.

How does the love of God work? The various aspects of the

radiation-law form together one law, one higher radiation order. This radiation-law is Abraxas, Love, the universal sun, which is immersed in everyone and everything. Whoever conforms harmoniously to this law of eternal love, will experience its bliss, but whoever forms a disharmonious relationship with it will burn himself with its light, which has then become a fire. Whoever breaks the fundamental cohesion will be struck by the consequences of this disturbance. The concerned always brings this trouble upon himself, for there is only one law of cohesion, the law of the seventh ray, the law of true group unity, the law of the Living Body of the young Gnosis.

The hermetic philosophy distinguishes between light and fire. Light is the cherishing love of God; fire is the scourging of that same love, as we read in verse 29. But in fire, and therefore by scourging, almighty love proves its presence and its activity, so that everyone and everything will finally break out into the cherishing of the Light. In verse 41, it is recorded: 'Know that every living body is composed of matter and soul, the immortal as well as the mortal, the one equipped with reason as well as the one devoid of reason.'

Now one may ask: 'Is this line of God's intervention drawn through everyone and everything?' Yes, in an absolute sense this intervention moves towards the entire living nature unto all the realms of nature, with all the consequences, embracing even all the spheres of hell and all that is venomous and horrible. For, do not forget that ultimately everything, everything however degenerated it may be, will be extracted from the possibilities and forces of the vast sevenfold realm of the Soul. That which is in disharmony with it can be overcome, corrected, cured only by the universal law of Love, which releases nothing and no one.

Just think of everything that takes place in our world — how many problems, incredible agonies, horribles menaces and hatred. Do you imagine that even one solution is possible by means of violence, by means of murder, confiscation and imprisonment? There is only this solution: the power of love, the fire of the love of God. This love must descend into the deepest depths of sunkenness, to be able to help at the right moment. The consequences of the all-bearing universal love have been acknowledged and pointed out in world literature by many authors. Just think, for instance, of the magnificent work *Christian Wahnschaffe*, by Jacob Wasserman. Just think of figures like the Buddha, who refused to kill even the most insignificant being.

The salvation of all that is sunken, the recovery of harmony in the all-revelation is possible only through applied love. That is why Sigfried fights the dragon and Hermes places his foot on the hissing body of the snake. But the sword that both Sigfried and Hermes use is not the sword of violence — of hatred, menace and murder — but the sword of the love-fire of God, which makes them invincible. If you understand this from within, then you also know that the world we call the nature of death, is not hopeless. In the School of the Rosycross we distinguish between the nature of death and the nature of life. We must do so because we need to take the actual situation into account and must teach each other to turn from the side of the fire to the side of the light. We should first go up into the light, but afterwards to turn the fire into the light, in service of the world and mankind.

In the deepest sense there is only one nature, one realm. We, as soul-beings, cannot make an inner division. For practical reasons, to find our way, for the pure definition of our aim, we have to distinguish and pronounce: 'We turn to the light.' But as soon as we elevate ourselves into the Light,

the serving of mankind with all its consequences is our glorious task.

When we continue to divide, as indicated in verse 60 of the second book of Hermes, we are like the ordinary man who calls the change: death, because the body is dissolved and life departs to the invisible. But how glorious it is when the light turns into fire, so that what burns will become light! Have we not all experienced the blaze of fire in our life — the blaze of affliction, the flame of purification, the inferno consuming all lower things — in order that out of this consuming fire the wings of the new firebird might unfold themselves?

But let us now penetrate into deeper considerations which arise from the knowledge of God and examine all the aspects of the concept `omnipresence.'

We now know: `Everything is in God', so your reborn soul also, if you already possess it. `Everything is in God.' However, not in a definite place, for a place is corporeal and immovable, as Pymander said in verse 70. We have seen that the soul-body and the elevated personality are attributes of the Spirit-soul. Spirit, soul and body form a trinity. You should discover that the reborn microcosm, as a unity lost in God, is at the same time all-inclusive, omnipresent. The entire universe, in which spirit, soul and body exist in unity, is full of soul and spirit consciousness. All this is a group unity, that is, the consciousness of the one soul is at the same time an omnipresent consciousness. That is why the reborn microcosm is omnipresent, all-inclusive.

