

known limits, alone is possible. A change in the nature of knowledge is possible only with a change in the nature of being.

"Taken in itself, a man's being has many different sides. The most characteristic feature of a modern man is the *absence of unity in him* and, further, the absence in him of even traces of those properties which he most likes to ascribe to himself, that is, 'lucid consciousness,' 'free will,' a 'permanent ego or I,' and the 'ability to do.' It may surprise you if I say that the chief feature of a modern man's being which explains *everything else that is lacking in him is sleep*.

"A modern man lives in sleep, in sleep he is born and in sleep he dies. About sleep, its significance and its role in life, we will speak later. But at present just think of one thing, what *knowledge* can a sleeping man have? And if you think about it and at the same time remember that *sleep* is the chief feature of our being, it will at once become clear to you that if a man really wants knowledge, he must first of all think about how to wake, that is, about how to change his *being*.

"Exteriorly man's being has many different sides: activity or passivity; truthfulness or a tendency to lie; sincerity or insincerity; courage, cowardice; self-control, profligacy; irritability, egoism, readiness for self-sacrifice, pride, vanity, conceit, industry, laziness, morality, depravity; all these and much more besides make up the being of man.

"But all this is entirely *mechanical* in man. If he lies it means that he cannot help lying. If he tells the truth it means that he cannot help telling the truth, and so it is with everything. Everything happens, a man can do nothing either in himself or outside himself.

"But of course there are limits and bounds. Generally speaking, the being of a modern man is of very inferior quality. But it can be of such bad quality that no change is possible. This must always be remembered. People whose being can still be changed are very lucky. But there are people who are definitely diseased, broken machines with whom nothing can be done. And such people are in the majority. If you think of this you will understand why only few can receive real knowledge. Their being prevents it.

"Generally speaking, the *balance* between knowledge and being is even more important than a separate development of either one or the other. And a separate development of knowledge or of being is not desirable in any way. Although it is precisely this *one-sided* development that often seems particularly attractive to people.

"If knowledge outweighs being a man *knows but has no power to do*. It is useless knowledge. On the other hand if being outweighs knowledge a man *has the power to do*, but does not know, that is, he can do something but does not know what to do. The being he has acquired becomes aimless and efforts made to attain it prove to be useless.

"In the history of humanity there are known many examples when

entire civilizations have perished because knowledge outweighed being or being outweighed knowledge."

"What are the results of the development of the line of knowledge without being, or the development of the line of being without knowledge?" someone asked during a talk upon this subject.

"The development of the line of knowledge without the line of being gives a *weak yogi*," said G., "that is to say, a man who knows a great deal but can do nothing, a man who *does not understand*" (he emphasized these words) "what he knows, a man without *appreciation*, that is, a man for whom there is no difference between one kind of knowledge and another. And the development of the line of being without knowledge gives a *stupid saint*, that is, a man who can do a great deal but who does not know what to do or with what object; and if he does anything he acts in obedience to his subjective feelings which may lead him greatly astray and cause him to commit grave mistakes, that is, actually to do the opposite of what he wants. In either case both the *weak yogi* and the *stupid saint* are brought to a standstill. Neither the one nor the other can develop further.

"In order to understand this and, in general, the nature of knowledge and the nature of being, as well as their interrelation, it is necessary to understand the relation of knowledge and being to 'understanding.'

"*Knowledge is one thing, understanding is another thing.*

"People often confuse these concepts and do not clearly grasp what is the difference between them.

"Knowledge by itself does not give understanding. Nor is understanding increased by an increase of knowledge alone. Understanding depends upon the relation of knowledge to being. Understanding is the resultant of knowledge and being. And knowledge and being must not diverge too far, otherwise understanding will prove to be far removed from either. At the same time the relation of knowledge to being does not change with a mere growth of knowledge. It changes only when being grows simultaneously with knowledge. In other words, understanding grows only with the growth of being.

"In ordinary thinking, people do not distinguish understanding from knowledge. They think that greater understanding depends on greater knowledge. Therefore they accumulate knowledge, or that which they call knowledge, but they do not know how to accumulate understanding and do not bother about it.

"And yet a person accustomed to self-observation knows for certain that at different periods of his life he has understood one and the same idea, one and the same thought, in totally different ways. It often seems strange to him that he could have understood so wrongly that which, in his opinion, he now understands rightly. And he realizes, at the same

time, that his knowledge has not changed, and that he knew as much about the given subject before as he knows now. What, then, has changed? His being has changed. And once being has changed understanding must change also.

"The difference between knowledge and understanding becomes clear when we realize that *knowledge* may be the function of one center. Understanding, however, is the function of three centers. Thus the thinking apparatus may *know* something. But *understanding* appears only when a man *feels* and *senses* what is connected with it.

"We have spoken earlier about mechanicalness. A man cannot say that he understands the idea of mechanicalness if he only *knows* about it with his mind. He must *feel* it with his whole mass, with his whole being; then he will understand it.

"In the sphere of practical activity people know very well the difference between mere knowledge and understanding. They realize that to know and to *know how to do* are two different things, and that *knowing how to do* is not created by knowledge alone. But outside the sphere of practical activity people do not clearly understand what 'understanding' means.

"As a rule, when people realize that they do not understand a thing they try to *find a name* for what they do not 'understand,' and when they find a name they say they 'understand.' But to 'find a name' does not mean to 'understand.' Unfortunately, people are usually satisfied with names. A man who knows a great many names, that is, a great many words, is deemed to understand a great deal—again excepting, of course, any sphere of practical activity wherein his ignorance very soon becomes evident.

"One of the reasons for the divergence between the line of knowledge and the line of being in life, and the lack of understanding which is partly the cause and partly the effect of this divergence, is to be found in the language which people speak. This language is full of wrong concepts, wrong classifications, wrong associations. And the chief thing is that, owing to the essential characteristics of ordinary thinking, that is to say, to its vagueness and inaccuracy, every word can have thousands of different meanings according to the material the speaker has at his disposal and the complex of associations at work in him at the moment. People do not clearly realize to what a degree their language is subjective, that is, what different things each of them says while using the same words. They are not aware that each one of them speaks in a language of his own, understanding other people's language either vaguely or not at all, and having no idea that each one of them speaks in a language unknown to him. People have a very firm conviction, or belief, that they speak the same language, that they understand one another.

Actually this conviction has no foundation whatever. The language in which they speak is adapted to practical life only. People can communicate to one another information of a practical character, but as soon as they pass to a slightly more complex sphere they are immediately lost, and they cease to understand one another, although they are unconscious of it. People imagine that they often, if not always, understand one another, or that they can, at any rate, understand one another if they try or want to; they imagine that they understand the authors of the books they read and that other people understand them. This also is one of the illusions which people create for themselves and in the midst of which they live. As a matter of fact, no one understands anyone else. Two men can say the same thing with profound conviction but call it by different names, or argue endlessly together without suspecting that they are thinking exactly the same. Or, vice versa, two men can say the same words and imagine that they agree with, and understand, one another, whereas they are actually saying absolutely different things and do not understand one another in the least.

"If we take the simplest words that occur constantly in speech and endeavor to analyze the meaning given to them, we shall see at once that, at every moment of his life, every man puts into each word a special meaning which another man can never put into it or suspect.

"Let us take the word 'man' and imagine a conversation among a group of people in which the word 'man' is often heard. Without any exaggeration it can be said that the word 'man' will have as many meanings as there are people taking part in the conversation, and that these meanings will have nothing in common.

"In pronouncing the word 'man' everyone will involuntarily connect with this word the point of view from which he is generally accustomed to regard man, or from which, for some reason or other, he regards him at the moment. One man at the moment may be occupied with the question of the relation between the sexes. Then the word 'man' will have no general meaning for him and on hearing this word he will first of all ask himself—Which? man or woman? Another man may be religious and his first question will be—A Christian or not a Christian? The third man may be a doctor and the concept 'man' will mean for him a 'sick man' or a 'healthy man,' and, of course from the point of view of his speciality. A spiritualist will think of 'man' from the point of view of his 'astral body,' of 'life on the other side,' and so on, and he may say, if he is asked, that men are divided into mediums and non-mediums. A naturalist speaking of man will place the center of gravity of his thoughts in the idea of man as a zoological type, that is to say, in speaking of man he will think of the structure of his teeth, his fingers, his facial angle, the distance between the eyes. A lawyer will see in 'man' a statistical unit, or a subject for the application of laws, or a potential criminal, or a possible client.

A moralist pronouncing the word 'man' will invariably introduce into it the idea of good and evil, and so on, and so on.

"People do not notice all these contradictions, do not notice that they never understand one another, that they always speak about different things. It is quite clear that, for proper study, for an exact exchange of thoughts, an exact language is necessary, which would make it possible to establish what a man actually means, would include an indication of the point of view from which a given concept is taken and determine the center of gravity of this concept. The idea is perfectly clear and every branch of science endeavors to elaborate and to establish an exact language for itself. But there is no universal language. People continually confuse the languages of different sciences and can never establish their exact correlation. And even in each separate branch of science new terminologies, new nomenclatures, are constantly appearing. And the further it goes the worse it becomes. Misunderstanding grows and increases instead of diminishing and there is every reason to think that it will continue to increase in the same way. And people will understand one another ever less and less.

"For exact understanding exact language is necessary. And the study of systems of ancient knowledge begins with the study of a language which will make it possible to establish at once exactly what is being said, from what point of view, and in what connection. This new language contains hardly any new terms or new nomenclature, but it bases the construction of speech upon a new principle, namely, the principle of relativity; that is to say, it introduces relativity into all concepts and thus makes possible an accurate determination of the angle of thought—for what precisely ordinary language lacks are expressions of relativity.

"When a man has mastered this language, then, with its help, there can be transmitted and communicated to him a great deal of knowledge and information which cannot be transmitted in ordinary language even by using all possible scientific and philosophical terms.

"The fundamental property of the new language is that *all* ideas in it are concentrated round *one* idea, that is, they are taken in their mutual relationship from the point of view of *one* idea. This idea is the idea of *evolution*. Of course, not evolution in the sense of *mechanical* evolution, because such an evolution does not exist, but in the sense of a conscious and volitional evolution, which alone is possible.

"Everything in the world, from solar systems to man, and from man to atom, either rises or descends, either evolves or degenerates, either develops or decays. *But nothing evolves mechanically*. Only degeneration and destruction proceed mechanically. That which cannot evolve consciously—degenerates. Help from outside is possible only in so far as it is valued and accepted, even if it is only by feeling in the beginning.

"The language in which understanding is possible is constructed upon

the indication of the relation of the object under examination to the evolution possible for it; upon the indication of its *place* in the evolutionary ladder.

"For this purpose many of our usual ideas are *divided* according to the steps of this evolution.

"Once again let us take the idea *man*. In the language of which I speak, instead of the word 'man,' seven words are used, namely: man number one, man number two, man number three, man number four, man number five, man number six, and man number seven. With these seven ideas people are already able to understand one another when speaking of man.

"Man number seven means a man who has reached the full development possible to man and who possesses everything a man can possess, that is, will, consciousness, permanent and unchangeable I, individuality, immortality, and many other properties which, in our blindness and ignorance, we ascribe to ourselves. It is only when to a certain extent we understand man number seven and his properties that we can understand the gradual stages through which we can approach him, that is, understand the process of development possible for us.

"Man number six stands very close to man number seven. He differs from man number seven only by the fact that some of his properties have not as yet become *permanent*.

"Man number five is also for us an unattainable standard of man, for it is a man who has reached *unity*.

"Man number four is an intermediate stage. I shall speak of him later.

"Man number one, number two, and number three, these are people who constitute mechanical humanity on the same level on which they are born.

"*Man number one* means man in whom the center of gravity of his psychic life lies in the moving center. This is the man of the physical body, the man with whom the moving and the instinctive functions constantly outweigh the emotional and the thinking functions.

"*Man number two* means man on the same level of development, but man in whom the center of gravity of his psychic life lies in the emotional center, that is, man with whom the *emotional* functions outweigh all others; the man of feeling, the emotional man.

"*Man number three* means man on the same level of development but man in whom the center of gravity of his psychic life lies in the intellectual center, that is, man with whom the thinking functions gain the upper hand over the moving, instinctive, and emotional functions; the man of reason, who goes into everything from theories, from mental considerations.

"Every man is born number one, number two, or number three.

"Man number four is not born ready-made. He is born one, two, or three, and becomes four only as a result of efforts of a definite character. Man number four is always the *product of school work*. He can neither be born, nor develop accidentally or as the result of ordinary influences of bringing up, education, and so on. Man number four already stands on a different level to man number one, two, and three; he has a *permanent center of gravity* which consists in his ideas, in his valuation of the work, and in his relation to the school. In addition his psychic centers have already begun to be balanced; one center in him cannot have such a preponderance over others as is the case with people of the first three categories. He already begins to know himself and begins to know whither he is going.

"Man number five has already been crystallized; he cannot change as man number one, two, and three change. But it must be noted that man number five can be the result of right work and he can be the result of wrong work. He can become number five from number four and he can become number five *without having been four*. And in this case he cannot develop further, cannot become number six and seven. In order to become number six he must again melt his crystallized essence, must intentionally lose his being of man number five. And this can be achieved only through terrible sufferings. Fortunately these cases of wrong development occur very rarely.

"The division of man into seven categories, or seven numbers, explains thousands of things which otherwise cannot be understood. This division gives the first conception of *relativity* as applied to man. Things may be one thing or another thing according to the kind of man from whose point of view, or in relation to whom, they are taken.

"In accordance with this, all the inner and all the outer manifestations of man, all that belongs to man, and all that is created by him, is also divided into seven categories.

"It can now be said that there exists a knowledge number one, based upon imitation or upon instincts, or learned by heart, crammed or drilled into a man. Number one, if he is man number one in the full sense of the term, learns everything like a parrot or a monkey.

"The knowledge of man number two is merely the knowledge of what he likes; what he does not like he does not know. Always and in everything he wants something pleasant. Or, if he is a sick man, he will, on the contrary, know only what he dislikes, what repels him and what evokes in him fear, horror, and loathing.

"The knowledge of man number three is knowledge based upon subjectively logical thinking, upon words, upon literal understanding. It is the knowledge of bookworms, of scholastics. Men number three, for example, have counted how many times each letter of the Arabic alphabet

is repeated in the Koran of Mohammed, and upon this have based a whole system of interpretation of the Koran.

"The knowledge of man number four is a very different kind of knowledge. It is knowledge which comes from man number five, who in turn receives it from man number six, who has received it from man number seven. But, of course, man number four assimilates of this knowledge only what is possible according to his powers. But, in comparison with man number one, man number two, and man number three, man number four has begun to get free from the subjective elements in his knowledge and to move along the path towards objective knowledge.

"The knowledge of man number five is whole, indivisible knowledge. He has now one indivisible I and *all* his knowledge belongs to this I. He cannot have one I that knows something which another does not know. What he knows, the whole of him knows. His knowledge is nearer to objective knowledge than the knowledge of man number four.

"The knowledge of man number six is the complete knowledge possible to man; but it can still be lost.

"The knowledge of man number seven is his own knowledge, which cannot be taken away from him; it is the *objective* and completely *practical* knowledge of *All*.

"It is exactly the same with being. There is the being of man number one, that is, the being of a man living by his instincts and his sensations; the being of man number two, that is to say, the being of the sentimental, the emotional man; the being of man number three, that is, the being of the rational, the theoretical man, and so on. It is quite clear why knowledge cannot be far away from being. Man number one, two, or three cannot, by reason of his being, possess the knowledge of man number four, man number five, and higher. Whatever you may give him, he may interpret it in his own way, he will reduce every idea to the level on which he is himself.

"The same order of division into seven categories must be applied to everything relating to man. There is art number one, that is the art of man number one, imitative, copying art, or crudely primitive and sensuous art such as the dances and music of savage peoples. There is art number two, sentimental art; art number three, intellectual, invented art; and there must be art number four, number five, and so on.

"In exactly the same way there exists the religion of man number one, that is to say, a religion consisting of rites, of external forms, of sacrifices and ceremonies of imposing splendor and brilliance, or, on the contrary, of a gloomy, cruel, and savage character, and so on. There is the religion of man number two; the religion of faith, love, adoration, impulse, enthusiasm, which soon becomes transformed into the religion of persecution, oppression, and extermination of 'heretics' and 'heathens.' There is the religion of man number three; the intellectual, theoretical religion of

proofs and arguments, based upon logical deductions, considerations, and interpretations. Religions number one, number two, and number three are really the only ones we know; all known and existing religions and denominations in the world belong to one of these three categories. What the religion of man number four or the religion of man number five and so on is, we do not know, and we cannot know so long as we remain what we are.

"If instead of religion in general we take Christianity, then again there exists a Christianity number one, that is to say, paganism in the guise of Christianity. Christianity number two is an emotional religion, sometimes very pure but without force, sometimes full of bloodshed and horror leading to the Inquisition, to religious wars. Christianity number three, instances of which are afforded by various forms of Protestantism, is based upon dialectic, argument, theories, and so forth. Then there is Christianity number four, of which men number one, number two, and number three have no conception whatever.

"In actual fact Christianity number one, number two, and number three is simply external imitation. Only man number four strives to be a Christian and only man number five can actually be a Christian. For to be a Christian means to have the being of a Christian, that is, to live in accordance with Christ's precepts.

"Man number one, number two, and number three cannot live in accordance with Christ's precepts because with them everything 'happens.' Today it is one thing and tomorrow it is quite another thing. Today they are ready to give away their last shirt and tomorrow to tear a man to pieces because he refuses to give up his shirt to them. They are swayed by every chance event. They are not masters of themselves and therefore they cannot decide to be Christians and really be Christians.

"Science, philosophy, and all manifestations of man's life and activity can be divided in exactly the same way into seven categories. But the ordinary language in which people speak is very far from any such divisions, and this is why it is so difficult for people to understand one another.

"In analyzing the various subjective meanings of the word 'man' we have seen how varied and contradictory, and, above all, how concealed and unnoticeable even to the speaker himself are the meanings and the shades of meaning created by habitual associations that can be put into a word.

"Let us take some other word, for example, the term 'world.' Each man understands it in his own way, and each man in an entirely different way. Everyone when he hears or pronounces the word 'world' has associations entirely foreign and incomprehensible to another. Every 'conception of the world,' every habitual form of thinking, carries with it its own associations, its own ideas.

"In a man with a religious conception of the world, a Christian, the word 'world' will call up a whole series of religious ideas, will necessarily become connected with the idea of God, with the idea of the creation of the world or the end of the world, or of the 'sinful' world, and so on.

"For a follower of the Vedantic philosophy the world before anything else will be illusion, 'Maya.'

"A theosophist will think of the different 'planes,' the physical, the astral, the mental, and so on.

"A spiritualist will think of the world 'beyond,' the world of spirits.

"A physicist will look upon the world from the point of view of the structure of matter; it will be a world of molecules or atoms, or electrons.

"For the astronomer the world will be a world of stars and nebulae.

