

THE EGYPTIAN ARCH-GNOSIS

THE EGYPTIAN ARCH-GNOSIS AND ITS CALL IN THE ETERNAL PRESENT

**NEWLY PROCLAIMED AND EXPLAINED FROM
THE TABULA SMARAGDINA AND CORPUS HERMETICUM OF
HERMES TRISMEGISTUS**

BY

J. VAN RIJCKENBORGH

**PART 2
FIRST EDITION 1987
SECOND EDITION 2020**

ROZEKRUIS PERS HAARLEM THE NETHERLANDS

Colofon

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

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

ISBN

© 2020 Rozekruis Pers, Haarlem, The Netherlands



THE ARCH-MOTHER

The illustration depicts the mother of the world, or Arch-Mother, who sits within the framework of a five-pointed star in the midst of the constellations. She is receiving the fire of the Father, the Sevenfold Spirit Fire.

Her head and heart, through their harmonious interaction, are irradiated by astral light so that a source of Living Water, the Eternal Stream, is generated in her womb.

Thus, out of the Mother and by the seed of the Father, the childship, the sonship, becomes a living reality. The Father's plan of creation is brought to reality by the power of the Mother.

In the beginning was the Word,
The Word was God,
And God was The Word.
The Light shines in the darkness.

CONTENTS

Preface

- I Third book: Ignorance of God is the greatest evil in man
- II Fourth book: Hermes' oration to the glory of God
- III Stay awake, for you know neither the day nor the hour
 - The time of declaration
 - The ancient warning The state of our blood
 - The vocation of the emergency-order personality
 - The sevenfold heart
 - The sevenfold head
 - Go out to meet the Bridegroom
- IV The fetters of the blood
 - Romans 7
 - The narcosis of ignorance
 - The kind of person to whom Hermes' words are addressed
 - The blood-culture of the personality Sinful pleasures
- V Karma-Nemesis and the way to redemption
 - The essential task of pupilship: to die daily
 - The essence of sin The endura
 - The Garden of the Gods
 - Karma-Nemesis
 - The fall of man
 - The path of liberation
- VI The realisation of God's plan
 - The sorrows of mankind
 - What the Gnosis demands To suffer in the ego
 - The birth in Bethlehem and the victory on Golgotha
 - The wedding with the Lamb
- VII The heart-cry of the Universal Gnosis
 - Romans 8
 - The necessity of reversal

The path of the Universal Gnosis
Our task and vocation for the world and mankind
The appearance of the Son of Man in the clouds of heaven
The new gnostic realm

VIII Fifth book: From a sermon of Hermes to Tat

IX The primordial law of the gnosticmysteries

How will this law be fulfilled in the present?
True piety
The necessity of building
Unswerving courage and perseverance No reservations, no pretexts
Enter the circle of eternity

X The imitation of Christ

True self-freemasonry
In the world, but no longer of the world
Liberation is possible in the present
Liberation for the sake of service
The negative state of natural religions
Ignited by the Spirit of God

XI The path from Bethlehem to Golgotha

The process of the resurrection of the soul
The events of Jesus' imprisonment and humiliation, his path
of the cross, death and victory
The endura: non-conflict
Let Jesus Christ carry out his work in you

XII The twofold nature of man

The inescapable choice between life and death
Be perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect
Man's twofold soul
The realisation of God in man
The resurrection of the Spirit-Soul
Pain and grief
The trinity of the All-manifestation

XIII Sixth book: General dialogue between Hermes and Aesclepius

XIV The nature and activity of the All

Hermetic argumentation
The two natures of the opposites
The created and the uncreated
The divine and God
The Son, who is in the heart of the Father, has revealed Him
The logic and necessity of restoring the link with the one source of life
Our unconscious, earthly existence is the most illogical thing in the
All-manifestation

XV The unassailability of God's plan

To move in harmony or in counter-movement
Mary, the virginal primordial substance
How the plan of God comes into manifestation
A terrific conclusion
Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom
The result of counter-movement always destroys itself
Only what is from the Spirit of the Lord is eternal
Hora est!
The cause of death is logical and scientific
The One Life develops out of true, harmonious movement

XVI Voluntary self-surrender: the final death of the I

The directedness of the head and heart
Self-surrender and co-operative movement
The dangers of counter-movement in the School
The Seven Seals are broken
The necessity of self-examination

XVII The mystery of the Holy Grail

The Seven Seals are closed
Jesus and the Comforter
The seven rays of the Seven-Spirit
The Brotherhood of the Holy Grail
Absolute life
The necessity of true longing
The image-bearer's aim in life
Enter into the peace of your Lord

XVIII New, liberating possibilities

The broken state of the human brotherhood of the beginning
The tragedy of estrangement
The hell of counter-movement
The Gnosis, the healer, the Lord of Love
The generation of the Son