From this point of view there is no one who understands more, there is no one quicker or more powerful than he who is freed from the nature of death; the most intelligent, quick and mighty among all those is the reborn spirit-soul, so verse 71 reveals.

`Order your soul to go to India', so Pymander rejoices to

Hermes in verse 72 to 74, `and it will arrive there even before you have ordered it. Command it to go to the ocean and, again, it will immediately be there. Even order it to rise up into heaven: it will need no wings. Nothing can hinder it; neither the fire of the sun, nor the ether, neither the lawful movement of the firmament, nor the bodies of the stars; it will cleave all space and in its flight elevate unto the outermost celestial body.'

Whoever desires this freedom will have it granted to him. Nothing will prevent him from attaining it, provided, as it speaks for itself, the way is walked which leads to that end. Do realize what power you possess. You already possess the power of completeness; it rests within you, but you have not yet made use of it. You have clung too much to the ordinary things. You gaze too much at the illusions on the horizontal level. You hold yourself down.

Look into the omnipresence. Liberate your soul and you will realize the divine omnipotence within yourself. Liberate the power of completeness within yourself by going the path of the light, the path of the Gnosis of the light. Then, with regard to you, too, it may one day be said:

`Out of Egypt I have called my Son.'

Amen

GLOSSARY

Abraxes: gnostic indication for God's universal being of Love; appearing as such, among other things, in the doctrine of Apollonius of Tyana.

Arch-Gnosis of Hermes: indication that points to the fact that *all* real gnostic activity of the present period of mankind emanated from the original fount of the Egyptian Gnosis; that *all* gnostic redemptive work is rooted in the original knowledge; that deliverance of man is possible only through the resurrection of the hermetic or Mercury-man, the real divine man, who lives out of a consciousness enlightened in God. Therefore, it also points to this original basis for all redemptive work, as the Gospel testifies by the expression: Out of Egypt I have called My Son'.

Authades: the power with the lion's head; the unholy will of natural man; also, the unholy raging of the I-man in a more general sense. The name is quoted from the gnostic gospel: *Pistis Sophia*, said to have been written by Valentinus.

Being, the aural: represents the total of powers, values and commitments, which are the result of diverse personality-appearances in the manifestation-field. All these powers, together, form the lights, the constellations, of our microcosmic firmament. These lights are magnetic foci which, according to their character, define the quality of the magnetic, spiritual field, that is, define the nature of the powers and substances which are attracted out of the atmosphere and incorporated into the microcosmic system and, thus, also into the personality. So the personality depends on the nature of these lights. Therefore, a change of being of the personality must be preceded by a change of being of the firmament, which is possible only through self-sacrifice of the I-being - the total self-demolition.

Brotherhood, The Universal: the divine hierarchy of the Immovable Kingdom. It forms the universal body of the Lord. It is also indicated by many other names, such as the invisible Church of Christ, the Christ-Hierarchy, the universal gnostic Chain, the Gnosis. Through its activity in the aid of fallen man it appears, among other things, as the Brotherhood of Shamballa, the

Mystery School of the Christ-Hierophants, the Hierophantal Spiritual School and as the young Gnostic Brotherhood (in these times).

Cosmocrators: seven mighty nature-beings, also indicated as gods, who are closely connected with the origin of creation and who maintain the fundamental, cosmic laws. Together, they form the Seven-spirit of the All-revelation. In the book *Pymander* they are called Rectors (verses 26, 33, 36, etc.).

Demi-Urgos: Spirit-being emanating from God the Father; the Demi-Urgos is the creator of the world out of the original substance, which was not created by Him, but by God the Father. He is one with the Word, with the world-soul.

Dialectics: our present life-field, in which everything manifests itself in pairs of opposites: day and night, light and darkness, joy and sorrow, youth and age, good and evil, life and death, which are inseparably bound to each other; they follow each other unavoidably and bring each other into existence. Through this fundamental law, everything in our field of existence is subjected to continuous alteration and disintegrating, to rising, shining and fading. Through this law our field of existence is a territory of finiteness, pain, sorrow, demolition, sickness and death. Viewed from a higher perspective, the law of dialectics is also the law of divine grace which, through its continual breaking up and renewal, prevents the ultimate crystalization of man. It ever again grants a new possibility of revelation and, through this, the possibility to recognize the purpose of life and to go the path of return, through transfiguration - rebirth out of water and spirit.