"And so on and so on. The phenomenal and the noumenal world, the world of the fourth and other dimensions, the world of good and the world of evil, the material world and the immaterial world, the proportion of power in the different nations of the world, can man be 'saved' in the world, and so on, and so on.

"People have thousands of different ideas about the world but not one general idea which would enable them to understand one another and to determine at once from what point of view they desire to regard the world.

"It is impossible to study a system of the universe without studying man. At the same time it is impossible to study man without studying the universe. Man is an image of the world. He was created by the same laws which created the whole of the world. By knowing and understanding himself he will know and understand the whole world, all the laws that create and govern the world. And at the same time by studying the world and the laws that govern the world he will learn and understand the laws that govern him. In this connection some laws are understood and assimilated more easily by studying the objective world, while man can only understand other laws by studying himself. The study of the world and the study of man must therefore run parallel, one helping the other.

"In relation to the term 'world' it is necessary to understand from the very outset that there are many worlds, and that we live not in one world, but in several worlds. This is not readily understood because in ordinary language the term 'world' is generally used in the singular. And if the plural 'worlds' is used it is merely to emphasize, as it were, the same idea, or to express the idea of various worlds existing parallel to one another. Our language does not have the idea of worlds contained one within another. And yet the idea that we live in different worlds precisely implies worlds contained one within another to which we stand in different relations.

"If we desire an answer to the question what is the world or worlds in

which we live, we must first of all ask ourselves what it is that we may call 'world' in the most intimate and immediate relation to us.

"To this we may answer that we often give the name of 'world' to the world of people, to humanity, in which we live, of which we form part. But humanity forms an inseparable part of organic life on earth, therefore it would be right to say that the world nearest to us is *organic life on earth*, the world of plants, animals, and men.

"But organic life is also in the world. What then is 'world' for organic life?"

"To this we can answer that for organic life our planet the earth is 'world.'

"But the earth is also in the world. What then is 'world' for the earth?"

"'World' for the earth is the planetary world of the solar system, of which it forms a part.

"What is 'world' for all the planets taken together? The sun, or the sphere of the sun's influence, or the solar system, of which the planets form a part.

"For the sun, in its turn, 'world' is our world of stars, or the Milky Way, an accumulation of a vast number of solar systems.

"Furthermore, from an astronomical point of view, it is quite possible to presume a multitude of worlds existing at enormous distances from one another in the space of 'all worlds.' These worlds taken together will be 'world' for the Milky Way.

"Further, passing to philosophical conclusions, we may say that 'all worlds' must form some, for us, incomprehensible and unknown *Whole* or *One* (as an apple is one). This *Whole*, or *One*, or *All*, which may be called the 'Absolute,' or the 'Independent' because, including everything within itself, it is not dependent upon anything, is 'world' for 'all worlds.' Logically it is quite possible to think of a state of things where *All* forms one single *Whole*. Such a whole will certainly be the Absolute, which means the Independent, because it, that is, the *All*, is infinite and indivisible.

"The Absolute, that is, the state of things when the *All* constitutes one *Whole*, is, as it were, the primordial state of things, out of which, by division and differentiation, arises the diversity of the phenomena observed by us.

"Man lives in all these worlds but in different ways.

"This means that he is first of all influenced by the *nearest* world, the one immediate to him, of which he forms a part. Worlds further away also influence man, directly as well as through other intermediate worlds, but their action is diminished in proportion to their remoteness or to the increase in the difference between them and man. As will be seen later, the *direct* influence of the Absolute does not reach man. But the influence of the next world and the influence of the star world are already

perfectly clear in the life of man, although they are certainly unknown to science."

With this G. ended the lecture.

On the next occasion we had very many questions chiefly about the influences of the various worlds and why the influence of the Absolute does not reach us.

"Before examining these influences," began G., "and the laws of transformation of Unity into Plurality, we must examine the *fundamental law* that creates all phenomena in all the diversity or unity of all universes.

"This is the 'Law of Three' or the law of the *three principles* or the *three forces*. It consists of the fact that every phenomenon, on whatever scale and in whatever world it may take place, from molecular to cosmic phenomena, is the result of the combination or the meeting of three different and opposing forces. Contemporary thought realizes the existence of two forces and the necessity of these two forces for the production of a phenomenon: force and resistance, positive and negative magnetism, positive and negative electricity, male and female cells, and so on. But it does not observe even these two forces always and everywhere. No question has ever been raised as to the third, or if it has been raised it has scarcely been heard.

"According to real, exact knowledge, one force, or two forces, can never produce a phenomenon. The presence of a third force is necessary, for it is only with the help of a third force that the first two can produce what may be called a phenomenon, no matter in what sphere.

"The teaching of the three forces is at the root of all ancient systems. The first force may be called active or positive; the second, passive or negative; the third, neutralizing. But these are *merely names*, for in reality all three forces are equally active and appear as active, passive, and neutralizing, only at their meeting points, that is to say, *only in relation to one another at a given moment*. The first two forces are more or less comprehensible to man and the third may sometimes be discovered either at the point of application of the forces, or in the 'medium,' or in the 'result.' But, speaking in general, the third force is not easily accessible to direct observation and understanding. The reason for this is to be found in the functional limitations of man's ordinary psychological activity and in the fundamental categories of our perception of the phenomenal world, that is, in our sensation of space and time resulting from these limitations. People cannot perceive and observe the third force directly any more than they can spatially perceive the 'fourth dimension.'

"But by studying himself, the manifestations of his thought, consciousness, activity—his habits, his desires, and so on—man may learn to observe and to see in himself the action of the three forces. Let us suppose, for instance, that a man wants to work on himself in order to change

certain of his characteristics, to attain a higher level of being. His desire, his initiative, is the active force. The inertia of all his habitual psychological life which shows opposition to his initiative will be the passive or the negative force. The two forces will either counterbalance one another, or one will completely conquer the other, but, at the same time, it will become too weak for any further action. Thus the two forces will, as it were, revolve one around the other, one absorbing the other and producing no result whatever. This may continue for a lifetime. A man may feel desire and initiative. But all this initiative may be absorbed in overcoming the habitual inertia of life, leaving nothing for the purpose towards which the initiative ought to be directed. And so it may go on until the third force makes its appearance, in the form, for instance, of *new knowledge*, showing at once the advantage or the necessity of work on oneself and, in this way, supporting and strengthening the initiative. Then the initiative, with the support of this third force, may conquer inertia and the man becomes active in the desired direction.

"Examples of the action of the three forces, and the moments of entry of the third force, may be discovered in all manifestations of our psychic life, in all phenomena of the life of human communities and of humanity as a whole, and in all the phenomena of nature around us.

"But at the beginning it is enough to understand the general principle: every phenomenon, of whatever magnitude it may be, is inevitably the manifestation of three forces; one or two forces cannot produce a phenomenon, and if we observe a stoppage in anything, or an endless hesitation at the same place, we can say that, at the given place, the third force is lacking. In trying to understand this it must be remembered at the same time that people cannot observe phenomena as manifestations of three forces because we cannot observe the objective world in our subjective states of consciousness. And in the subjectively observed phenomenal world we see in phenomena only the manifestation of one or two forces. If we could see the manifestation of three forces in every action, we should then see the world as it is (things in themselves). Only it must here be remembered that a phenomenon which appears to be simple may actually be very complicated, that is, it may be a very complex combination of trinities. But we know that we cannot observe the world as it is and this should help us to understand why we cannot see the third force. The third force is a property of the real world. The subjective or phenomenal world of our observation is only relatively real, at any rate it is not complete.

"Returning to the world in which we live we may now say that in the Absolute, as well as in everything else, three forces are active: the active, the passive, and the neutralizing. But since by its very nature everything in the Absolute constitutes one whole the three forces also constitute one whole. Moreover in forming one independent whole the three forces

possess a full and independent will, full consciousness, full understanding of themselves and of everything they do.

"The idea of the unity of the three forces in the Absolute forms the basis of many ancient teachings—consubstantial and indivisible Trinity, Trimurti—Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva, and so on.

"The three forces of the Absolute, constituting one whole, separate and unite by their own will and by their own decision, and at the points of junction they create phenomena, or 'worlds.' These worlds, created by the will of the Absolute, depend entirely upon this will in everything that concerns their own existence. In each of these worlds the three forces again act. Since, however, each of these worlds is now not the whole, but only a part, then the three forces in them do not form a single whole. It is now a case of three wills, three consciousnesses, three unities. Each of the three forces contains within it the possibility of all three forces, but at the meeting point of the three forces each of them manifests only one principle—the active, the passive, or the neutralizing. The three forces together form a trinity which produces new phenomena. But this trinity is different, it is not that which was in the Absolute, where the three forces formed an indivisible whole and possessed one single will and one single consciousness. In the worlds of the second order the three forces are now divided and their meeting points are now of a different nature. In the Absolute the moment and the point of their meeting is determined by their single will. In the worlds of the second order, where there is no longer a single will but three wills, the points of issue are each determined by a separate will, independent of the others, and therefore the meeting point becomes accidental or mechanical. The will of the Absolute creates the worlds of the second order and governs them, but it does not govern their creative work, in which a mechanical element makes its appearance.

"Let us imagine the Absolute as a circle and in it a number of other circles, worlds of the second order. Let us take one of these circles. The Absolute is designated by the number 1, because the three forces constitute one whole in the Absolute, and the small circles we will designate by the number 3, because in a world of the second order the three forces are already divided.

"The three divided forces in the worlds of the second order, meeting together in each of these worlds, create new worlds of the third order. Let us take one of these worlds. The worlds of the third order, created by the three forces which act semi-mechanically, no longer depend upon the single will of the Absolute but upon three mechanical laws. These worlds are created by the three forces. And having been created they manifest three new forces of their own. Thus the number of forces acting in the worlds of the third order will be six. In the diagram the circle of the third order is designated by the number 6 (3 plus 3). In these worlds are

created worlds of a new order, the fourth order. In the worlds of the fourth order there act three forces of the world of the second order, six forces of the world of the third order, and three of their own, twelve forces altogether. Let us take one of these worlds and designate it by the number 12 (3 plus 6 plus 3). Being subject to a greater number of laws these worlds stand still further away from the single will of the Absolute and are still more mechanical. The worlds created within these worlds will be governed by twenty-four forces (3 plus 6 plus 12 plus 3). The worlds created within these worlds will be governed by forty-eight forces, the number 48 being made up as follows: three forces of the world immediately following the Absolute, six of the next one, twelve of the next, twenty-four of the one after, and three of its own (3 plus 6 plus 12 plus 24 plus 3), forty-eight in all. Worlds created within worlds 48 will be governed by ninety-six forces (3 plus 6 plus 12 plus 24 plus 48 plus 3). The worlds of the next order, if there are any, will be governed by 192 forces, and so on.

"If we take one of the many worlds created in the Absolute, that is, world 3, it will be the world representing the total number of starry worlds similar to our Milky Way. If we take world 6, it will be one of the worlds created within this world, namely the accumulation of stars which we call the Milky Way. World 12 will be one of the suns that compose the Milky Way, our sun. World 24 will be the planetary world, that is to say, all the planets of the solar system. World 48 will be the earth. World 96 will be the moon. If the moon had a satellite it would be world 192, and so on.

"The chain of worlds, the links of which are the Absolute, all worlds, all suns, our sun, the planets, the earth, and the moon, forms the 'ray of creation' in which we find ourselves. The ray of creation is for us the 'world' in the widest sense of the term. Of course, the ray of creation does not include the 'world' in the full sense of the term, since the Absolute gives birth to a number, perhaps to an infinite number, of different worlds, each of which begins a new and separate ray of creation. Furthermore, each of these worlds contains a number of worlds representing a further breaking up of the ray and again of these worlds we select only one—our Milky Way; the Milky Way consists of a number of suns, but of this number we select one sun which is nearest to us, upon which we immediately depend, and in which we live and move and have our being. Each of the other suns means a new breaking up of the ray, but we cannot study these rays in the same way as our ray, that is, the ray in which we are situated. Further, within the solar system the planetary world is nearer to us than the sun itself, and within the planetary world the nearest of all to us is the earth, the planet on which we live. We have no need to study other planets in the same way as we study the earth, it is suffi-

cient for us to take them all together, that is to say, on a considerably smaller scale than we take the earth.

"The number of forces in each world, 1, 3, 6, 12, and so on, indicates the number of laws to which the given world is subject.

"The fewer laws there are in a given world, the nearer it is to the will of the Absolute; the more laws there are in a given world, the greater the mechanicalness, the further it is from the will of the Absolute. We live in a world subject to forty-eight orders of laws, that is to say, very far from the will of the Absolute and in a very remote and dark corner of the universe.

"In this way the ray of creation helps us to determine and to realize our place in the world. But, as you see, we have not yet come to questions about influences. In order to understand the difference between the influences of various worlds we must better understand the law of three and then, further, still another fundamental law—the Law of Seven, or the law of octaves."

Chapter Five

WE TAKE the three-dimensional universe and consider the world as a world of *matter* and *force* in the simplest and most elementary meaning of these terms. Higher dimensions and new theories of matter, space, and time, as well as other categories of knowledge of the world which are unknown to science, we will discuss later. At present it is necessary to represent the universe in the diagrammatic form of the 'ray of creation,' from the Absolute to the moon.

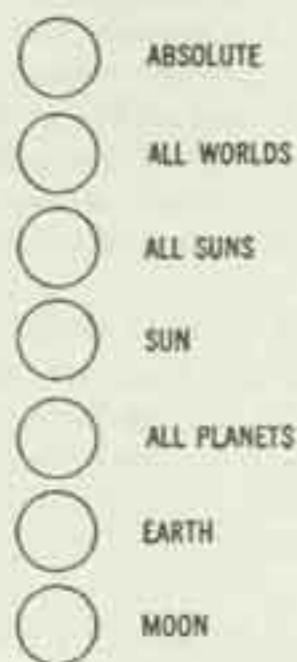


FIG. 3

"The 'ray of creation' seems at the first glance to be a very elementary plan of the universe, but actually, as one studies it further, it becomes clear that with the help of this simple plan it is possible to bring into accord, and to make into a single whole, a multitude of various and conflicting philosophical as well as religious and scientific views of the world. The idea of the ray of creation belongs to ancient knowledge and many of the naïve geocentric systems of the universe known to us are actually either incompetent expositions of the idea of the ray of creation or distortions of this idea due to literal understanding.

"It must be observed that the idea of the ray of creation and its growth from the Absolute contradicts some of the modern views, although not really scientific views. Take, for instance, the stage—sun, earth, moon. According to the usual understanding the moon is a cold, dead celestial body which was once like the earth, that is to say, it possessed internal heat and at a still earlier period was a molten mass like the sun. The earth, according to the usual views, was once like the sun, and is also gradually cooling down and, sooner or later, will become a frozen mass like the moon. It is usually supposed that the sun is also cooling down and that it will become, in time, similar to the earth and later on, to the moon.

"First of all, of course, it must be remarked that this view cannot be called 'scientific' in the strict sense of the term, because in science, that is, in astronomy, or rather, in astrophysics, there are many different and contradictory hypotheses and theories on the subject, none of which has any serious foundation. But this view is the one most widely spread and one which has become the view of the average man of modern times in regard to the world in which we live.

"The idea of the ray of creation and its growth from the Absolute contradicts these general views of our day.

"According to this idea the moon is still an unborn planet, one that is, so to speak, being born. It is becoming warm gradually and in time (given a favorable development of the ray of creation) it will become like the earth and have a satellite of its own, a new moon. A new link will have been added to the ray of creation. The earth, too, is not getting colder, it is getting warmer, and may in time become like the sun. We observe such a process for instance in the system of Jupiter, which is a sun for its satellites.

"Summing up all that has been said before about the ray of creation, from world 1 down to world 96, it must be added that the figures by which worlds are designated indicate the number of forces, or orders of laws, which govern the worlds in question. In the Absolute there is only one force and only one law—the single and independent will of the Absolute. In the next world there are three forces or three orders of laws. In the next there are six orders of laws; in the following one, twelve; and so on. In our world, that is, the earth, forty-eight orders of laws are operating to which we are subject and by which our whole life is governed. If we lived on the moon we should be subject to ninety-six orders of laws, that is, our life and activity would be still more mechanical and we should not have the possibilities of escape from mechanicalness that we now have.

"As has been said already, the will of the Absolute is only manifested in the immediate world created by it within itself, that is, in world 3; the immediate will of the Absolute does not reach world 6 and is mani-

fested in it only in the form of mechanical laws. Further on, in worlds 12, 24, 48, and 96, the will of the Absolute has less and less possibility of manifesting itself. This means that in world 3 the Absolute creates, as it were, a general plan of all the rest of the universe, which is then further developed mechanically. The will of the Absolute cannot manifest itself in subsequent worlds apart from this plan, and, in manifesting itself in accordance with this plan, it takes the form of mechanical laws. This means that if the Absolute wanted to manifest its will, say, in our world, in opposition to the mechanical laws in operation there, it would then have to destroy all the worlds intermediate between itself and our world.

"The idea of a miracle in the sense of a violation of laws by the will which made them is not only contrary to common sense but to the very idea of will itself. A 'miracle' can only be a manifestation of laws which are unknown to men or rarely met with. A 'miracle' is the manifestation in this world of the laws of another world.

"On the earth we are very far removed from the will of the Absolute; we are separated from it by forty-eight orders of mechanical laws. If we could free ourselves from one half of these laws, we should find ourselves subject to only twenty-four orders of laws, that is, to the laws of the planetary world, and then we should be one stage nearer to the Absolute and its will. If we could then free ourselves from one half of these laws, we should be subject to the laws of the sun (twelve laws) and consequently one stage nearer still to the Absolute. If, again, we could free ourselves from half of these laws, we should be subject to the laws of the starry world and separated by only one stage from the immediate will of the Absolute.

"And the possibility for man thus gradually to free himself from mechanical laws exists.

"The study of the forty-eight orders of laws to which man is subject cannot be abstract like the study of astronomy; they can be studied only by observing them in oneself and by *getting free from them*. At the beginning a man must simply understand that he is quite needlessly subject to a thousand petty but irksome laws which have been created for him by other people and by himself. When he attempts to get free from them he will see that he cannot. Long and persistent attempts to gain freedom from them will convince him of his slavery. The laws to which man is subject can only be studied by struggling with them, by trying to get free from them. But a great deal of knowledge is needed in order to become free from one law without creating for oneself another in its place.

"The orders of laws and their forms vary according to the point of view from which we consider the ray of creation.

"In our system the end of the ray of creation, the growing end, so to speak, of the branch, is the moon. The energy for the growth, that is,

for the development of the moon and for the formation of new shoots, goes to the moon from the earth, where it is created by the joint action of the sun, of all the other planets of the solar system, and of the earth itself. This energy is collected and preserved in a huge accumulator situated on the earth's surface. This accumulator is organic life on earth. Organic life on earth feeds the moon. Everything living on the earth, people, animals, plants, is food for the moon. The moon is a huge living-being feeding upon all that lives and grows on the earth. The moon could not exist without organic life on earth, any more than organic life on earth could exist without the moon. Moreover, in relation to organic life the moon is a huge electromagnet. If the action of the electromagnet were suddenly to stop, organic life would crumble to nothing.