Doctrine, Universal: this is not a 'doctrine' in the usual sense; also, it is not to be found in books. It is, in its deepest essence, the living reality of God, out of which the consciousness that is ennobled to it learns to understand the Universal Wisdom of the Creator.

Endura: The path of I-demolition.

Gate of Bethlehem: indication for the condition of the heart of one who, in true yearning for salvation, executes the total reversal of life. Such a person opens the heart for the entrance of the gnostic light and prepares the 'stall', the maimed and defiled heart, for the birth of the inner Christ Being. In every true pupil, Bethlehem becomes the beginning of the ancient way, which finds its glorious end on Golgotha — the Place of Skull — through the resurrection of the true Son of God in the microcosmos.

Gnosis: a. the breath of God; God, the Logos, the fount of all things, manifesting itself as Spirit, Love, Light, Power and Wisdom;

b. the Universal Brotherhood, as bearer and manifestation of the radiation-field of Christ;

c. the living knowledge which is of and with God and becomes the portion of those who, through soul-rebirth, have entered the light-birth of God, the pymandric state of consciousness.

Gnosis, the fivefold Universal: summarization of the five phases of development through which the only path unto Life manifests itself in the pupil as: 1. liberating insight; 2. yearning for salvation; 3. self-surrender; 4. new attitude of life and 5. resurrection into the new life-field.

Grain of Corn of Jesus: indication in the *Fama Fraternitatis*, the classical testament of the Rosicrucians, for the spirit-spark atom; see: the Rose of the Heart.

Great Play, the: the ambitious, cunning reflection sphere activity, which contemplates, through the help of the entire occultism from beyond the veil and the application of enormous apparitions of a natural-scientific nature, to imitate the return of the Lord. It is an intensive manifestation of doom, which will accompany the end of the present cosmic day and which will threaten to imprison all of humanity and drive it along in the blindness of delusion. *Unmasking*, J. van Rijckenborgh, Rozekruis Pers, Haarlem.

Hierophants: see Brotherhood, the Universal.

Kingdom, the new gnostic: the gnostic astral field, formed out of the pure astral substance of the beginning, built-up by the young gnostic Brotherhood in cooperation with the Universal gnostic Chain, of which it forms the youngest link. Through its activity in two worlds (in the resurrection field of the sixth cosmic domain as well as in our field of existence - the seventh cosmic domain) it enables the liberation-seeking man, for the duration of the harvest period, to enter the resurrection field via the Living Body of the young Gnosis. The Living Body forms the temporary bridge between both cosmic domains. The new gnostic kingdom vivifies *all* the powers that the pupil needs to cross over this bridge-into-life.

Lipika: the aural firmament, the totality of the senses, power-centres and foci, in which the total karma of man lies anchored. The earthly, mortal being is a projection of this firmament and is defined by it with respect to possibilities, limitations and nature. The lipika represents the entire burden of sin of the fallen microcosm.

Microcosm: man as a *minitum mundum* — little world — a complex spherical life-system, in which one can differentiate, from inside out: the personality, the manifestation (or respiration)-field, the aural being and a sevenfold, magnetic, spiritual field. The true man is a microcosm. What in this world is meant by 'man' is but the maimed personality of a degenerated microcosm. Its present consciousness is a personality-consciousness. As a result, it is only consciousness of the field of existence to which it belongs.

Natural man: the man born of nature and subject to the law of the dialectical nature order.

Parfaits of the Cathars, the: the perfect ones, the bonshommes, those who have realized the reborn soul which has found its Pymander.

Pistis Sophia: a. gnostic gospel ascribed to Valentinus, which has been preserved

intact and which proclaims, in impressive purity and minute detail, the way of redemption in Christ, the path of transmutation and transfiguration; *b.* also, the true pupil who perseveres unto attainment.

Proto-atom: See Rose of the heart.

Reflection sphere: the dialectical nature-order possesses two halves of existence: a material sphere and a reflection sphere. The material sphere is the region in which we live during our lives. The reflection sphere is the region in which, among other things, the process between death of the old personality and the vivifying of the new personality take place. This sphere embraces the spheres of hell and purgatory (the sphere of purification) and what in natural religion and occultism is wrongly indicated as 'heaven', or 'eternal life'. These heavenly spheres and the existences in them are just as subject to finiteness and transitoriness as existence in the material sphere. The reflection sphere is the *temporary* abode of the dead, which does not imply that the deceased personality will be raised up to new life. *There is no survival of the fourfold personality*; only the deepest nucleus of the consciousness, the spiritual flash or the dialectical spark, is temporarily re-accepted into the aural being and forms the basis of consciousness for a new personality, which is developed by the aural being in co-operation with the powers at work within the mother.

Respiration-field: the force-field in which the life of the personality is made possible. It is the connecting field between the aural being and the personality. It is totally one with the personality in its activity of attraction and repulsion of matter and powers, necessary for the life and maintenance of the personality.

Rose of the heart, the: mystical indication for the spirit-spark atom (also called proto atom or Christ atom, the grain of corn of Jesus, or the jewel in the lotus), which is situated at the approximate top of the right ventricle of the heart and which is the mathematical centre of the microcosm; it is the rudimentary remnant of the original divine life. The Rose of the heart is the germ of a new microcosm, the divine seed that is preserved in fallen man as a promise of grace, so that one day the moment will come when he remembers his origin and is filled with longing for the House of the Father. Then, the possibility for the dawning of the light of the spiritual sun (the awakening of the slumbering rosebud) will be created. By the positive reaction and sustained purpose of the pupil the process unto regeneration of man, according to the divine plan of redemption, can be commenced.

Rose fastened to the cross, the: a phase on the pupil's path during which, led by pure insight and real yearning for salvation, he allows the I-man, his nature-born personality, to perish through 'daily dying' so that the divine man, the pymandric man, may be resurrected within him.

Self-surrender: see the fivefold Universal Gnosis.

Spiritual School: the Mystery School of the Christ-Hierophants (see Universal

Brotherhood).

Spirit-spark atom: see Rose of the heart.

Spirit-Soul: the heart sanctuary of dialectical man which is emptied and completely purified of every nature-born influence and activity and which vibrates in harmony with the spirit-spark atom. Only in such a purified heart can the meeting with God, the pymandric consciousness, take place.

Wheel of birth and death, the: the ever recurring process of birth, life and death of personalities according to the law of dialectics, followed by the revivification of the microcosm through a new personality.

CONTENTS

	Preface	
	Hermes Trismegistus	1
	The three-times-three aspects of the hermetic man	2
	The threefold sublimity of the new nascent man- kind in the classical Rosycross	3
	The flight to Egypt	5
it	The Tabula Smaragdina	7
	Explanation	10
Itl	The Corpus Hermeticum.....	17
	Introduction	18
	Pymander.....	19
iv	The first book: Pymander	22
v	Pymander and Hermes	41
	The unity of heart and head	42
	The fundamental purification of the heart	45
vi	The position of the dialectical order in the Cosmic Septenary.....	48
	Its task in the cosmic All	49
	The Egyptian Gnosis and the Gnosis of Mani	50
	The tragedy of the fusion of spirit and matter	52
	The vocation of man	54

vii	Salvation and redemption of sin	56
	The promise of reconciliation: the golden seed of immortality	57
	Deliverance through voluntary fundamental renewal of life	58
	The wonder of the great reconciliation plan of God	59
viii	The twofold state of man	61
	Natural man: a sham figure	63
	The division of the sexes.....	64
	The cause of sexual abnormalities	65
	The sevenfold purification of the heart	67
ix	Propel the immortal soul to birth	68
	The Kingdom of God is within you	69
	The Father and I are one	69
	The rise towards the hidden kingdom	70
	The cardinal mistake	71
	He must increase, but I must decrease	71
x	The good end	75
	The way back to the original life	76
	The circle-no-farther	77
	The good end	78
	The signature of the soul-born man	79
	Harvest and service	80
	The spreading of the harvest field	82
xi	Pymander's benefaction.....	84
	Inhalation and exhalation.....	85
	The sleep of the gnostic pupil	85
	Hermes' song of praise	86
xii The structure of the gnostic ritual	
88		
	Hermes' song of praise and the number nine	89