"The process of the growth and the warming of the moon is connected with life and death on the earth. Everything living sets free at its death a certain amount of the energy that has 'animated' it; this energy, or the 'souls' of everything living—plants, animals, people—is attracted to the moon as though by a huge electromagnet, and brings to it the warmth and the life upon which its growth depends, that is, the growth of the ray of creation. In the economy of the universe nothing is lost, and a certain energy having finished its work on one plane goes to another.

"The souls that go to the moon, possessing perhaps even a certain amount of consciousness and memory, find themselves there under ninety-six laws, in the conditions of mineral life, or to put it differently, in conditions from which there is no escape apart from a general evolution in immeasurably long planetary cycles. The moon is 'at the extremity,' at the end of the world; it is the 'outer darkness' of the Christian doctrine 'where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

"The influence of the moon upon everything living manifests itself in all that happens on the earth. The moon is the chief, or rather, the nearest, the immediate, motive force of all that takes place in organic life on the earth. All movements, actions, and manifestations of people, animals, and plants depend upon the moon and are controlled by the moon. The sensitive film of organic life which covers the earthly globe is entirely dependent upon the influence of the huge electromagnet that is sucking out its vitality. Man, like every other living being, cannot, in the ordinary conditions of life, tear himself free from the moon. All his movements and consequently all his actions are controlled by the moon. If he kills another man, the moon does it; if he sacrifices himself for others, the moon does that also. All evil deeds, all crimes, all self-sacrificing actions, all heroic exploits, as well as all the actions of ordinary everyday life, are controlled by the moon.

"The liberation which comes with the growth of mental powers and faculties is liberation from the moon. The mechanical part of our life depends upon the moon, is subject to the moon. If we develop in our-

selves consciousness and will, and subject our mechanical life and all our mechanical manifestations to them, we shall escape from the power of the moon.

"The next idea which it is necessary to master is the materiality of the universe which is taken in the form of the ray of creation. Everything in this universe can be weighed and measured. The Absolute is as material, as weighable and measurable, as the moon, or as man. If the Absolute is God it means that God can be weighed and measured, resolved into component elements, 'calculated,' and expressed in the form of a definite formula.

"But the concept 'materiality' is as relative as everything else. If we recall how the concept 'man' and all that refers to him—good, evil, truth, falsehood, and so on—is divided into different categories ('man number one,' 'man number two,' and so on), it will be easy for us to understand that the concept 'world,' and everything that refers to the world, is also divided into different categories. The ray of creation establishes seven planes in the world, seven worlds one within another. Everything that refers to the world is also divided into seven categories, one category within another. The materiality of the Absolute is a materiality of an order different from that of 'all worlds.' The materiality of 'all worlds' is of an order different from the materiality of 'all suns.' The materiality of 'all suns' is of an order different from the materiality of our sun. The materiality of our sun is of an order different from the materiality of 'all planets.' The materiality of 'all planets' is of an order different from the materiality of the earth, and the materiality of the earth is of an order different from the materiality of the moon. This idea is at first difficult to grasp. People are accustomed to think that *matter* is everywhere the same. The whole of physics, of astrophysics, of chemistry, such methods as spectroanalysis, and so on, are based upon this assumption. And it is true that matter is the same, but materiality is different. And different degrees of materiality depend directly upon the qualities and properties of the energy manifested at a given point.

"Matter or substance necessarily presupposes the existence of force or energy. This does not mean that a dualistic conception of the world is necessary. The concepts of matter and force are as relative as everything else. In the Absolute, where all is one, matter and force are also one. But in this connection matter and force are not taken as real principles of the world in itself, but as properties or characteristics of the phenomenal world observed by us. To begin the study of the universe it is sufficient to have an elementary idea of matter and energy, such as we get by immediate observation through our organs of sense. The 'constant' is taken as material, as matter, and 'changes' in the state of the 'constant,' or of matter, are called manifestations of force or energy. All these changes can be regarded as the result of vibrations or undulatory motions which begin in the center, that is, in the Absolute, and go in all directions,

crossing one another, colliding, and merging together, until they stop altogether at the end of the ray of creation.

"From this point of view, then, the world consists of vibrations and matter, or of matter in a state of vibration, of vibrating matter. The rate of vibration is in inverse ratio to the density of matter.

"In the Absolute vibrations are the most rapid and matter is the least dense. In the next world vibrations are slower and matter denser; and further on matter is still more dense and vibrations correspondingly slower.

"'Matter' may be regarded as consisting of 'atoms.' Atoms in this connection are taken also as the result of the final division of matter. In every order of matter they are simply certain small *particles* of the given matter which are indivisible only on the given plane. The atoms of the Absolute alone are really indivisible, the atom of the next plane, that is, of world 3, consists of three atoms of the Absolute or, in other words, it is three times bigger and three times heavier, and its movements are correspondingly slower. The atom of world 6 consists of six atoms of the Absolute merged together, as it were, and forming one atom. Its movements are correspondingly slower. The atom of the next world consists of twelve primordial particles, and of the next worlds, of twenty-four, forty-eight, and ninety-six. The atom of world 96 is of an enormous size compared with the atom of world 1; its movements are correspondingly slower, and the matter which is made up of such atoms is correspondingly denser.

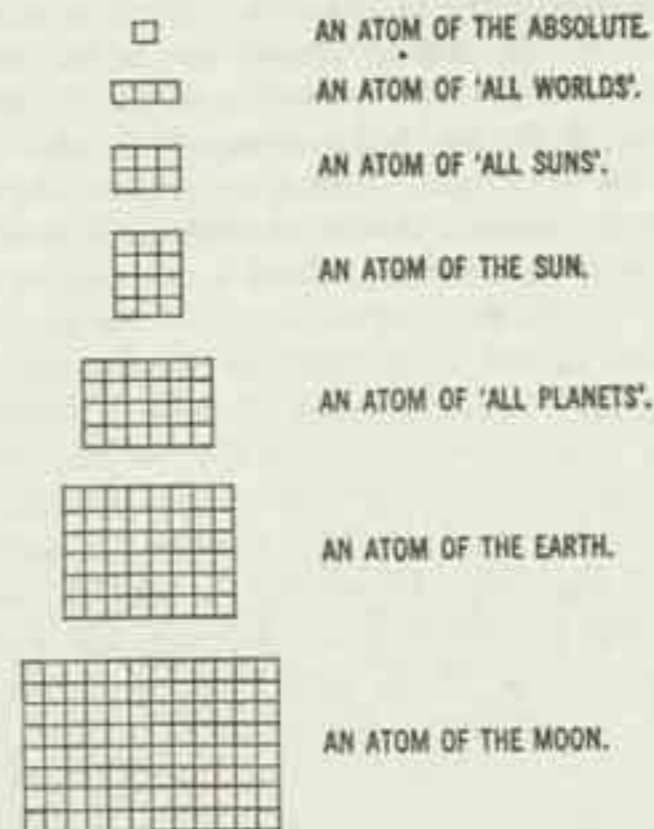


FIG. 4

"The seven worlds of the ray of creation represent seven orders of materiality. The materiality of the moon is different from the materiality of the earth; the materiality of the earth is different from the materiality of the planetary world; the materiality of the planetary world is different from the materiality of the sun, and so on.

"Thus instead of one concept of matter we have seven kinds of matter, but our ordinary conception of materiality only with difficulty embraces the materiality of worlds 96 and 48. The matter of world 24 is much too rarefied to be regarded as matter from the scientific point of view of our physics and chemistry; such matter is practically hypothetical. The still finer matter of world 12 has, for ordinary investigation, no characteristics of materiality at all. All these matters belonging to the various orders of the universe are not separated into layers but are intermixed, or, rather, they interpenetrate one another. We can get an idea of similar interpenetration of matters of different densities from the penetration of one matter by another matter of different densities known to us. A piece of wood may be saturated with water, water may in its turn be filled with gas. Exactly the same relation between different kinds of matter may be observed in the whole of the universe: the finer matters permeate the coarser ones.

"Matter that possesses characteristics of materiality comprehensible to us is divided for us into several states according to its density: solid, liquid, gaseous; further gradations of matter are: radiant energy, that is, electricity, light, magnetism; and so on. But on every plane, that is to say, in every order of materiality, similar relations and divisions of the various states of a given matter may be found; but, as has been already said, matter of a higher plane is not material at all for the lower planes.

"All the matter of the world that surrounds us, the food that we eat, the water that we drink, the air that we breathe, the stones that our houses are built of, our own bodies—everything is permeated by all the matters that exist in the universe. There is no need to study or investigate the sun in order to discover the matter of the solar world: this matter exists in ourselves and is the result of the division of our atoms. In the same way we have in us the matter of all other worlds. Man is, in the full sense of the term, a 'miniature universe'; in him are all the matters of which the universe consists; the same forces, the same laws that govern the life of the universe, operate in him; therefore in studying man we can study the whole world, just as in studying the world we can study man.

"But a complete parallel between man and the world can only be drawn if we take 'man' in the full sense of the word, that is, a man whose inherent powers are developed. An undeveloped man, a man who has not completed the course of his evolution, cannot be taken as a complete picture or plan of the universe—he is an unfinished world.

"As has been said already, the study of oneself must go side by side with the study of the fundamental laws of the universe. The laws are the same everywhere and on all planes. But the very same laws manifesting themselves in different worlds, that is, under different conditions, produce different phenomena. The study of the relation of laws to the planes upon which they are manifested brings us to the study of *relativity*.

"The idea of relativity occupies a very important place in this teaching, and, later on, we shall return to it. But before anything else it is necessary to understand the relativity of each thing and of each manifestation according to the place it occupies in the cosmic order.

"We are on the earth and we depend entirely upon the laws that are operating on the earth. The earth is a very bad place from the cosmic point of view—it is like the most remote part of northern Siberia, very far from everywhere, it is cold, life is very hard. Everything that in another place either comes by itself or is easily obtained, is here acquired only by hard labor; everything must be fought for both in life and in the work. In life it still happens sometimes that a man gets a legacy and afterwards lives without doing anything. But such a thing does not happen in the work. All are equal and all are equally beggars.

"Returning to the law of three, one must learn to find the manifestations of this law in everything we do and in everything we study. The application of this law in any sphere at once reveals much that is new, much that we did not see before. Take chemistry, for instance. Ordinary science does not know of the law of three and it studies matter without taking into consideration its cosmic properties. But besides ordinary chemistry there exists another, a special chemistry, or alchemy if you like, which studies matter taking into consideration its cosmic properties. As has been said before, the cosmic properties of each substance are determined first by its place, and secondly by the force which is acting through it at the given moment. Even in the same place the nature of a given substance undergoes a great change dependent upon the force which is being manifested through it. Each substance can be the conductor of any one of the three forces and, in accordance with this, it can be *active*, *passive*, or *neutralizing*. And it can be neither the first, nor the second, nor the third, if no force is manifesting through it at the given moment or if it is taken without relation to the manifestation of forces. In this way every substance appears, as it were, in four different aspects or states. In this connection it must be noted that when we speak of matter we do not speak of chemical elements. The special chemistry of which I speak looks upon every substance having a separate function, even the most complex, as an element. In this way only is it possible to study the cosmic properties of matter, because all complex compounds have their own cosmic purpose and significance. From this point of view an atom of a given substance is

the smallest amount of the given substance which retains all its chemical, physical, and cosmic properties. Consequently the size of the 'atom' of different substances is not the same. And in some cases an 'atom' may be a particle even visible to the naked eye.

"The four aspects or states of every substance have definite names.

"When a substance is the conductor of the first or the active force, it is called 'carbon,' and, like the carbon of chemistry, it is designated by the letter C.

"When a substance is the conductor of the second or the passive force, it is called 'oxygen,' and, like the oxygen of chemistry, it is designated by the letter O.

"When a substance is the conductor of the third or neutralizing force, it is called 'nitrogen,' and, like the nitrogen of chemistry, it is designated by the letter N.

"When a substance is taken without relation to the force manifesting itself through it, it is called 'hydrogen,' and, like the hydrogen of chemistry, it is designated by the letter H.

"The active, the passive, and the neutralizing forces are designated by the figures 1, 2, 3, and the substances by the letters C, O, N, and H. These designations must be understood."

"Do these four elements correspond to the old four alchemical elements, fire, air, water, earth?" asked one of us.

"Yes, they do correspond," said G., "but we will use these. You will understand why afterwards."

What I heard interested me very much for it connected G.'s system with the system of the Tarot, which had seemed to me at one time to be a possible key to hidden knowledge. Moreover it showed me a relation of *three* to *four* which was new to me and which I had not been able to understand from the Tarot. The Tarot is definitely constructed upon the *law of four principles*. Until now G. had spoken only of the *law of three principles*. But now I saw how *three* passed into *four* and understood the necessity for this division so long as the division of *force* and *matter* exists for our immediate observation. "Three" referred to force and "four" referred to matter. Of course, the further meaning of this was still obscure for me, but even the little that G. said promised a great deal for the future.

In addition I was very interested in the names of the elements: "carbon," "oxygen," "nitrogen," and "hydrogen." I must here remark that although G. had definitely promised to explain precisely why these names were taken and not others, he never did so. Later on I shall return once again to these names. Attempts to establish the origin of these names explained to me a great deal concerning the whole of G.'s system as well as its history.

At one of the meetings, to which a fairly large number of new people had been invited who had not heard G. before, he was asked the question: "Is man immortal or not?"

"I shall try to answer this question," said G., "but I warn you that this cannot be done fully enough with the material to be found in ordinary knowledge and in ordinary language.

"You ask whether man is immortal or not.

"I shall answer, Both yes and no.

"This question has many different sides to it. First of all what does *immortal* mean? Are you speaking of absolute immortality or do you admit different degrees? If for instance after the death of the body something remains which lives for some time preserving its consciousness, can this be called immortality or not? Or let us put it this way: how long a period of such existence is necessary for it to be called immortality? Then does this question include the possibility of a different 'immortality' for different people? And there are still many other different questions. I am saying this only in order to show how vague they are and how easily such words as 'immortality' can lead to illusion. In actual fact nothing is immortal, even God is mortal. But there is a great difference between man and God, and, of course, God is mortal in a different way to man. It would be much better if for the word 'immortality' we substitute the words 'existence after death.' Then I will answer that man has the possibility of existence after death. But *possibility* is one thing and the realization of the possibility is quite a different thing.

"Let us now try to see what this possibility depends upon and what its realization means."

Then G. repeated briefly all that had been said before about the structure of man and the world. He drew the diagram of the ray of creation and the diagram of the four bodies of man [see Figs. 1, 3]. But in relation to the bodies of man he introduced a detail which we had not had before.

He again used the Eastern comparison of man with a carriage, horse, driver, and master, and drew the diagram with one addition that was not there before.

"Man is a complex organization," he said, "consisting of four parts which may be connected or unconnected, or badly connected. The carriage is connected with the horse by shafts, the horse is connected with the driver by reins, and the driver is connected with the master by the master's voice. But the driver must hear and understand the master's voice. He must know how to drive and the horse must be trained to obey the reins. As to the relation between the horse and the carriage, the horse must be properly harnessed. Thus there are three connections between the four sections of this complex organization [see Fig. 5b]. If something is lacking in one of the connections, the organization cannot

act as a single whole. The connections are therefore no less important than the actual 'bodies.' Working on himself man works simultaneously on the 'bodies' and on the 'connections.' But it is different work.

"Work on oneself must begin with the driver. The driver is the mind. In order to be able to hear the master's voice, the driver, first of all, must *not be asleep*, that is, he must wake up. Then it may prove that the master speaks a language that the driver does not understand. The driver must learn this language. When he has learned it, he will understand the master. But concurrently with this he must learn to drive the horse, to harness it to the carriage, to feed and groom it, and to keep the carriage in order—because what would be the use of his understanding the master if he is not in a position to do anything? The master tells him to go yonder. But he is unable to move, because the horse has not been fed, it is not harnessed, and he does not know where the reins are. The horse is our emotions. The carriage is the body. The mind must learn to control the emotions. The emotions always pull the body after them. This is the order in which work on oneself must proceed. But observe again that work on the 'bodies,' that is, on the driver, the horse, and the carriage, is one thing. And work on the 'connections'—that is, on the 'driver's understanding,' which unites him to the master; on the 'reins,' which connect him with the horse; and on the 'shafts' and the 'harness,' which connect the horse with the carriage—is quite another thing.

"It sometimes happens that the bodies are quite good and in order, but that the 'connections' are not working. What then is the use of the whole organization? Just as in the case of undeveloped bodies, the whole organization is inevitably controlled from *below*, that is, not by the will of the master, but by accident.

"In a man with two bodies the second body is active in relation to the physical body; this means that the consciousness in the 'astral body' may have power over the physical body."

G. put a plus over the 'astral body' and a minus over the physical. [See Fig. 5c.]

"In a man with three bodies, the third or 'mental body' is active in relation to the 'astral body' and to the physical body; this means that the consciousness in the 'mental body' has complete power over the 'astral body' and over the physical body."

G. put a plus over the 'mental body' and a minus over the 'astral' and the physical bodies, bracketed together.

"In a man with four bodies the active body is the fourth. This means that the consciousness in the fourth body has complete power over the 'mental,' the 'astral,' and the physical bodies."

G. put a plus over the fourth body and a minus over the other three bracketed together.

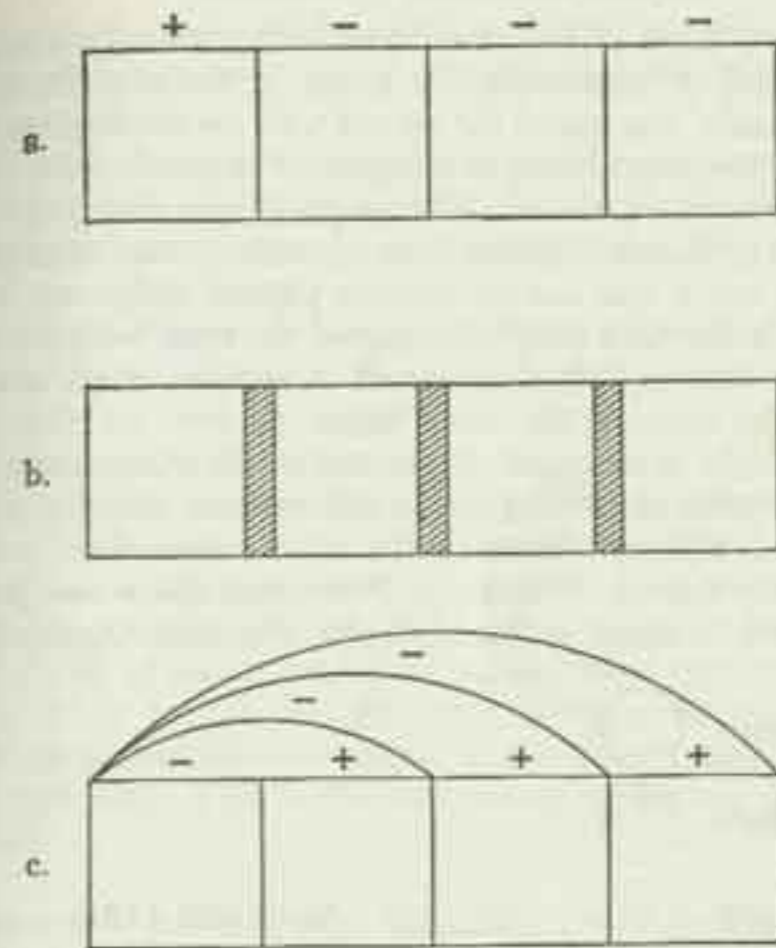


FIG. 5

"As you see," he said, "there exist four quite different situations. In one case all the functions are controlled by the physical body. It is active; in relation to it everything else is passive. [See Fig. 5a.] In another case the second body has power over the physical. In the third case the 'mental' body has power over the 'astral' and the physical. And in the last case the fourth body has power over the first three. We have seen before that in man of physical body only, exactly the same order of relationship is possible between his various functions. The physical functions may control feeling, thought, and consciousness. Feeling may control the physical functions. Thought may control the physical functions and feeling. And *consciousness* may control the physical functions, feeling, and thought.