XIII	The astral sphere of dialectics	91
	Dangers for the pupil	91
	The tragic existence in the reflection sphere	93
	The dangers of dream life	95
	An urgent question	96
xiv	Escape from astral bondage	97
	Desirelessness	98
	The power with the lion's head	99
	The necessity of a positive pupilship	100
	The key to the gnostic path	101
	True craving for salvation.....	102
xv	The way to alienation	104
	The new sidereal birth	106
	The way of the Rosycross.....	107
	The new directedness	108
	No place to lay ones head	109
	Alienship	110
xvi	The awakening of the soul (I)	112
	The gnostic astral field	113
	The transfiguration of the soul.....	114
	The new elixer of life	116
	Pymander's benefaction	117
	The emphasis in daytime life	119
XVII	The awakening of the soul (II)	122
	The origin of the aeons	123
	The thirteenth Aeon	125
	The necessity of self-sanctification	125
	The unfading crown of glory	127
xviii	The reality of liberation.....	128
	The color and the vibration of the new astral field	128
	Two ways to die out of the dialectic sphere of life	129

	Removal of the barriers	131
	Imitation of the gnostic help	131
	The guardians at the borders	132
	Inhalation and exhalation.....	133
	Across the borders of death	134
xix	The practical education of thought	135
	The centre of remembrance	135
	The lipika.....	135
	The constraint of human thought	136
	Five minutes of unguarded thought	136
	Place a guard on your thoughts.....	137
	A life question	138
	How the Gnosis breaks into us	139
	The key to the path in your own hand	140
	Dreams.....	141
xx	The sign of the Son of Man	143
	The bread and the wine: the Holy Grail.....	143
	The twofold connection with the new astral field	144
	The genesis of the golden Wedding Garment.....	145
	The third eye: the golden wonder flower	146
	The gnostic intuition	146
	The helmet of salvation	147
	The help of the gnostic astral bath of light	149
xxi	The bath of light and the consolamentum	150
	The nature of the bath of light	150
	The disembodied sleeping souls	151
	The consolamentum.....	152
xxii	Live out of the new soul-principle	153
	Consciousness, life, soul	154
	The three conditions of the astral body	155
	The disturbance of the natural magnetic order of the microcosmos	156
	Reversal of the poles	157

	The blossoming of the new soul consciousness	157
	The connection with the Spirit	158
xxiii	The development of the consciousness in the new astral-field	159
	The exceptional state of the Living Body of the young Gnosis	159
	The responsibility of pupilship	160
	Two examples	160
	The help for a disembodied pupil	162
	The raising of the sleeping souls	164
	The harvest and the harvesters.....	165
	The self-active, self-creative freemason	166
xxiv	The Wedding-room: the Golden Head	167
	The weighing of the candidates	170
	The Kingdom of Heaven	170
	The Father and I are one	171
	He who will never find the power of the Paraclete.....	171
xxv	Second book: Pymander to Hermes	173
xxvi	The living knowledge of God	192
	My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge	192
	The arrogance of theology	193
	The origin of historical materialism	194
	Truth is unassailable	194
	God's Being can only be understood spiritually	195
	Without restored spiritual connection, real knowledge of God is impossible.....	196
xxvii	God's Universal Love.....	197
	God's Love is omnipresent	198
	Dialectical love	198
	Two kinds of dialectics	200
	The holy earth.....	200
	God's time and man's time	200
	Christ's death is life to us	201

xxviii	The secret of our origin	202
	What is life ⁹	202
	God and man	203
	The Spirit-soul is God's child	203
	Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom	204
	Casting off karmic burdens	205
	The emergency plan of God	207
	God manifested in the flesh	208
xxix	Let us be still	209
	The spirit-spark atom.....	210
	The Mercury-man.....	210
	The unity of heart and head	210
	The larynx	211
	The ninefold man	212
	The three human temples	212
	The Holy of Holies	213
	Let us become still before God.....	214
xxx	What is wisdom?.....	215
	Group unity in the Gnosis.....	216
	The divine reality of the seventh ray	216
	The great friendship	217
	The righthand path and the lefthand path	217
	Light and fire	218
	The universal law of Love	219
	Everything is in God	220
	Glossary	222
	Contents	227