"In man of two, three, and four bodies, the most active body also lives the longest, that is, it is 'immortal' in relation to a lower body."

He again drew the diagram of the ray of creation and by the side of earth he placed the physical body of man.

"This is ordinary man," he said, "man number one, two, three, and four. He has only the physical body. The physical body dies and nothing is left of it. The physical body is composed of earthly material and at

death it returns to earth. *It is dust and to dust it returns.* It is impossible to talk of any kind of 'immortality' for a man of this sort. But if a man has the second body" (he placed the second body on the diagram parallel to the planets), "this second body is composed of material of the planetary world and it can survive the death of the physical body. It is not immortal in the full sense of the word, because after a certain period of time it also dies. But at any rate it does not die with the physical body.

"If a man has the third body" (he placed the third body on the diagram parallel to the sun), "it is composed of material of the sun and it can exist after the death of the 'astral' body.

"The fourth body is composed of material of the *starry world*, that is, of material that does not belong to the solar system, and therefore, if it has crystallized within the limits of the solar system there is nothing within this system that could destroy it. *This means that a man possessing the fourth body is immortal within the limits of the solar system.* [Fig. 6.]

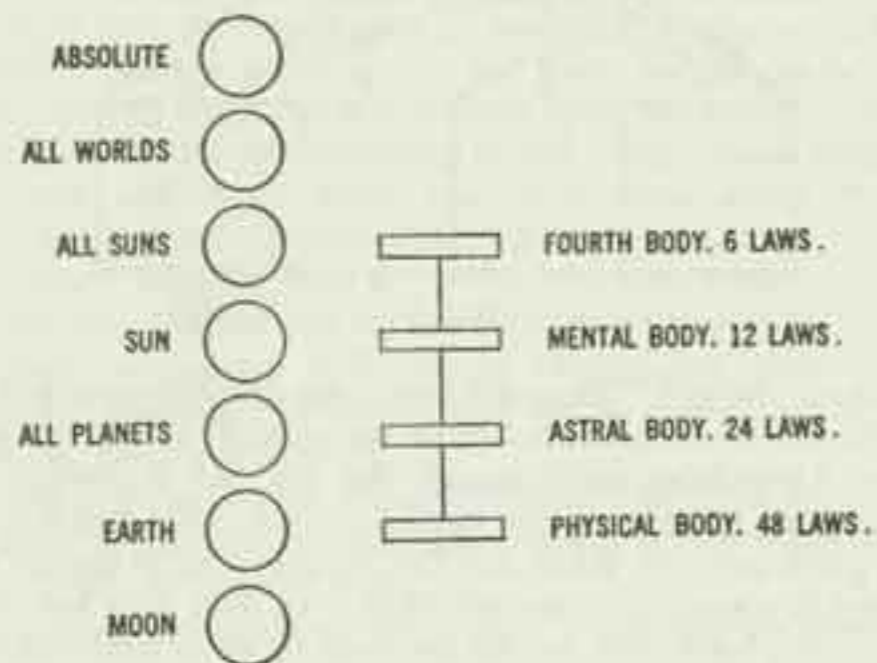


FIG. 6

"You see, therefore, why it is impossible to answer at once the question: Is man immortal or not? One man is immortal, another is not, a third tries to become immortal, a fourth considers himself immortal and is, therefore, simply a lump of flesh."

When G. went to Moscow our permanent group met without him.

There remain in my memory several talks in our group which were connected with what we had recently heard from G.

We had many talks about the idea of miracles, and about the fact that the Absolute cannot manifest its will in our world and that this will manifests itself only in the form of mechanical laws and cannot manifest itself by violating these laws.

I do not remember which of us was first to remember a well-known, though not very respectful school story, in which we at once saw an illustration of this law.

The story is about an over-aged student of a seminary who, at a final examination, does not understand the idea of God's omnipotence.

"Well, give me an example of something that the Lord cannot do," said the examining bishop.

"It won't take long to do that, your Eminence," answered the seminarist. "Everyone knows that even the Lord himself cannot beat the ace of trumps with the ordinary deuce."

Nothing could be more clear.

There was more sense in this silly story than in a thousand theological treatises. The laws of a game make the essence of the game. A violation of these laws would destroy the entire game. The Absolute can as little interfere in our life and substitute other results in the place of the natural results of causes created by us, or created accidentally, as he can beat the ace of trumps with the deuce. Turgenev wrote somewhere that all ordinary prayers can be reduced to one: "Lord, make it so that twice two be not four." This is the same thing as the ace of trumps of the seminarist.

Another talk was about the moon and its relation to organic life on earth. And again one of our group found a very good example showing the relation of the moon to organic life.

The moon is the weight on a clock. Organic life is the mechanism of the clock brought into motion by the weight. The gravity of the weight, the pull of the chain on the cogwheel, set in motion the wheels and the hands of the clock. If the weight is removed all movements in the mechanism of the clock will at once stop. The moon is a colossal weight hanging on to organic life and thus setting it in motion. Whatever we may be doing, whether it is good or bad, clever or stupid, all the movements of the wheels and the hands of our organism depend upon this weight, which is continually exerting its pressure upon us.

Personally I was very interested in the question of relativity in connection with *place*, that is, with place in the world. I had long since come to the idea of a relativity dependent upon the interrelation of sizes and velocities. But the idea of *place*, in the cosmic order, was entirely new both to me and to all the others. How strange it was for me when, some time later, I became convinced that it was the same thing, in other words, that size and velocity determined the *place* and the *place* determined size and velocity.

I remember yet another talk that took place during the same period. Someone asked him about the possibility of a *universal language*—in what connection I do not remember.

"A universal language is possible," said G., "only people will never invent it."

"Why not?" asked one of us.

"First because it was invented a long time ago," answered G., "and second because to understand this language and to express ideas in it depends not only upon the knowledge of this language, but also on *being*. I will say even more. There exists not one, but three universal languages. The first of them can be spoken and written while remaining within the limits of one's own language. The only difference is that when people speak in their ordinary language they do not understand one another, but in this other language they do understand. In the second language, written language is the same for all peoples, like, say, figures or mathematical formulae; but people still speak their own language, yet each of them understands the other even though the other speaks in an unknown language. The third language is the same for all, both the written and the spoken. The difference of language disappears altogether on this level."

"Is not this the same thing which is described in the Acts as the descent of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles, when they began to understand divers languages?" asked someone.

I noticed that such questions always irritated G.

"I don't know, I wasn't there," he said.

But on other occasions some opportune question led to new and unexpected explanations.

Someone asked him on one occasion during a talk whether there was anything real and leading to some end in the teachings and rites of existing religions.

"Yes and no," said G. "Imagine that we are sitting here talking of religions and that the maid Masha hears our conversation. She, of course, understands it in her own way and she repeats what she has understood to the porter Ivan. The porter Ivan again understands it in his own way and he repeats what he has understood to the coachman Peter next door. The coachman Peter goes to the country and recounts in the village what the gentry talk about in town. Do you think that what he recounts will at all resemble what we said? This is precisely the relation between existing religions and that which was their basis. You get teachings, traditions, prayers, rites, not at fifth but at twenty-fifth hand, and, of course, almost everything has been distorted beyond recognition and everything essential forgotten long ago.

"For instance, in all the denominations of Christianity a great part is played by the tradition of the Last Supper of Christ and his disciples. Liturgies and a whole series of dogmas, rites, and sacraments are based upon it. This has been a ground for schism, for the separation of churches, for the formation of sects; how many people have perished because they

would not accept this or that interpretation of it. But, as a matter of fact, nobody understands what this was precisely, or what was done by Christ and his disciples that evening. There exists no explanation that even approximately resembles the truth, because what is written in the Gospels has been, in the first place, much distorted in being copied and translated; and secondly, it was written *for those who know*. To those who do not know it can explain nothing, but the more they try to understand it, the deeper they are led into error.

"To understand what took place at the Last Supper it is first of all necessary to know certain laws.

"You remember what I said about the 'astral body'? Let us go over it briefly. People who have an 'astral body' can communicate with one another at a distance without having recourse to ordinary physical means. But for such communication to be possible they must establish some 'connection' between them. For this purpose when going to different places or different countries people sometimes take with them something belonging to another, especially things that have been in contact with his body and are permeated with his emanations, and so on. In the same way, in order to maintain a connection with a dead person, his friends used to keep objects which had belonged to him. These things leave, as it were, a *trace* behind them, something like invisible wires or threads which remain stretched out through space. These threads connect a given object with the person, living or in certain cases dead, to whom the object belonged. Men have known this from the remotest antiquity and have made various uses of this knowledge.

"Traces of it may be found among the customs of many peoples. You know, for instance, that several nations have the custom of *blood-brotherhood*. Two men, or several men, mix their blood together in the same cup and then drink from this cup. After that they are regarded as *brothers by blood*. But the origin of this custom lies deeper. In its origin it was a magical ceremony for establishing a connection between 'astral bodies.' Blood has special qualities. And certain peoples, for instance the Jews, ascribed a special significance of magical properties to blood. Now, you see, if a connection between 'astral bodies' had been established, then again according to the beliefs of certain nations it is not broken by death.

"Christ knew that he must die. It had been decided thus beforehand. He knew it and his disciples knew it. And each one knew what part he had to play. But at the same time they wanted to establish a permanent link with Christ. And for this purpose he gave them his blood to drink and his flesh to eat. It was not bread and wine at all, but real flesh and real blood.

"The Last Supper was a *magical ceremony* similar to 'blood-brotherhood' for establishing a connection between 'astral bodies.' But who is there who knows about this in existing religions and who understands

what it means? All this has been long forgotten and everything has been given quite a different meaning. The words have remained but their meaning has long been lost."

This lecture and particularly its ending provoked a great deal of talk in our groups. Many were repelled by what G. said about Christ and the Last Supper; others, on the contrary, felt in this a *truth* which they never could have reached by themselves.

Chapter Six

ONE of the next lectures began with a question asked by one of those present: *What was the aim of his teaching?*

"I certainly have an aim of my own," said G. "But you must permit me to keep silent about it. At the present moment my aim cannot have any meaning for you, because it is important that you should define your own aim. *The teaching by itself cannot pursue any definite aim.* It can only show the best way for men to attain whatever aims they may have. The question of aim is a very important question. Until a man has defined his own aim for himself he will not be able even to begin 'to do' anything. How is it possible 'to do' anything without having an aim? Before anything else 'doing' presupposes an aim."

"But the question of the aim of existence is one of the most difficult of philosophical questions," said one of those present. "You want us to begin by solving this question. But perhaps we have come here because we are seeking an answer to this question. You expect us to have known it beforehand. If a man knows this, he really knows everything."

"You misunderstood me," said G. "I was not speaking of the philosophical significance of the aim of existence. Man does not know it and he cannot know it so long as he remains what he is, first of all, because there is not one but many aims of existence. On the contrary, attempts to answer this question using ordinary methods are utterly hopeless and useless. I was asking about an entirely different thing. I was asking about your *personal* aim, about what you want to attain, and not about the reason for your existence. Everyone must have his own aim: one man wants riches, another health, a third wants the kingdom of heaven, the fourth wants to be a general, and so on. It is about aims of this sort that I am asking. If you tell me what your aim is, I shall be able to tell you whether we are going along the same road or not.

"Think of how you formulated your own aim to yourselves before you came here."

"I formulated my own aim quite clearly several years ago," I said. "I said to myself then that I want *to know the future*. Through a theoretical study of the question I came to the conclusion that the future *can* be known, and several times I was even successful in experiments in knowing

the exact future. I concluded from this that we ought, and that we have a right, to know the future, and that until we do know it we shall not be able to organize our lives. A great deal was connected for me with this question. I considered, for instance, that a man can know, and has a right to know, exactly how much time is left to him, how much time he has at his disposal, or, in other words, he can and has a right to know the day and hour of his death. I always thought it humiliating for a man to live without knowing this and I decided at one time not to begin doing anything in any sense whatever until I did know it. For what is the good of beginning any kind of work when one doesn't know whether one will have time to finish it or not?"

"Very well," said G., "to know the future is the first aim. Who else can formulate his aim?"

"I should like to be convinced that I shall go on existing after the death of the physical body, or, if this depends upon me, I should like to work in order to exist after death," said one of the company.

"I don't care whether I know the future or not, or whether I am certain or not certain of life after death," said another, "if I remain what I am now. What I feel most strongly is that I am not master of myself, and if I were to formulate my aim, I should say that I want to be *master of myself*."

"I should like to understand the teaching of Christ, and to be a Christian in the true sense of the term," said the next.

"I should like to be able to *help people*," said another.

"I should like to know how to stop wars," said another.

"Well, that's enough," said G., "we have now sufficient material to go on with. The best formulation of those that have been put forward is the wish to be one's own master. Without this nothing else is possible and without this nothing else will have any value. But let us begin with the first question, or the first aim.

"In order to know the future it is necessary first to know the present in all its details, as well as to know the past. Today is what it is because yesterday was what it was. And if today is like yesterday, tomorrow will be like today. If you want tomorrow to be different, you must make today different. If today is simply a consequence of yesterday, tomorrow will be a consequence of today in exactly the same way. And if one has studied thoroughly what happened yesterday, the day before yesterday, a week ago, a year, ten years ago, one can say unmistakably what will and what will not happen tomorrow. But at present we have not sufficient material at our disposal to discuss this question seriously. What happens or may happen to us may depend upon three causes: upon accident, upon fate, or upon our own will. Such as we are, we are almost wholly dependent upon accident. We can have no fate in the real sense of the word any more than we can have will. If we had will, then through this alone we

should know the future, because we should then make our future, and make it such as we want it to be. If we had fate, we could also know the future, because fate corresponds to type. If the type is known, then its fate can be known, that is, both the past and the future. But accidents cannot be foreseen. Today a man is one, tomorrow he is different: today one thing happens to him, tomorrow another."

"But are you not able to foresee what is going to happen to each of us," somebody asked, "that is to say, foretell what result each of us will reach in work on himself and whether it is worth his while to begin work?"

"It is impossible to say," said G. "One can only foretell the future for *men*. It is impossible to foretell the future for *mad machines*. Their direction changes every moment. At one moment a machine of this kind is going in one direction and you can calculate where it can get to, but five minutes later it is already going in quite a different direction and all your calculations prove to be wrong. Therefore, before talking about knowing the future, one must know whose future is meant. If a man wants to know his own future he must first of all know himself. Then he will see whether it is worth his while to know the future. Sometimes, maybe, it is better not to know it.

"It sounds paradoxical but we have every right to say that we know our future. It will be exactly the same as our past has been. Nothing can change of itself.

"And in practice, in order to study the future one must learn to notice and to remember the moments when we really know the future and when we act in accordance with this knowledge. Then judging by results, it will be possible to demonstrate that we really do know the future. This happens in a simple way in business, for instance. Every good commercial businessman knows the future. If he does not know the future his business goes smash. In work on oneself one must be a good businessman, a good merchant. And knowing the future is worth while only when a man can be his own master.

"There was a question here about the future life, about how to create it, how to avoid final death, how not to die.

"For this it is necessary 'to be.' If a man is changing every minute, if there is nothing in him that can withstand external influences, it means that there is nothing in him that can withstand death. But if he becomes independent of external influences, if there appears in him something that can live *by itself*, this something may not die. In ordinary circumstances we die every moment. External influences change and we change with them, that is, many of our I's die. If a man develops in himself a permanent I that can survive a change in external conditions, it can survive the death of the physical body. The whole secret is that one cannot work for a future life without working for this one. In working for life a man works for death, or rather, for immortality. Therefore work for immor-

tality, if one may so call it, cannot be separated from general work. In attaining the one, a man attains the other. A man may strive to be simply for the sake of his own life's interests. Through this alone he may become immortal. We do not speak specially of a future life and we do not study whether it exists or not, because the laws are everywhere the same. In studying his own life as he knows it, and the lives of other men, from birth to death, a man is studying all the laws which govern life and death and immortality. If he becomes the master of his life, he may become the master of his death.

"Another question was *how to become a Christian*.

"First of all it is necessary to understand that a Christian is not a man who calls himself a Christian or whom others call a Christian. A Christian is one who lives in accordance with Christ's precepts. Such as we are we cannot be Christians. In order to be Christians we must be able 'to do.' We cannot do; with us everything 'happens.' Christ says: 'Love your enemies,' but how can we love our enemies when we cannot even love our friends? Sometimes 'it loves' and sometimes 'it does not love.' Such as we are we cannot even really desire to be Christians because, again, sometimes 'it desires' and sometimes 'it does not desire.' And one and the same thing cannot be desired for long, because suddenly, instead of desiring to be a Christian, a man remembers a very good but very expensive carpet that he has seen in a shop. And instead of wishing to be a Christian he begins to think how he can manage to buy this carpet, forgetting all about Christianity. Or if somebody else does not believe what a wonderful Christian he is, he will be ready to eat him alive or to roast him on hot coals. In order to be a good Christian one must *be*. To be means to be master of oneself. If a man is not his own master he has nothing and can have nothing. And he cannot be a Christian. He is simply a machine, an automaton. A machine cannot be a Christian. Think for yourselves, is it possible for a motorcar or a typewriter or a gramophone to be Christian? They are simply things which are controlled by chance. They are not responsible. They are machines. To be a Christian means to be responsible. Responsibility comes later when a man even partially ceases to be a machine, and begins in fact, and not only in words, to desire to be a Christian."

"What is the relation of the teaching you are expounding to Christianity as we know it?" asked somebody present.

"I do not know what you know about *Christianity*," answered G., emphasizing this word. "It would be necessary to talk a great deal and to talk for a long time in order to make clear what you understand by this term. But for the benefit of those who know already, I will say that, if you like, *this is esoteric Christianity*. We will talk in due course about the meaning of these words. At present we will continue to discuss our questions.

"Of the desires expressed the one which is most right is the desire to be *master of oneself*, because without this nothing else is possible. And in comparison with this desire all other desires are simply childish dreams, desires of which a man could make no use even if they were granted to him.

"It was said, for instance, that somebody wanted to help people. In order to be able to *help people* one must first learn to help oneself. A great number of people become absorbed in thoughts and feelings about helping others simply out of laziness. They are too lazy to work on themselves; and at the same time it is very pleasant for them to think that they are able to help others. This is being false and insincere with oneself. If a man looks at himself as he really is, he will not begin to think of helping other people; he will be ashamed to think about it. Love of mankind, altruism, are all very fine words, but they only have meaning when a man is able, of his own choice and of his own decision, to love or not to love, to be an altruist or an egoist. Then his choice has a value. But if there is no choice at all, if he cannot be different, if he is only such as chance has made or is making him, an altruist today, an egoist tomorrow, again an altruist the day after tomorrow, then there is no value in it whatever. In order to help others one must first learn to be an egoist, a conscious egoist. Only a conscious egoist can help people. Such as we are we can do nothing. A man decides to be an egoist but gives away his last shirt instead. He decides to give away his last shirt, but instead, he strips of his last shirt the man to whom he meant to give his own. Or he decides to give away his own shirt but gives away somebody else's and is offended if somebody refuses to give him his shirt so that he may give it to another. This is what happens most often. And so it goes on.

"And above all, in order to do what is difficult, one must first learn to do what is easy. One cannot begin with the most difficult.

"There was a question about *war*. *How to stop wars?* Wars cannot be stopped. War is the result of the slavery in which men live. Strictly speaking men are not to blame for war. War is due to cosmic forces, to planetary influences. But in men there is no resistance whatever against these influences, and there cannot be any, because men are slaves. If they were *men* and were capable of 'doing,' they would be able to resist these influences and refrain from killing one another."

"But surely those who realize this can do something?" said the man who had asked the question about war. "If a sufficient number of men came to a definite conclusion that there should be no war, could they not influence others?"

"Those who dislike war have been trying to do so almost since the creation of the world," said G. "And yet there has never been such a war as the present. Wars are not decreasing, they are increasing and war cannot be stopped by ordinary means. All these theories about universal peace,

about peace conferences, and so on, are again simply laziness and hypocrisy. Men do not want to think about themselves, do not want to work on themselves, but think of how to make other people do what they want. If a sufficient number of people who wanted to stop war really did gather together they would first of all begin by making war upon those who disagreed with them. And it is still more certain that they would make war on people who also want to stop wars but in another way. And so they would fight. Men are what they are and they cannot be different. War has many causes that are unknown to us. Some causes are in men themselves, others are outside them. One must begin with the causes that are in man himself. How can he be independent of the external influences of great cosmic forces when he is the slave of everything that surrounds him? He is controlled by everything around him. If he becomes free from things, he may then become free from planetary influences.

"Freedom, liberation, this must be the aim of man. To become free, to be liberated from slavery: this is what a man ought to strive for when he becomes even a little conscious of his position. There is nothing else for him, and nothing else is possible so long as he remains a slave both inwardly and outwardly. But he cannot cease to be a slave outwardly while he remains a slave inwardly. Therefore in order to become free, man must gain inner freedom.

"The first reason for man's inner slavery is his ignorance, and above all, his ignorance of himself. Without self-knowledge, without understanding the working and functions of his machine, man cannot be free, he cannot govern himself and he will always remain a slave, and the plaything of the forces acting upon him.

"This is why in all ancient teachings the first demand at the beginning of the way to liberation was: '*Know thyself.*'

"We shall speak of these words now."

The next lecture began precisely with the words: "*Know thyself.*"

"These words," said G., "which are generally ascribed to Socrates, actually lie at the basis of many systems and schools far more ancient than the Socratic. But although modern thought is aware of the existence of this principle it has only a very vague idea of its meaning and significance. The ordinary man of our times, even a man with philosophic or scientific interests, does not realize that the principle '*know thyself*' speaks of the necessity of knowing one's machine, the '*human machine.*' Machines are made more or less the same way in all men; therefore, before anything else man must study the structure, the functions, and the laws of his organism. In the human machine everything is so interconnected, one thing is so dependent upon another, that it is quite impossible to study any one function without studying all the others. In order to know one thing, one must know everything. To know *everything* in man is possible,

but it requires much time and labor, and above all, the application of the right method and, what is equally necessary, right guidance.

"The principle '*know thyself*' embraces a very rich content. It demands, in the first place, that a man who wants to know himself should understand what this means, with what it is connected, what it necessarily depends upon.

"Knowledge of oneself is a very big, but a very vague and distant, aim. Man in his present state is very far from self-knowledge. Therefore, strictly speaking, his aim cannot even be defined as self-knowledge. Self-study must be his big aim. It is quite enough if a man understands that he must study himself. It must be man's aim to begin to study himself, to *know himself*, in the right way.

"Self-study is the work or the way which leads to self-knowledge.

"But in order to study oneself one must first learn *how to study*, where to begin, what methods to use. A man must learn how to study himself, and he must study the methods of self-study.

"The chief method of self-study is self-observation. Without properly applied self-observation a man will never understand the connection and the correlation between the various functions of his machine, will never understand how and why on each separate occasion everything in him '*happens.*'

"But to learn the methods of self-observation and of right self-study requires a certain understanding of the functions and the characteristics of the human machine. Thus in observing the functions of the human machine it is necessary to understand the correct divisions of the functions observed and to be able to define them exactly and at once; and the definition must not be a verbal but an inner definition; by taste, by sensation, in the same way as we define all inner experiences.

"There are two methods of self-observation: *analysis*, or attempts at analysis, that is, attempts to find the answers to the questions: upon what does a certain thing depend, and why does it happen; and the second method is registering, simply '*recording*' in one's mind what is observed at the moment.

"Self-observation, especially in the beginning, must on no account become analysis or attempts at analysis. Analysis will only become possible much later when a man knows all the functions of his machine and all the laws which govern it.

"In trying to analyze some phenomenon that he comes across within him, a man generally asks: '*What is this? Why does it happen in this way and not in some other way?*' And he begins to seek an answer to these questions, forgetting all about further observations. Becoming more and more engrossed in these questions he completely loses the thread of self-observation and even forgets about it. Observation stops. It is clear from

this that only one thing can go on: either observation or attempts at analysis.

"But even apart from this, attempts to analyze separate phenomena without a knowledge of general laws are a completely useless waste of time. Before it is possible to analyze even the most elementary phenomena, a man must accumulate a sufficient quantity of material by means of 'recording.' 'Recording,' that is, the result of a direct observation of what is taking place at a given moment, is the most important material in the work of self-study. When a certain number of 'records' have been accumulated and when, at the same time, laws to a certain extent have been studied and understood, analysis becomes possible.

"From the very beginning, observation, or 'recording,' must be based upon the understanding of the fundamental principles of the activity of the human machine. Self-observation cannot be properly applied without knowing these principles, without constantly bearing them in mind. Therefore ordinary self-observation, in which all people are engaged all their lives, is entirely useless and leads nowhere.

"Observation must begin with the division of functions. All the activity of the human machine is divided into four sharply defined groups, each of which is controlled by its own special mind or 'center.' In observing himself a man must differentiate between the four basic functions of his machine: the thinking, the emotional, the moving, and the instinctive. Every phenomenon that a man observes in himself is related to one or the other of these functions. Therefore, before beginning to observe, a man must understand how the functions differ; what intellectual activity means, what emotional activity means, what moving activity means, and what instinctive activity means.

"Observation must begin from the beginning. All previous experience, the results of all previous self-observation, must be laid aside. They may contain much valuable material. But all this material is based upon wrong divisions of the functions observed and is itself wrongly divided. It cannot therefore be utilized, at any rate it cannot be utilized at the beginning of the work of self-study. What is of value in it will, at the proper time, be taken up and made use of. But it is necessary to begin from the beginning. A man must begin observing himself as though he did not know himself at all, as though he had never observed himself.

"When he begins to observe himself, he must try to determine at once to what group, to which center, belong the phenomena he is observing at the moment.

"Some people find it difficult to understand the difference between thought and feeling, others have difficulty in understanding the difference between feeling and sensation, between a thought and a moving impulse.

"Speaking on very broad lines, one may say that the thinking function

always works by means of comparison. Intellectual conclusions are always the result of the comparison of two or more impressions.

"Sensation and emotion do not reason, do not compare, they simply define a given impression by its aspect, by its being pleasant or unpleasant in one sense or another, by its color, taste, or smell. Moreover, *sensations* can be indifferent—neither warm nor cold, neither pleasant nor unpleasant: 'white paper,' 'red pencil.' In the sensation of white or red there is nothing either pleasant or unpleasant. At any rate there need not necessarily be anything pleasant or unpleasant connected with this or that color. These sensations, the so-called 'five senses,' and others, like the feeling of warmth, cold, and so on, are instinctive. Feeling functions or emotions are always pleasant or unpleasant; indifferent emotions do not exist.

"The difficulty of distinguishing between the functions is increased by the fact that people differ very much in the way they feel their functions. This is what we do not generally understand. We take people to be much more alike than they really are. In reality, however, there exist between them great differences in the forms and methods of their perception. Some perceive chiefly through their mind, others through their feeling, and others through sensation. It is very difficult, almost impossible for men of different categories and of different modes of perception to understand one another, because they call one and the same thing by different names, and they call different things by the same name. Besides this, various other combinations are possible. One man perceives by thoughts and sensations, another by thoughts and feelings, and so on. One or another mode of perception is immediately connected with one or another kind of reaction to external events. The result of this difference in perception and reaction to external events is expressed in the first place by the fact that people do not understand one another and in the second by the fact that they do not understand themselves. Very often a man calls his thoughts or his intellectual perceptions his feelings, calls his feelings his thoughts, and his sensations his feelings. This last is the most common. If two people perceive the same thing differently, let us say that one perceives it through feeling and another through sensation—they may argue all their lives and never understand in what consists the difference of their attitude to a given object. Actually, one sees one aspect of it, and the other a different aspect.

"In order to find a way of discriminating we must understand that every normal psychic function is a means or an instrument of knowledge. With the help of the mind we see one aspect of things and events, with the help of emotions another aspect, with the help of sensations a third aspect. The most complete knowledge of a given subject possible for us can only be obtained if we examine it simultaneously with our mind, feelings, and sensations. Every man who is striving after right knowledge must aim at

the possibility of attaining such perception. In ordinary conditions man sees the world through a crooked, uneven window. And even if he realizes this, he cannot alter anything. This or that mode of perception depends upon the work of his organism as a whole. All functions are interconnected and counterbalance one another, all functions strive to keep one another in the state in which they are. Therefore when a man begins to study himself he must understand that if he discovers in himself something that he dislikes he will not be able to change it. To study is one thing, and to change is another. But study is the first step towards the possibility of change in the future. And in the beginning, to study himself he must understand that for a long time all his work will consist in study only.

"Change under ordinary conditions is impossible, because, in wanting to change something a man wants to change this one thing only. But everything in the machine is interconnected and every function is inevitably counterbalanced by some other function or by a whole series of other functions, although we are not aware of this interconnection of the various functions within ourselves. The machine is balanced in all its details at every moment of its activity. If a man observes in himself something that he dislikes and begins making efforts to alter it, he may succeed in obtaining a certain result. But together with this result he will inevitably obtain another result, which he did not in the least expect or desire and which he could not have suspected. By striving to destroy and annihilate everything that he dislikes, by making efforts to this end, he upsets the balance of the machine. The machine strives to re-establish the balance and re-establishes it by creating a new function which the man could not have foreseen. For instance, a man may observe that he is very absent-minded, that he forgets everything, loses everything, and so on. He begins to struggle with this habit and, if he is sufficiently methodical and determined, he succeeds, after a time, in attaining the desired result: he ceases to forget and to lose things. This he notices, but there is something else he does not notice, which other people notice, namely, that he has grown irritable, pedantic, fault-finding, disagreeable. Irritability has appeared as the result of his having lost his absent-mindedness. Why? It is impossible to say. Only detailed analysis of a particular man's mental qualities can show why the loss of one quality has caused the appearance of another. This does not mean that loss of absent-mindedness must necessarily give rise to irritability. It is just as easy for some other characteristic to appear that has no relation to absent-mindedness at all, for instance stinginess or envy or something else.

"So that if one is working on oneself properly, one must consider the possible supplementary changes, and take them into account beforehand. Only in this way is it possible to avoid undesirable changes, or the appearance of qualities which are utterly opposed to the aim and the direction of the work.

"But in the general plan of the work and functions of the human machine there are certain points in which a change may be brought about without giving rise to any supplementary results.

"It is necessary to know what these points are and it is necessary to know how to approach them, for if one does not begin *with them* one will either get no result at all or wrong and undesirable results.

"Having fixed in his own mind the difference between the intellectual, the emotional, and the moving functions, a man must, as he observes himself, immediately refer his impressions to this or that category. And at first he must take mental note of only such observations as regards which he has no doubt whatever, that is, those where he sees at once to what category they belong. He must reject all vague or doubtful cases and remember only those which are unquestionable. If the work is carried on properly, the number of unquestionable observations will rapidly increase. And that which seemed doubtful before will be clearly seen to belong to the first, the second, the third center. Each center has its own memory, its own associations, its own thinking. As a matter of fact each center consists of three parts: the thinking, the emotional, and the moving. But we know very little about this side of our nature. In each center we know only one part. Self-observation, however, will very quickly show us that our mental life is much richer than we think, or in any case that it contains more possibilities than we think.

"At the same time as we watch the work of the centers we shall observe, side by side with their right working, their wrong working, that is, the working of one center for another: the attempts of the thinking center to feel or to pretend that it feels, the attempts of the emotional center to think, the attempts of the moving center to think and feel. As has been said already, one center working for another is useful in certain cases, for it preserves the continuity of mental activity. But in becoming habitual it becomes at the same time harmful, since it begins to interfere with right working by enabling each center to shirk its own direct duties and to do, not what it ought to be doing, but what it likes best at the moment. In a normal healthy man each center does its own work, that is, the work for which it was specially destined and which it can best perform. There are situations in life which the thinking center alone can deal with and can find a way out of. If at this moment the emotional center begins to work instead, it will make a muddle of everything and the result of its interference will be most unsatisfactory. In an unbalanced kind of man the substitution of one center for another goes on almost continually and this is precisely what 'being unbalanced' or 'neurotic' means. Each center strives, as it were, to pass its work on to another and, at the same time, it strives to do the work of another center for which it is not fitted. The emotional center working for the thinking center brings unnecessary nervousness, feverishness, and hurry into situations where, on the con-

trary, calm judgment and deliberation are essential. The thinking center working for the emotional center brings deliberation into situations which require quick decisions and makes a man incapable of distinguishing the peculiarities and the fine points of the position. Thought is too slow. It works out a certain plan of action and continues to follow it even though the circumstances have changed and quite a different course of action is necessary. Besides, in some cases the interference of the thinking center gives rise to entirely wrong reactions, because the thinking center is simply incapable of understanding the shades and distinctions of many events. Events that are quite different for the moving center and for the emotional center appear to be alike to it. Its decisions are much too general and do not correspond to the decisions which the emotional center would have made. This becomes perfectly clear if we imagine the interference of thought, that is, of the theoretical mind, in the domain of feeling, or of sensation, or of movement; in all three cases the interference of the mind leads to wholly undesirable results. The mind cannot understand shades of feeling. We shall see this clearly if we imagine one man reasoning about the emotions of another. He is not feeling anything himself so the feelings of another do not exist for him. *A full man does not understand a hungry one.* But for the other *they have a very definite existence.* And the decisions of the first, that is of the mind, can never satisfy him. In exactly the same way the mind cannot appreciate sensations. For it they are dead. Nor is it capable of controlling movement. Instances of this kind are the easiest to find. Whatever work a man may be doing, it is enough for him to try to do each action deliberately, with his mind, following every movement, and he will see that the quality of his work will change immediately. If he is typing, his fingers, controlled by his moving center, find the necessary letters themselves, but if he tries to ask himself before every letter: 'Where is "k"?' 'Where is the comma?' 'How is this word spelled?' he at once begins to make mistakes or to write very slowly. If one drives a car with the help of one's mind, one can go only in the lowest gear. The mind cannot keep pace with all the movements necessary for developing a greater speed. To drive at full speed, especially in the streets of a large town, while steering with the help of one's mind is absolutely impossible for an ordinary man.

"Moving center working for thinking center produces, for example, mechanical reading or mechanical listening, as when a man reads or listens to nothing but words and is utterly unconscious of what he is reading or hearing. This generally happens when attention, that is, the direction of the thinking center's activity, is occupied with something else and when the moving center is trying to replace the absent thinking center; but this very easily becomes a habit, because the thinking center is generally distracted not by useful work, by thought, or by contemplation, but simply by daydreaming or by imagination.

"'Imagination' is one of the principal sources of the wrong work of centers. Each center has its own form of imagination and daydreaming, but as a rule both the moving and the emotional centers make use of the thinking center which very readily places itself at their disposal for this purpose, because daydreaming corresponds to its own inclinations. Daydreaming is absolutely the opposite of 'useful' mental activity. 'Useful' in this case means activity directed towards a definite aim and undertaken for the sake of obtaining a definite result. Daydreaming does not pursue any aim, does not strive after any result. The motive for daydreaming always lies in the emotional or in the moving center. The actual process is carried on by the thinking center. The inclination to daydream is due partly to the laziness of the thinking center, that is, its attempts to avoid the efforts connected with work directed towards a definite aim and going in a definite direction, and partly to the tendency of the emotional and the moving centers to repeat to themselves, to keep alive or to recreate experiences, both pleasant and unpleasant, that have been previously lived through or 'imagined.' Daydreaming of disagreeable, morbid things is very characteristic of the unbalanced state of the human machine. After all, one can understand daydreaming of a pleasant kind and find logical justification for it. Daydreaming of an unpleasant character is an utter absurdity. And yet many people spend nine tenths of their lives in just such painful daydreams about misfortunes which may overtake them or their family, about illnesses they may contract or sufferings they will have to endure. Imagination and daydreaming are instances of the wrong work of the thinking center.

"Observation of the activity of imagination and daydreaming forms a very important part of self-study.

"The next object of self-observation must be habits in general. Every grown-up man consists wholly of habits, although he is often unaware of it and even denies having any habits at all. This can never be the case. All three centers are filled with habits and a man can never know himself until he has studied all his habits. The observation and the study of habits is particularly difficult because, in order to see and 'record' them, one must escape from them, free oneself from them, if only for a moment. So long as a man is governed by a particular habit, he does not observe it, but at the very first attempt, however feeble, to struggle against it, he feels it and notices it. Therefore in order to observe and study habits one must try to struggle against them. This opens up a practical method of self-observation. It has been said before that a man cannot change anything in himself, that he can only observe and 'record.' This is true. But it is also true that a man cannot observe and 'record' anything if he does not try to struggle with himself, that is, with his habits. This struggle cannot yield direct results, that is to say, it cannot lead to any change, especially to any permanent and lasting change. But it shows what is

there. Without a struggle a man cannot see what he consists of. The struggle with small habits is very difficult and boring, but without it self-observation is impossible.

"Even at the first attempt to study the elementary activity of the moving center a man comes up against habits. For instance, a man may want to study his movements, may want to observe how he walks. But he will never succeed in doing so for more than a moment if he continues to walk in the usual way. But if he understands that his usual way of walking consists of a number of habits, for instance, of taking steps of a certain length, walking at a certain speed, and so on, and he tries to alter them, that is, to walk faster or slower, to take bigger or smaller steps, he will be able to observe himself and to study his movements as he walks. If a man wants to observe himself when he is writing, he must take note of how he holds his pen and try to hold it in a different way from usual; observation will then become possible. In order to observe himself a man must try to walk not in his habitual way, he must sit in unaccustomed attitudes, he must stand when he is accustomed to sit, he must sit when he is accustomed to stand, and he must make with his left hand the movements he is accustomed to make with his right hand and vice versa. All this will enable him to observe himself and study the habits and associations of the moving center.

"In the sphere of the emotions it is very useful to try to struggle with the habit of giving immediate expression to all one's unpleasant emotions. Many people find it very difficult to refrain from expressing their feelings about bad weather. It is still more difficult for people not to express unpleasant emotions when they feel that something or someone is violating what they may conceive to be order or justice.

"Besides being a very good method for self-observation, the struggle against expressing unpleasant emotions has at the same time another significance. It is one of the few directions in which a man can change himself or his habits without creating other undesirable habits. Therefore self-observation and self-study must, from the first, be accompanied by the struggle against the *expression of unpleasant emotions*.

"If he carries out all these rules while he observes himself, a man will record a whole series of very important aspects of his being. To begin with he will record with unmistakable clearness the fact that his actions, thoughts, feelings, and words are the result of external influences and that nothing comes from himself. He will understand and see that he is in fact an automaton acting under the influences of external stimuli. He will feel his complete mechanicalness. Everything 'happens,' he cannot 'do' anything. He is a machine controlled by accidental shocks from outside. Each shock calls to the surface one of his I's. A new shock and that I disappears and a different one takes its place. Another small change in the environment and again there is a new I. A man will begin to under-

stand that he has no control of himself whatever, that he does not know what he may say or do the next moment, he will begin to understand that he cannot answer for himself even for the shortest length of time. He will understand that if he remains the same and does nothing unexpected, it is simply because no unexpected outside changes are taking place. He will understand that his actions are entirely controlled by external conditions and he will be convinced that there is nothing permanent in him from which control could come, not a single permanent function, not a single permanent state."

There were several points in G.'s psychological theories that particularly aroused my interest. The first thing was the possibility of self-change, that is, the fact that in beginning to observe himself *in the right way* a man immediately begins to change himself, and that he can never find himself to be *right*.

The second thing was the demand "not to express unpleasant emotions." I at once felt something big behind this. And the future showed that I was right, for the study of emotions and the work on emotions became the basis of the subsequent development of the whole system. But this was much later.

The third thing, which at once attracted my attention and of which I began to think the very first time I heard of it, was the idea of the *moving center*. The chief thing that interested me here was the question of the relation in which G. placed moving functions to instinctive functions. Were they the same thing or were they different? And further, in what relation did the divisions made by G. stand to the divisions customary in ordinary psychology? With certain reservations and additions I had considered it possible to accept the old divisions, that is, to divide man's actions into "conscious" actions, "automatic" actions (which must at first be conscious), "instinctive" actions (expedient, but without consciousness of purpose), and "reflexes," simple and complex, which are never conscious and which can, in certain cases, be inexpedient. In addition there were actions performed under the influence of hidden emotional dispositions or inner unknown impulses.

G. turned all this structure upside down.

First of all he completely rejected "conscious" actions because, as it appeared from what he said, there was nothing that was conscious. The term "subconscious" which plays such a big part in the theories of some authors became quite useless and even misleading, because phenomena of quite different categories were classified under the category of "subconscious."

The division of actions according to the centers controlling them did away with all uncertainty and all possible doubts as to the correctness of these divisions.

What was particularly important in G.'s system was the indication that the same actions could originate in different centers. An example is the recruit and the old soldier at rifle drill. One has to perform the drill with his thinking center, the other does it with the moving center, which does it *much better*.

But G. did not call actions governed by the moving center "automatic." He used the name "automatic" only for the actions which a man performs *imperceptibly for himself*. If the same actions are *observed* by a man, they cannot be called "automatic." He allotted a big place to automatism, but regarded the moving functions as distinct from the automatic functions, and, what is most important, he found automatic actions *in all centers*; he spoke, for instance, of "automatic thoughts" and of "automatic feelings." When I asked him about reflexes he called them "instinctive actions." And as I understood from what followed, among external movements he considered only reflexes to be *instinctive* actions.

I was very interested in the interrelation of moving and instinctive functions in his description and I often returned to this subject in my talks with him.

First of all G. drew attention to the constant misuse of the words "instinct" and "instinctive." It transpired from what he said that these words could be applied, by rights, only to the *inner* functions of the organism. The beating of the heart, breathing, the circulation of blood, digestion—these were *instinctive functions*. The only external functions that belong to this category are *reflexes*. The difference between instinctive and moving functions was as follows: the moving functions of man, as well as of animals, of a bird, of a dog, *must be learned*; but instinctive functions are *inborn*. A man has very few inborn external movements; an animal has more, though they vary, some have more, others have less; but that which is usually explained as "instinct" is very often a series of complex moving functions which young animals learn from older ones. One of the chief properties of the moving center is its ability to imitate. The moving center imitates what it sees without reasoning. This is the origin of the legends that exist about the wonderful "intelligence" of animals or the "instinct" that takes the place of intelligence and makes them perform a whole series of very complex and expedient actions.

The idea of an independent moving center, which, on the one hand, does not depend upon the mind, does not require the mind, and which is a mind in itself, and which, on the other hand, does not depend upon instinct and has first of all to learn, placed very many problems on entirely new ground. The existence of a moving center working by means of imitation explained the preservation of the "existing order" in beehives, termitaries, and ant-hills. Directed by imitation, one generation has had to shape itself absolutely upon the model of another. There could be no changes, no departure whatever from the model. But "imitation" did

not explain how such an order was arrived at in the first place. I often wanted very much to speak to G. about this as well as about many other things connected with it. But G. eluded such conversations by leading them up to man and to real problems of self-study.

Then a great deal was elucidated for me by the idea that each center was not only a motive force but also a "receiving apparatus," working as receiver for different and sometimes very distant influences. When I thought of what had been said about wars, revolutions, migrations of peoples, and so on; when I pictured how masses of humanity could move under the control of planetary influences, I began to understand our fundamental mistake in determining the actions of an individual. We regard the actions of an individual as originating in himself. We do not imagine that the "masses" may consist of automatons obeying external stimuli and may move, not under the influence of the will, consciousness, or inclination of individuals, but under the influence of external stimuli coming possibly from very far away.

"Can the instinctive and the moving functions be controlled by two distinct centers?" I asked G. once.

"They can," said G., "and to them must be added the sex center. These are the three centers of the lower story. The sex center is the neutralizing center in relation to the instinctive and the moving centers. The lower story can exist by itself, because the three centers in it are the conductors of the three forces. The thinking and the emotional centers are not indispensable for life."

"Which of them is active and which is passive in the lower story?"

"It changes," said G., "one moment the moving center is active and the instinctive is passive. Another moment the instinctive is active and the moving is passive. You must find examples of both states in yourself. But besides different states there are also different types. In some people the moving center is more active, in others the instinctive center. But for the sake of convenience in reasoning and particularly in the beginning, when it is important only to explain the principles, we take them as one center with different functions which are on the same level. If you take the thinking, the emotional, and the moving centers, then they work on different levels. The moving and the instinctive—on one level. Later on you will understand what these levels mean and upon what they depend."

Chapter Seven

ON ONE occasion while talking with G. I asked him whether he considered it possible to attain "cosmic consciousness," not for a brief moment only but for a longer period. I understood the expression "cosmic consciousness" in the sense of a higher consciousness possible for man in the sense in which I had previously written about it in my book *Tertium Organum*.

"I do not know what you call 'cosmic consciousness,'" said G., "it is a vague and indefinite term; anyone can call anything he likes by it. In most cases what is called 'cosmic consciousness' is simply fantasy, associative daydreaming connected with intensified work of the emotional center. Sometimes it comes near to ecstasy but most often it is merely a subjective emotional experience on the level of dreams. But even apart from all this before we can speak of 'cosmic consciousness' we must define in general *what consciousness is*."

"How do you define consciousness?"

"Consciousness is considered to be indefinable," I said, "and indeed, how can it be defined if it is an inner quality? With the ordinary means at our disposal it is impossible to prove the presence of consciousness in another man. We know it only in ourselves."

"All this is rubbish," said G., "the usual scientific sophistry. It is time you got rid of it. Only one thing is true in what you have said: that you *can know* consciousness only in yourself. Observe that I say you *can know*, for you can know it only when you have it. And when you have not got it, you can know that you have not got it, not at that very moment, but afterwards. I mean that when it comes again you can see that it has been absent a long time, and you can find or remember the moment when it disappeared and when it reappeared. You can also define the moments when you are nearer to consciousness and further away from consciousness. But by observing in yourself the appearance and the disappearance of consciousness you will inevitably see one fact which you neither see nor acknowledge now, and that is that moments of consciousness are very short and are separated by long intervals of completely unconscious, mechanical working of the machine. You will then see that you can think, feel, act, speak, work, *without being conscious of it*. And

if you learn to see in yourselves the moments of consciousness and the long periods of mechanicalness, you will as infallibly see in other people when they are conscious of what they are doing and when they are not.

"Your principal mistake consists in thinking that you *always have consciousness*, and in general, either that consciousness is *always present* or that it is *never present*. In reality consciousness is a property which is continually changing. Now it is present, now it is not present. And there are different degrees and different levels of consciousness. Both consciousness and the different degrees of consciousness must be understood in oneself by sensation, by taste. No definitions can help you in this case and no definitions are possible so long as you do not understand *what you have to define*. And science and philosophy cannot define consciousness because they want to define it where it does not exist. It is necessary to distinguish *consciousness* from the *possibility of consciousness*. We have only the possibility of consciousness and rare flashes of it. Therefore we cannot define what consciousness is."

I cannot say that what was said about consciousness became clear to me at once. But one of the subsequent talks explained to me the principles on which these arguments were based.

On one occasion at the beginning of a meeting G. put a question to which all those present had to answer in turn. The question was: "What is the most important thing that we notice during self-observation?"

Some of those present said that during attempts at self-observation, what they had felt particularly strongly was an incessant flow of thoughts which they had found impossible to stop. Others spoke of the difficulty of distinguishing the work of one center from the work of another. I had evidently not altogether understood the question, or I answered my own thoughts, because I said that what struck me most was the connectedness of one thing with another in the system, the wholeness of the system, as if it were an "organism," and the entirely new significance of the word to *know* which included not only the idea of knowing this thing or that, but the connection between this thing and everything else.

G. was obviously dissatisfied with our replies. I had already begun to understand him in such circumstances and I saw that he expected from us indications of something definite that we had either missed or failed to understand.

"Not one of you has noticed the most important thing that I have pointed out to you," he said. "That is to say, not one of you has noticed that you *do not remember yourselves*." (He gave particular emphasis to these words.) "You do not feel yourselves; you are not conscious of yourselves. With you, 'it observes' just as 'it speaks,' 'it thinks,' 'it laughs.' You do not feel: I observe, I notice, I see. Everything still 'is noticed,' 'is seen.' . . . In order really to observe oneself one must first of all remem-

ber oneself." (He again emphasized these words.) "Try to remember yourselves when you observe yourselves and later on tell me the results. Only those results will have any value that are accompanied by self-remembering. Otherwise you yourselves do not exist in your observations. In which case what are all your observations worth?"

These words of G.'s made me think a great deal. It seemed to me at once that they were the key to what he had said before about consciousness. But I decided to draw no conclusions whatever, but to try to remember myself while observing myself.

The very first attempts showed me how difficult it was. Attempts at self-remembering failed to give any results except to show me that in actual fact we never remember ourselves.

"What else do you want?" said G. "This is a very important realization. People who know this" (he emphasized these words) "already know a great deal. The whole trouble is that nobody knows it. If you ask a man whether he can remember himself, he will of course answer that he can. If you tell him that he cannot remember himself, he will either be angry with you, or he will think you an utter fool. The whole of life is based on this, the whole of human existence, the whole of human blindness. If a man really knows that he cannot remember himself, he is already near to the understanding of his being."

All that G. said, all that I myself thought, and especially all that my attempts at self-remembering had shown me, very soon convinced me that I was faced with an entirely new problem which science and philosophy had not, so far, come across.

But before making deductions, I will try to describe my attempts to remember myself.

The first impression was that attempts to remember myself or to be conscious of myself, to say to myself, I am walking, I am doing, and continually to feel this I, stopped thought. When I was feeling I, I could neither think nor speak; even sensations became dimmed. Also, one could only remember oneself in this way for a very short time.

I had previously made certain experiments in stopping thought which are mentioned in books on Yoga practices. For example there is such a description in Edward Carpenter's book *From Adam's Peak to Elephanta*, although it is a very general one. And my first attempts to self-remember reminded me exactly of these, my first experiments. Actually it was almost the same thing with the one difference that in stopping thoughts attention is wholly directed towards the effort of not admitting thoughts, while in self-remembering attention becomes divided, one part of it is directed towards the same effort, and the other part to the feeling of self.

This last realization enabled me to come to a certain, possibly a very incomplete, definition of "self-remembering," which nevertheless proved to be very useful in practice.

I am speaking of the division of attention which is the characteristic feature of self-remembering.

I represented it to myself in the following way:

When I observe something, my attention is directed towards what I observe—a line with one arrowhead:

I —————→ the observed phenomenon.

When at the same time, I try to remember myself, my attention is directed both towards the object observed and towards myself. A second arrowhead appears on the line:

I ←————→ the observed phenomenon.

Having defined this I saw that the problem consisted in directing attention on oneself without weakening or obliterating the attention directed on something else. Moreover this "something else" could as well be within me as outside me.

The very first attempts at such a division of attention showed me its possibility. At the same time I saw two things clearly.

In the first place I saw that self-remembering resulting from this method had nothing in common with "self-feeling," or "self-analysis." It was a new and very interesting state with a strangely familiar flavor.

And secondly I realized that moments of self-remembering do occur in life, although rarely. Only the deliberate production of these moments created the sensation of novelty. Actually I had been familiar with them from early childhood. They came either in new and unexpected surroundings, in a new place, among new people while traveling, for instance, when suddenly one looks about one and says: *How strange! I and in this place; or in very emotional moments, in moments of danger, in moments when it is necessary to keep one's head, when one hears one's own voice and sees and observes oneself from the outside.*

I saw quite clearly that my first recollections of life, in my own case very early ones, were moments of self-remembering. This last realization revealed much else to me. That is, I saw that I really only remember those moments of the past in which I remembered myself. Of the others I know only that they took place. I am not able wholly to revive them, to experience them again. But the moments when I had remembered myself were alive and were in no way different from the present. I was still afraid to come to conclusions. But I already saw that I stood upon the threshold of a very great discovery. I had always been astonished at the weakness and the insufficiency of our memory. So many things disappear. For some reason or other the chief absurdity of life for me consisted in this. Why experience so much in order to forget it afterwards? Besides there was something degrading in this. A man feels something which seems to him very big, he thinks he will never forget it; one or two years pass by—and nothing remains of it. It now became clear

to me why this was so and why it could not be otherwise. If our memory really keeps alive only moments of self-remembering, it is clear why our memory is so poor.

All these were the realizations of the first days. Later, when I began to learn to divide attention, I saw that self-remembering gave wonderful sensations which, in a natural way, that is, by themselves, come to us only very seldom and in exceptional conditions. Thus, for instance, at that time I used very much to like to wander through St. Petersburg at night and to "sense" the houses and the streets. St. Petersburg is full of these strange sensations. Houses, especially old houses, were quite alive, I all but spoke to them. There was no "imagination" in it. I did not think of anything, I simply walked along while trying to remember myself and looked about; the sensations came by themselves.

Later on I was to discover many unexpected things in the same way. But I will speak of this further on.

Sometimes self-remembering was not successful; at other times it was accompanied by curious observations.

I was once walking along the Liteiny towards the Nevsky, and in spite of all my efforts I was unable to keep my attention on self-remembering. The noise, movement, everything distracted me. Every minute I lost the thread of attention, found it again, and then lost it again. At last I felt a kind of ridiculous irritation with myself and I turned into the street on the left having firmly decided to keep my attention on the fact that I *would remember myself* at least for some time, at any rate until I reached the following street. I reached the Nadejdinskaya without losing the thread of attention except, perhaps, for short moments. Then I again turned towards the Nevsky realizing that, in quiet streets, it was easier for me not to lose the line of thought and wishing therefore to test myself in more noisy streets. I reached the Nevsky still remembering myself, and was already beginning to experience the strange emotional state of inner peace and confidence which comes after great efforts of this kind. Just round the corner on the Nevsky was a tobacconist's shop where they made my cigarettes. Still remembering myself I thought I would call there and order some cigarettes.

Two hours later I *woke up* in the Tavricheskaya, that is, far away. I was going by *izvostchik* to the printers. The sensation of awakening was extraordinarily vivid. I can almost say that I *came to*. I remembered everything at once. How I had been walking along the Nadejdinskaya, how I had been remembering myself, how I had thought about cigarettes, and how at this thought I seemed all at once to fall and disappear into a deep sleep.

At the same time, while immersed in this sleep, I had continued to perform consistent and expedient actions. I left the tobacconist, called at my flat in the Liteiny, telephoned to the printers. I wrote two letters.

Then again I went out of the house. I walked on the left side of the Nevsky up to the Gostinoy Dvor intending to go to the Offitizerskaya. Then I had changed my mind as it was getting late. I had taken an *izvostchik* and was driving to the Kavalergardskaya to my printers. And on the way while driving along the Tavricheskaya I began to feel a strange uneasiness, as though I had forgotten something.—*And suddenly I remembered that I had forgotten to remember myself.*

I spoke of my observations and deductions to the people in our group as well as to my various literary friends and others.

I told them that this was the center of gravity of the whole system and of all work on oneself; that now work on oneself was not only empty words but a real fact full of significance thanks to which psychology becomes an exact and at the same time a practical science.

I said that European and Western psychology in general had overlooked a fact of tremendous importance, namely, that *we do not remember ourselves*; that we live and act and reason in deep sleep, not metaphorically but in absolute reality. And also that, at the same time, *we can remember ourselves* if we make sufficient efforts, that *we can awaken*.

I was struck by the difference between the understanding of the people who belonged to our groups and that of people outside them. The people who belonged to our groups understood, though not all at once, that we had come into contact with a "miracle," and that it was something "new," something that had never existed anywhere before.

The other people did not understand this; they took it all too lightly and sometimes they even began to prove to me that such theories had existed before.

A. L. Volinsky, whom I had often met and with whom I had talked a great deal since 1909 and whose opinions I valued very much, did not find in the idea of "self-remembering" anything that he had not known before.

"This is an *apperception*," He said to me, "Have you read Wundt's *Logic*? You will find there his latest definition of apperception. It is exactly the same thing you speak of. 'Simple observation' is perception. 'Observation with self-remembering,' as you call it, is apperception. Of course Wundt knew of it."

I did not want to argue with Volinsky. I had read Wundt. And of course what Wundt had written was not at all what I had said to Volinsky. Wundt had come close to this idea, but others had come just as close and had afterwards gone off in a different direction. He had not seen the magnitude of the idea which was hidden behind his thoughts about different forms of *perception*. And not having seen the magnitude

of the idea he of course could not see the central position which the idea of the absence of consciousness and the idea of the possibility of the voluntary creation of this consciousness ought to occupy in our thinking. Only it seemed strange to me that Volinsky could not see this even when I pointed it out to him.

I subsequently became convinced that this idea was hidden by an impenetrable veil for many otherwise very intelligent people—and still later on I saw why this was so.

The next time G. came from Moscow he found us immersed in experiments in self-remembering and in discussions about these experiments. But at his first lecture he spoke of something else.

"In right knowledge the study of man must proceed on parallel lines with the study of the world, and the study of the world must run parallel with the study of man. Laws are everywhere the same, in the world as well as in man. Having mastered the principles of any one law we must look for its manifestation in the world and in man simultaneously. Moreover, some laws are more easily observed in the world, others are more easily observed in man. Therefore in certain cases it is better to begin with the world and then to pass on to man, and in other cases it is better to begin with man and then to pass on to the world.

"This parallel study of the world and of man shows the student the fundamental unity of everything and helps him to find analogies in phenomena of different orders.

"The number of fundamental laws which govern all processes both in the world and in man is very small. Different numerical combinations of a few elementary forces create all the seeming variety of phenomena.

"In order to understand the mechanics of the universe it is necessary to resolve complex phenomena into these elementary forces.

"The first fundamental law of the universe is the law of three forces, or three principles, or, as it is often called, *the law of three*. According to this law every action, every phenomenon in all worlds without exception, is the result of a simultaneous action of three forces—the positive, the negative, and the neutralizing. Of this we have already spoken, and in future we will return to this law with every new line of study.

"The next fundamental law of the universe is the *law of seven* or the *law of octaves*.

"In order to understand the meaning of this law it is necessary to regard the universe as consisting of vibrations. These vibrations proceed in all kinds, aspects, and densities of the matter which constitutes the universe, from the finest to the coarsest; they issue from various sources and proceed in various directions, crossing one another, colliding, strengthening, weakening, arresting one another, and so on.

"In this connection according to the usual views accepted in the West, vibrations are continuous. This means that vibrations are usually regarded as proceeding uninterruptedly, ascending or descending so long as there continues to act the force of the original impulse which caused the vibration and which overcomes the resistance of the medium in which the vibrations proceed. When the force of the impulse becomes exhausted and the resistance of the medium gains the upper hand the vibrations naturally die down and stop. But until this moment is reached, that is, until the beginning of the natural weakening, the vibrations develop uniformly and gradually, and, in the absence of resistance, can even be endless. So that one of the fundamental propositions of our physics is the *continuity of vibrations*, although this has never been precisely formulated because it has never been opposed. In certain of the newest theories this proposition is beginning to be shaken. Nevertheless physics is still very far from a correct view on the nature of vibrations, or what corresponds to our conception of vibrations, in the real world.

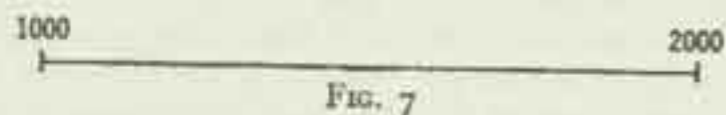
"In this instance the view of ancient knowledge is opposed to that of contemporary science because at the base of the understanding of vibrations ancient knowledge places the principle of the *discontinuity of vibrations*.

"The principle of the *discontinuity of vibration* means the definite and necessary characteristic of all vibrations in nature, whether ascending or descending, to develop *not uniformly* but with periodical accelerations and retardations. This principle can be formulated still more precisely if we say that the force of the original impulse in vibrations does not act uniformly but, as it were, becomes alternately stronger and weaker. The force of the impulse acts without changing its nature and vibrations develop in a regular way only for a certain time which is determined by the nature of the impulse, the medium, the conditions, and so forth. But at a certain moment a kind of change takes place in it and the vibrations, so to speak, cease to obey it and for a short time they slow down and to a certain extent change their nature or direction; for example, ascending vibrations at a certain moment begin to ascend more slowly, and descending vibrations begin to descend more slowly. After this temporary retardation, both in ascending and descending, the vibrations again enter the former channel and for a certain time ascend or descend uniformly up to a certain moment when a check in their development again takes place. In this connection it is significant that the periods of uniform action of the momentum are not equal and that the moments of retardation of the vibrations are not symmetrical. One period is shorter, the other is longer.

"In order to determine these moments of retardation, or rather, the checks in the ascent and descent of vibrations, the lines of development of

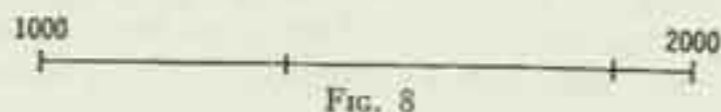
vibrations are divided into periods corresponding to the *doubling* or the *halving* of the number of vibrations in a given space of time.

"Let us imagine a line of increasing vibrations. Let us take them at the moment when they are vibrating at the rate of one thousand a second. After a certain time the number of vibrations is doubled, that is, reaches two thousand.



"It has been found and established that in this interval of vibrations, between the given number of vibrations and a number twice as large, there are two places where a *retardation in the increase of vibrations* takes place. One is near the beginning but not at the beginning itself. The other occurs almost at the end.

"Approximately:



"The laws which govern the retardation or the deflection of vibrations from their primary direction were known to ancient science. These laws were duly incorporated into a particular formula or diagram which has been preserved up to our times. In this formula the period in which vibrations are doubled was divided into *eight* unequal steps corresponding to the rate of increase in the vibrations. The eighth step repeats the first step with double the number of vibrations. This period of the doubling of the vibrations, or the line of the development of vibrations, between a given number of vibrations and double that number, is called an *octave*, that is to say, *composed of eight*.

"The principle of dividing into eight unequal parts the period, in which the vibrations are doubled, is based upon the observation of the non-uniform increase of vibrations in the entire octave, and separate 'steps' of the octave show acceleration and retardation at different moments of its development.

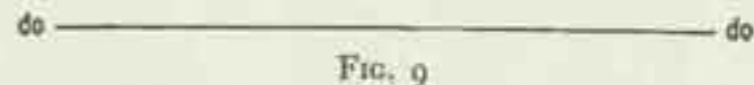
"In the guise of this formula ideas of the octave have been handed down from teacher to pupil, from one school to another. In very remote times one of these schools found that it was possible to apply this formula to music. In this way was obtained the seven-tone musical scale which was known in the most distant antiquity, then forgotten, and then discovered or 'found' again.

"The seven-tone scale is the formula of a cosmic law which was worked out by ancient schools and applied to music. At the same time, how-

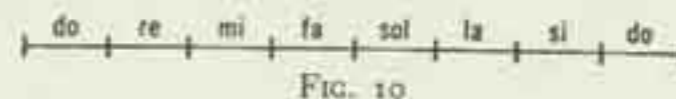
ever, if we study the manifestations of the law of octaves in vibrations of other kinds we shall see that the laws are everywhere the same, and that light, heat, chemical, magnetic, and other vibrations are subject to the same laws as sound vibrations. For instance, the light scale is known to physics; in chemistry the periodic system of the elements is without doubt closely connected with the principle of octaves although this connection is still not fully clear to science.

"A study of the structure of the seven-tone musical scale gives a very good foundation for understanding the cosmic law of octaves.

"Let us again take the ascending octave, that is, the octave in which the frequency of vibrations increases. Let us suppose that this octave begins with one thousand vibrations a second. Let us designate these thousand vibrations by the note *do*. Vibrations are growing, that is, their frequency is increasing. At the point where they reach two thousand vibrations a second there will be a second *do*, that is, the *do* of the next octave.



"The period between one *do* and the next, that is, an octave, is divided into seven *unequal* parts because the frequency of vibrations does not increase uniformly.



"The ratio of the pitch of the notes, or of the frequency of vibrations will be as follows:

"If we take *do* as 1 then *re* will be $\frac{9}{8}$, *mi* $\frac{5}{4}$, *fa* $\frac{4}{3}$, *sol* $\frac{3}{2}$, *la* $\frac{5}{3}$, *si* $\frac{15}{8}$, and *do* 2.

1	$\frac{9}{8}$	$\frac{5}{4}$	$\frac{4}{3}$	$\frac{3}{2}$	$\frac{5}{3}$	$\frac{15}{8}$	2
do	re	mi	fa	sol	la	si	do

"The differences in the acceleration or increase in the notes or the difference in tone will be as follows:

between do and re	$\frac{9}{8} : 1 = \frac{9}{8}$	
between re and mi	$\frac{5}{4} : \frac{9}{8} = \frac{10}{9}$	
between mi and fa	$\frac{4}{3} : \frac{5}{4} = \frac{16}{15}$	increase retarded
between fa and sol	$\frac{3}{2} : \frac{4}{3} = \frac{9}{8}$	
between sol and la	$\frac{5}{3} : \frac{3}{2} = \frac{10}{9}$	
between la and si	$\frac{15}{8} : \frac{5}{3} = \frac{9}{8}$	
between si and do	$2 : \frac{15}{8} = \frac{16}{15}$	increase again retarded

"The differences in the notes or the differences in the pitch of the notes are called *intervals*. We see that there are three kinds of intervals in the octave: $\frac{9}{8}$, $\frac{10}{9}$, and $\frac{16}{15}$, which in whole numbers correspond to 405, 400, and 384. The smallest interval $\frac{16}{15}$ occurs between mi and fa and between si and do. These are precisely the places of retardation in the octave.

"In relation to the musical (seven-tone) scale it is generally considered (theoretically) that there are two semitones between each two notes, with the exception of the intervals mi-fa and si-do, which have only one semitone and in which one semitone is regarded as being left out.

"In this manner *twenty* notes are obtained, eight of which are fundamental:

do, re, mi, fa, sol, la, si, do

and twelve intermediate: two between each of the following two notes:

do-re
re-mi
fa-sol
sol-la
la-si

and one between each of the following two notes :

mi-fa
si-do

"But in practice, that is, in music, instead of twelve intermediate semitones only five are taken, that is one semitone between:

do-re
re-mi
fa-sol
sol-la
la-si

"Between mi and fa and between si and do the semitone is not taken at all.

"In this way the structure of the musical seven-tone scale gives a scheme of the cosmic law of 'intervals,' or absent semitones. In this respect when octaves are spoken of in a 'cosmic' or a 'mechanical' sense, only those intervals between mi-fa and si-do are called '*intervals*.'

"If we grasp its full meaning the law of octaves gives us an entirely new explanation of the whole of life, of the progress and development of phe-

nomena on all planes of the universe observed by us. This law explains why there are no straight lines in nature and also why we can neither think nor do, why everything with us *is thought*, why everything *happens* with us and happens usually in a way opposed to what we want or expect. All this is the clear and direct effect of the 'intervals,' or retardations in the development of vibrations.

"What precisely does happen at the moment of the retardation of vibrations? A deviation from the original direction takes place. The octave begins in the direction shown by the arrow:

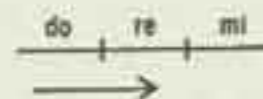


FIG. 12

"But a deviation takes place between mi and fa; the line begun at do changes its direction

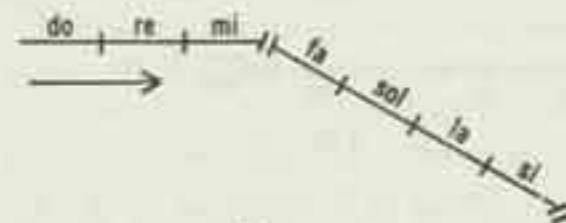


FIG. 13

and through fa, sol, la, and si it descends at an angle to its original direction, shown by the first three notes. Between si and do the second 'interval' occurs—a fresh deviation, a further change of direction.

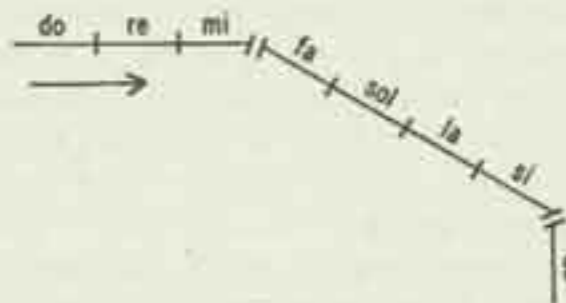


FIG. 14

"The next octave gives an even more marked deviation, the one following that a deviation that is more marked still, so that the line of octaves may at last turn completely round and proceed in a direction opposite to the original direction.

is changing, and inevitably either develops or goes down, weakens or degenerates, that is to say, it moves along either an ascending or a descending line of octaves.

"And third, that in the actual development itself of both ascending and descending octaves, fluctuations, rises and falls are constantly taking place.

"We have spoken so far chiefly about the discontinuity of vibrations and about the deviation of forces. We must now clearly grasp two other principles: the inevitability of either ascent or descent in every line of development of forces, and also the periodic fluctuations, that is, rises and falls, in every line whether ascending or descending.

"Nothing can develop by staying on one level. Ascent or descent is the inevitable cosmic condition of any action. We neither understand nor see what is going on around and within us, either because we do not allow for the inevitability of descent when there is no ascent, or because we take descent to be ascent. These are two of the fundamental causes of our self-deception. We do not see the first one because we continually think that things can remain for a long time at the same level; and we do not see the second because ascents where we see them are in fact impossible, as impossible as it is to increase consciousness by mechanical means.

"Having learned to distinguish ascending and descending octaves in life we must learn to distinguish ascent and descent within the octaves themselves. Whatever sphere of our life we take we can see that nothing can ever remain level and constant; everywhere and in everything proceeds the swinging of the pendulum, everywhere and in everything the waves rise and fall. Our energy in one or another direction which suddenly increases and afterwards just as suddenly weakens; our moods which 'become better' or 'become worse' without any visible reason; our feelings, our desires, our intentions, our decisions—all from time to time pass through periods of ascent or descent, become stronger or weaker.

"And there are perhaps a hundred pendulums moving here and there in man. These ascents and descents, these wave-like fluctuations of moods, thought, feelings, energy, determination, are periods of the development of forces between 'intervals' in the octaves as well as the 'intervals' themselves.

"Upon the law of octaves in its three principal manifestations depend many phenomena both of a psychic nature as well as those immediately connected with our life. Upon the law of octaves depends the imperfection and the incompleteness of our knowledge in all spheres without exception, chiefly because we always begin in one direction and afterwards without noticing it proceed in another.

"As has been said already, the law of octaves in all its manifestations was known to ancient knowledge.

"Even our division of time, that is, the days of the week into work days and Sundays, is connected with the same properties and inner conditions of our activity which depend upon the general law. The Biblical myth of the creation of the world in six days and of the seventh day in which God rested from his labors is also an expression of the law of octaves or an indication of it, though an incomplete one.

"Observations based on an understanding of the law of octaves show that 'vibrations' may develop in different ways. In interrupted octaves they merely begin and fall, are drowned or swallowed up by other, stronger, vibrations which intersect them or which go in an opposite direction. In octaves which deviate from the original direction the vibrations change their nature and give results opposite to those which might have been expected at the beginning.

"And it is only in octaves of a cosmic order, both descending and ascending, that vibrations develop in a consecutive and orderly way, following the same direction in which they started.

"Further observations show that a right and consistent development of octaves, although rare, can be observed in all the occasions of life and in the activity of nature and even in human activity.

"The right development of these octaves is based on what looks an accident. It sometimes happens that octaves going parallel to the given octave, intersecting or meeting it, in some way or another fill up its 'intervals' and make it possible for the vibrations of the given octave to develop in freedom and without checks. Observation of such rightly developing octaves establishes the fact that if at the necessary moment, that is, at the moment when the given octave passes through an 'interval,' there enters into it an 'additional shock' which corresponds in force and character, it will develop further without hindrance along the original direction, neither losing anything nor changing its nature.

"In such cases there is an essential difference between ascending and descending octaves.

"In an ascending octave the first 'interval' comes between mi and fa. If corresponding additional energy enters at this point the octave will develop without hindrance to si, but between si and do it needs a much stronger 'additional shock' for its right development than between mi and fa, because the vibrations of the octave at this point are of a considerably higher pitch and to overcome a check in the development of the octave a greater intensity is needed.

"In a descending octave, on the other hand, the greatest 'interval' occurs at the very beginning of the octave, immediately after the first do and the material for filling it is very often found either in do itself or in the lateral vibrations evoked by do. For this reason a descending octave develops much more easily than an ascending octave and in passing beyond si it reaches fa without hindrance; here an 'additional shock' is neces-

sary, though *considerably less strong* than the first 'shock' between do and si.

"In the big cosmic octave, which reaches us in the form of the *ray of creation*, we can see the first complete example of the law of octaves. The ray of creation begins with the Absolute. The Absolute is *the All*. *The All*, possessing full unity, full will, and full consciousness, creates worlds within itself, in this way beginning the *descending world octave*. The Absolute is the do of this octave. The worlds which the Absolute creates in itself are si. The 'interval' between do and si in this case is filled by the *will of the Absolute*. The process of creation is developed further by the force of the original impulse and an 'additional shock.' Si passes into la which for us is our star world, the *Milky Way*. La passes into sol—our *sun*, the solar system. Sol passes into fa—the planetary world. And here between the planetary world as a whole and our earth occurs an 'interval.' This means that the planetary radiations carrying various influences to the earth are not able to reach it, or, to speak more correctly, they are not received, the earth reflects them. In order to fill the 'interval' at this point of the ray of creation a special apparatus is created for receiving and transmitting the influences coming from the planets. This apparatus is *organic life on earth*. Organic life transmits to the earth all the influences intended for it and makes possible the further development and growth of the earth, mi of the cosmic octave, and then of the moon or re, after which follows another do—*Nothing*. Between *All* and *Nothing* passes the ray of creation.

"You know the prayer 'Holy God, Holy the Firm, Holy the Immortal'? This prayer comes from ancient knowledge. *Holy God* means the Absolute or *All*. *Holy the Firm* also means the Absolute or *Nothing*. *Holy the Immortal* signifies that which is between them, that is, the six notes of the ray of creation, with *organic life*. All three taken together make one. This is the coexistent and indivisible Trinity.

"We must now dwell on the idea of the 'additional shocks' which make it possible for the lines of forces to reach a projected aim. As I said before, shocks may occur accidentally. Accident is of course a very uncertain thing. But those lines of development of forces which are straightened out by accident, and which man can sometimes see, or suppose, or expect, create in him more than anything else the illusion of *straight lines*. That is to say, he thinks that straight lines are the rule and broken and interrupted lines the exception. This in its turn creates in him the illusion that it is possible to *do*; possible to attain a projected aim. In reality a man can do nothing. If by accident his activity gives a result, even though it resembles only in appearance or in name the original aim, a man assures himself and others that he has attained the aim which he set before him-

self and that anyone else would also be able to attain his aim, and others believe him. In reality this is illusion. A man *can* win at roulette. But this would be accident. Attaining an aim which one has set before oneself in life or in any particular sphere of human activity is just the same kind of accident. The only difference is that in regard to roulette a man at least knows for certain whether he has lost or won on each separate occasion, that is, on each separate stake. But in the activities of his life, particularly with activities of the kind that many people are concerned in and when years pass between the beginning of something and its result, a man can very easily deceive himself and take the result 'obtained' as the result desired, that is, believe that he has won when on the whole he has lost.

"The greatest insult for a 'man-machine' is to tell him that he can do nothing, can attain nothing, that he can never move towards any aim whatever and that in striving towards one he will inevitably create another. Actually of course it cannot be otherwise. The 'man-machine' is in the power of accident. His activities may fall by accident into some sort of channel which has been created by cosmic or mechanical forces and they may by accident move along this channel for a certain time, giving the illusion that aims of some kind are being attained. Such accidental correspondence of results with the aims we have set before us or the attainment of aims in small things *which can have no consequences* creates in mechanical man the conviction that he is able to attain any aim, 'is able to conquer nature' as it is called, is able to 'arrange the whole of his life,' and so on.

"As a matter of fact he is of course unable to do anything of the kind because not only has he no control over things outside himself but he has no control even over things within himself. This last must be very clearly understood and assimilated; at the same time it must be understood that control over things begins with control over things in ourselves, *with control over ourselves*. A man who cannot control himself, or the course of things within himself, can control nothing.

"In what way can control be attained?

"The technical part of this is explained by the law of octaves. Octaves can develop consecutively and continuously in the desired direction if 'additional shocks' enter them at the moments necessary, that is, at the moments when vibrations slow down. If 'additional shocks' do not enter at the necessary moments octaves change their direction. To entertain hopes of accidental 'shocks' coming from somewhere by themselves at the moments necessary is of course out of the question. There remains for a man the choice either of finding a direction for his activities which corresponds to the mechanical line of events of a given moment, in other words of 'going where the wind blows' or 'swimming with the stream,' even if this contradicts his inner inclinations, convictions, and sympathies, or of reconciling himself to the failure of everything he starts out

to do; or he can learn to recognize the moments of the 'intervals' in all lines of his activity and learn to *create* the 'additional shocks,' in other words, learn to apply to his own activities the method which cosmic forces make use of in *creating* 'additional shocks' at the moments necessary.

"The possibility of artificial, that is, specially created, 'additional shocks' gives a practical meaning to the study of the law of octaves and makes this study obligatory and necessary if a man desires to step out of the role of passive spectator of that which is happening to him and around him.

"The 'man-machine' can do nothing. To him and around him everything *happens*. In order to *do* it is necessary to know the law of octaves, to know the moments of the 'intervals' and be able to create necessary 'additional shocks.'

"It is only possible to learn this in a *school*, that is to say, in a rightly organized school which follows all esoteric traditions. Without the help of a school a man by himself can never understand the law of octaves, the points of the 'intervals,' and the order of creating 'shocks.' He cannot understand because certain conditions are necessary for this purpose, and these conditions can only be created in a school *which is itself created upon these principles*.

"How a school is created on the principles of the law of octaves will be explained in due course. And this in its turn will explain to you one aspect of the union of the *law of seven* with the *law of three*. In the meantime it can be said only that in school teaching, a man is given examples of both descending (creative) and ascending (or evolutionary) cosmic octaves. Western thought, knowing neither about octaves nor about the law of three, confuses the ascending and the descending lines and does not understand that the line of evolution is opposed to the line of creation, that is to say, it goes against it as though against the stream.

"In the study of the law of octaves it must be remembered that octaves in their relation to each other are divided into *fundamental* and *subordinate*. The fundamental octave can be likened to the trunk of a tree giving off branches of lateral octaves. The seven fundamental notes of the octave and the two 'intervals,' *the bearers of new directions*, give altogether nine links of a chain, three groups of three links each.

"The fundamental octaves are connected with the secondary or subordinate octaves in a certain definite way. Out of the subordinate octaves of the first order come the subordinate octaves of the second order, and so on. The construction of octaves can be compared with the construction of a tree. From the straight basic trunk there come out boughs on all sides which divide in their turn and pass into branches, becoming

smaller and smaller, and finally are covered with leaves. The same process goes on in the construction of the leaves, in the formation of the veins, the serrations, and so on.

"Like everything in nature the human body which represents a certain whole bears both within and without the same correlations. According to the number of the notes of the octave and its 'intervals,' the human body has nine basic measurements expressed by the numbers of a definite measure. In individuals these numbers of course differ widely but within certain definite limits. These nine basic measurements, giving a full octave of the first order, by combining in a certain definite way pass into measurements of subordinate octaves, which give rise in their turn to other subordinate octaves, and so on. In this way it is possible to obtain the measurements of any member or any part of the human body as they are all in a definite relationship one to another."

The law of octaves naturally gave rise to a great many talks in our group and to much perplexity. G. warned us all the time against too much theorizing.

"You must understand and feel this law in yourselves," he said. "Only then will you see it outside yourselves."

This of course is true. But the difficulty was not only in this. Merely a "technical" understanding of the law of octaves requires a lot of time. And we returned to it continually, sometimes making unexpected discoveries, sometimes again losing what had seemed to us already established.

It is now difficult to convey how at different periods now one and now another idea became the center of gravity in our work, attracted the greatest attention, gave rise to most talks. The idea of the law of octaves became in its way a permanent center of gravity. We returned to it on every occasion; we spoke of it and discussed its various aspects at every meeting until we began gradually to think of everything from the point of view of this idea.

In his first talk G. gave only a general outline of the idea and he constantly returned to it himself, pointing out to us its different aspects and meanings.

At one of the following meetings he gave us a very interesting picture of another meaning of the law of octaves which went deeply into things.

"In order better to understand the significance of the law of octaves it is necessary to have a clear idea of another property of vibrations, namely the so-called 'inner vibrations.' This means that within vibrations other vibrations proceed, and that every octave can be resolved into a great number of inner octaves.

"Each note of any octave can be regarded as an octave on another plane.

"Each note of these inner octaves again contains a whole octave and so on, for some considerable way, *but not ad infinitum*, because there is a definite limit to the development of inner octaves.

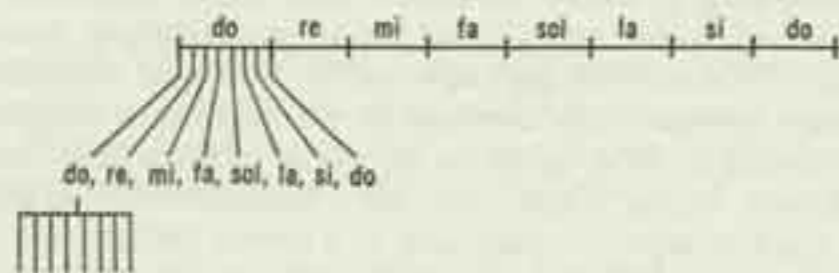


FIG. 17

"These inner vibrations proceed simultaneously in 'media' of different density, interpenetrating one another; they are reflected in one another, give rise to one another; stop, impel, or change one another.

"Let us imagine vibrations in a substance or a medium of a certain definite density. Let us suppose this substance or medium to consist of the comparatively coarse atoms of world 48, each of which is, so to speak, an agglomeration of forty-eight primordial atoms. The vibrations which proceed in this medium are divisible into octaves and the octaves are divisible into notes. Let us imagine that we have taken one octave of these vibrations for the purpose of some kind of investigation. We must realize that within the limits of this octave proceed the vibrations of a still finer substance. The substance of world 48 is saturated with substance of world 24; the vibrations in the substance of world 24 stand in a definite relation to the vibrations in the substance of world 48; namely, each note of the vibrations in the substance of world 48 contains a whole octave of vibrations in the substance of world 24.

"These are the *inner* octaves.

"The substance of world 24 is, in its turn, permeated with the substance of world 12. In this substance also there are vibrations and each note of the vibrations of world 24 contains a whole octave of the vibrations of world 12. The substance of world 12 is permeated with the substance of world 6. The substance of world 6 is permeated with the substance of world 3. World 3 is permeated with the substance of world 1. Corresponding vibrations exist in each of these worlds and the order remains always the same, namely, each note of the vibrations of a coarser substance contains a whole octave of the vibrations of a finer substance.

"If we begin with vibrations of world 48, we can say that one note of the vibrations in this world contains an octave or seven notes of the vibrations of the planetary world. Each note of the vibrations of the planetary world contains seven notes of the vibrations of the world of the sun. Each vibration of the world of the sun will contain seven notes of the vibrations of the starry world and so on.

"The study of inner octaves, the study of their relation to outer octaves and the possible influence of the former upon the latter, constitute a very important part of the study of the world and of man."

At the next meeting G. again spoke of the ray of creation, partly repeating and partly supplementing and developing what he had already said.

"The ray of creation like every other process which is complete at a given moment can be regarded as an octave. This would be a descending octave in which do passes into si, si into la and so on.

"The Absolute or All (world 1) will be do; all worlds (world 3)—si; all suns (world 6)—la; our sun (world 12)—sol; all planets (world 24)—fa; the earth (world 48)—mi; the moon (world 96)—re. The ray of creation begins with the Absolute. The Absolute is All. It is—do.

"The ray of creation ends in the moon. Beyond the moon there is *nothing*. This also is the Absolute—do.

"In examining the ray of creation or cosmic octave we see that 'intervals' should come in the development of this octave: the first between do and si, that is between world 1 and world 3, between the Absolute and 'all worlds,' and the second between fa and mi, that is, between world 24 and world 48, between 'all planets' and the earth. But the first 'interval' is filled by the will of the Absolute. One of the manifestations of the will of the Absolute consists precisely in the filling of this 'interval' by means of a conscious manifestation of neutralizing force which fills up the 'interval' between the active and the passive forces. With the second 'interval' the situation is more complicated. Something is missing between the planets and the earth. Planetary influences cannot pass to the earth consecutively and fully. An 'additional shock' is indispensable; the creation of some new conditions to insure a proper passage of forces is indispensable.

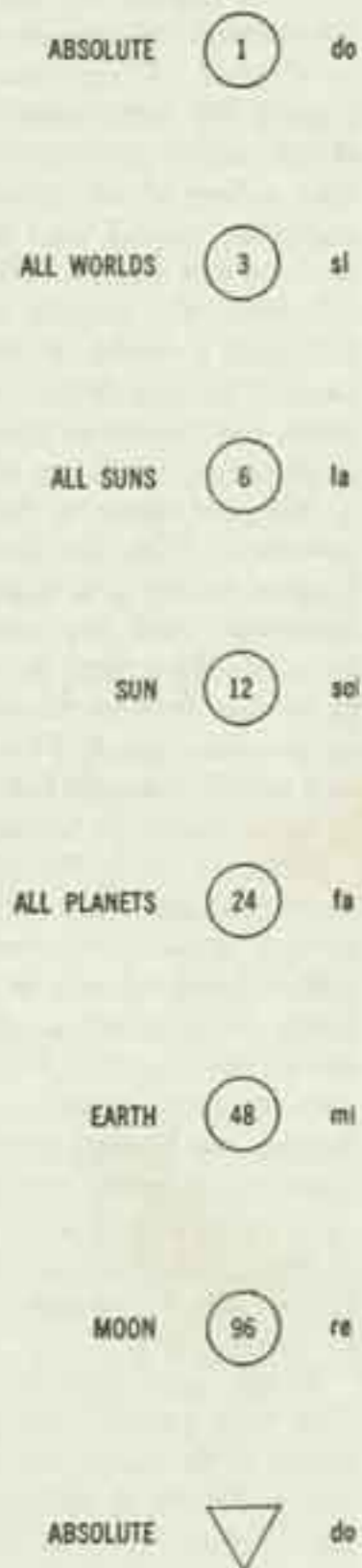


FIG. 18

"The conditions to insure the passage of forces are created by the arrangement of a special mechanical contrivance between the planets and the earth. This mechanical contrivance, this 'transmitting station of forces' is *organic life on earth*. Organic life on earth was created to fill the interval between the planets and the earth.

"Organic life represents so to speak the *earth's organ of perception*. Organic life forms something like a sensitive film which covers the whole of the earth's globe and takes in those influences coming from the planetary sphere which otherwise would not be able to reach the earth. The vegetable, animal, and human kingdoms are equally important for the earth in this respect. A field merely covered with grass takes in planetary influences of a definite kind and transmits them to the earth. The same field with a crowd of people on it will take in and transmit other influences. The population of Europe takes in one kind of planetary influences and transmits them to the earth. The population of Africa takes in planetary influences of another kind, and so on.

"All great events in the life of the human masses are caused by planetary influences. They are the result of the taking in of planetary influences. Human society is a highly sensitive mass for the reception of planetary influences. And any accidental small tension in planetary spheres can be reflected for years in an increased animation in one or another sphere of human activity. Something accidental and very transient takes place in planetary space. This is immediately received by the human masses, and people begin to hate and to kill one another, justifying their actions by some theory of brotherhood, or equality, or love, or justice.

"Organic life is the organ of perception of the earth and it is at the same time an organ of radiation. With the help of organic life each portion of the earth's surface occupying a given area sends every moment certain kinds of rays in the direction of the sun, the planets, and the moon. In connection with this the sun needs one kind of radiations, the planets another kind, and the moon another. Everything that happens on earth creates radiations of this kind. And many things often *happen* just because certain kinds of radiation are required from a certain place on the earth's surface."

In saying this G. drew our attention in particular to the nonconformity of time, that is, of the duration of events in the planetary world and in human life. The significance of his insistence on this point became clear to me only later.

At the same time he constantly emphasized the fact that no matter what took place in the thin film of organic life it always served the interests of the earth, the sun, the planets, and the moon; nothing unnecessary and nothing independent could happen in it because it was created for a definite purpose and was merely subordinate.

And once dwelling on this theme he gave us a diagram of the structure of the octave in which one of the links was "organic life on earth."

"This additional or lateral octave in the ray of creation begins in the sun," he said.

"The sun, sol of the cosmic octave, begins at a certain moment to sound as do, sol-do.

"It is necessary to realize that every note of any octave, in the present instance every note of the cosmic octave, may represent do of some other lateral octave issuing from it. Or it would be still more exact to say that any note of any octave may at the same time be any note of any other octave passing through it.

"In the present instance sol begins to sound as do. Descending to the level of the planets this new octave passes into si; descending still lower it produces three notes, la, sol, fa, which create and constitute organic life on earth in the form that we know it; mi of this octave blends with mi of the cosmic octave, that is, with *the earth*, and re with the re of the cosmic octave, that is, with *the moon*."

We at once felt that there was a great deal of meaning in this lateral octave. First of all it showed that organic life, represented in the diagram by three notes, had two higher notes, one on the level of the planets and one on the level of the sun, and that it *began in the sun*. This last was the most important point because once more, as with many other things in G.'s system, it contradicted the usual modern idea of life having originated so to speak from *below*. In his explanations life came from above.

Then much talk arose about the notes mi, re, of the lateral octave. We could not, of course, define what re was. But it was clearly connected with the idea of food for the moon. Some product of the disintegration of organic life went to the moon; this must be re. In regard to mi it was possible to speak quite definitely. Organic life undoubtedly disappeared in the earth. The role of organic life in the structure of the earth's surface was indisputable. There was the growth of coral islands and limestone mountains, the formation of coal seams and accumulations of petroleum; the alteration of the soil under the influence of vegetation, the growth of vegetation in lakes, the "formation of rich arable lands by worms," change of climate due to the draining of swamps and the destruction of forests, and many other things that we know of and do not know of.

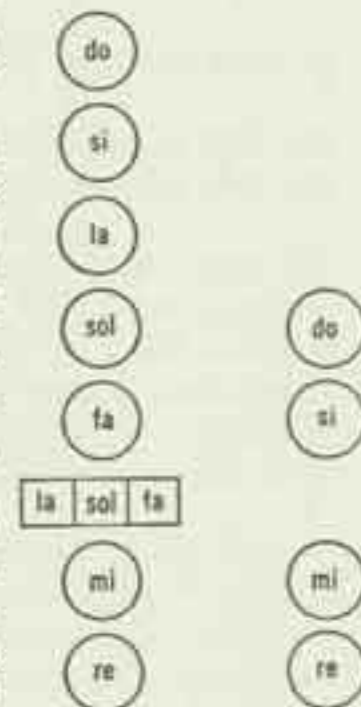


FIG. 19

But in addition to this the lateral octave showed with particular clarity how easily and correctly things were classified in the system we were studying. Everything anomalous, unexpected, and accidental disappeared, and an immense and strictly thought-out plan of the universe began to make its appearance.

Chapter Eight

AT ONE of the following lectures G. returned to the question of consciousness.

"Neither the psychical nor the physical functions of man can be understood," he said, "unless the fact has been grasped that they can both work in different states of consciousness.

"In all there are four states of consciousness possible for *man*" (he emphasized the word "man"). "But ordinary man, that is, man number one, number two, and number three, lives in the two lowest states of consciousness only. The two higher states of consciousness are inaccessible to him, and although he may have flashes of these states, he is unable to understand them and he judges them from the point of view of those states in which it is usual for him to be.

"The two usual, that is, the lowest, states of consciousness are first, *sleep*, in other words a passive state in which man spends a third and very often a half of his life. And second, the state in which men spend the other part of their lives, in which they walk the streets, write books, talk on lofty subjects, take part in politics, kill one another, which they regard as active and call 'clear consciousness' or the 'waking state of consciousness.' The term 'clear consciousness' or 'waking state of consciousness' seems to have been given in jest, especially when you realize what *clear consciousness* ought in reality to be and what the state in which man lives and acts really is.

"The third state of consciousness is *self-remembering* or self-consciousness or consciousness of one's being. It is usual to consider that we have this state of consciousness or that we can have it if we want it. Our science and philosophy have overlooked the fact that we *do not possess* this state of consciousness and that we cannot create it in ourselves by desire or decision alone.

"The fourth state of consciousness is called the *objective state of consciousness*. In this state a man can see things *as they are*. Flashes of this state of consciousness also occur in man. In the religions of all nations there are indications of the possibility of a state of consciousness of this kind which is called 'enlightenment' and various other names but which cannot be described in words. But the only right way to objective con-