XIX Seventh book: Hermes tells Tat of the Mixing Vessel and the Oneness

XX The prize for the race

In the beginning was the Word
The activity of human thought
The Logos, the Word
The mentality and the Spirit
An uncomprehending astonishment
The confusion of languages
The link with the Spirit, the prize for the race
The rose-heart, the latent faculty which leads to a higher awakening
Why do I live?
The birth of the Son

XXI The holy Mixing Vessel

1 John 5
The Spirit, the Water and the Blood
The Holy Grail, the missing link
The Triunity of the Light: Grail, Cathar and Cross with Roses
The twofold baptism
Imitation in natural religion
Symbolism and magic
The magic of churches and sects
The work of the aeons
The recipe for true pupilship

XXII Receiving the Holy Grail

The Sign of the Son of Man
What is Pymander?
The plan of the Logos
The victory over death
The awakening of the image of the true man
The absolute knowledge of the Pymandric man
Osiris-Isis, Spirit-Soul
Transmutation and transfiguration
The divine cup
The consequences of the Holy Grail
Liberation and service, glorification and the experience of grief

XXIII The path and the sacrifice

The most difficult task on the path
The necessity of I-mortification

God or mammon
Four obstacles

XXIV The return to oneness
An absolutely new beginning
The task of the emergency-order figure in the great plan of God

XXV Oneness (I)
How do we conquer death?
Mystification concerning death
The fourth mystery

XXVI Oneness (II)
The divine image will guide you
The unchangeable and the changeable
Oneness and the number
Unification and concrete action
The Pymander of the Living Body
Victory over death

XXVII Sell all you possess and follow me
A Brotherhood of the Holy Grail
Living cells of the Living Body
Lord, here I am
Group unity and self-surrender
The sevenfold river
The accomplishing action

XXVIII The secret of the gnostic mysteries
Attitude to life as a means of accelerating the processes of salvation
All or nothing
The weapon of slander, libel and criticism
What is the Living Body?
What is behind the Living Body?
A joyful testimony of the gnostic reality
The home Sancti Spiritus
Bought from the earth

XXIX The pentecostal feast of divine liberation
The foci of the young Gnosis
The spreading of the light-field
Reaping the harvest
The responsibility of every pupil

XXX Eighth book: Hermes to his son Tat: The invisible
God is the most manifest

XXXI The celestial ship and its passengers

An incomparable gift
Intellectual training
The process of gnostic consciousness
The administration of reconciliation
Absolute self-surrender
The celestial ship

XXXII Eternity in time

There are no fundamental impediments between man and God
The delusion of dialectics
True prayer
The responsibility of the gnostic worker

XXXIII Hermes' song of praise

XXXIV The wisdom of the world and the wisdom

The seven rays of the Seven-Spirit
The brain organism of a young child
The unfree thinking of dialectical man
Understanding the un-manifested
The new thinking
The link with the manifested and the unmanifested Godhead
The delusion with regard to memory
The living testimony of the gnostic, priestly human being

XXXV The key to purification

The necessity of soul-consciousness
The childhood of God and the attainment of maturity
The struggle between the soul and the body
The inescapable choice
The dominant role of the cerebellum
The liberating method of living
The harmonising effect of gnostic pupilship

XXXVI Ninth book: That none of what truly exists can be
lost, but that man mistakes transformation for
annihilation and death

XXXVII The rebirth of the soul

The unreality of death
How the problem of the seeker for truth should be approached
Theology and historical materialism
An incident in the process of dissolution
The meaning of transfiguration
The error of suicide
The necessity of natural birth to make liberation possible
What is soul-birth
Earthly man is only a body
The signature of the true Rosicrucian

XXXVIII Rebirth by the soul

Save your soul
The seat of life
The heart is the most important part of the human body
The seven chambers of the heart
The task of the sternum
Present-day natural man
The accusation of the heart
The voice of the soul

XXXIX The holy Mother Earth

The absolute man
The soul's way of the cross: from Bethlehem to Golgotha
The first God and the second god
Our divine Mother Earth
Our vocation and that of the Earth-Spirit
Christ, the planetary Spirit of the Earth
Several life-waves

XL Nothing can separate us from the love which is in

Jesus Christ our Lord

The fulfilment of the divine science
The atomic process of metabolism
Do not resist evil
We hold the process of immortality in our own hands
The formation of a world
The atom and the seven forces of absolute life
The coming destruction of our life-field
The work of salvation in a bona fide Spiritual School

XLI The restoration of perfect equilibrium

Two important questions

Lucifer and the Elohim

The regulation of the Universe is unassailable

The twin forces of nature: fire and cold

The necessity of learning to control the fire in our lives

The maintenance of the fundamental laws of the divine order

Glossary

PREFACE

Man, who are you? Where do you come from? Where are you going.

Since the dawn of man's appearance in the dialectical* field of existence, these profound questions have been posed by the mysterious Sphinx to all travellers on their endless wanderings through the desert of earthly life. The answers, shown in consciousness, directedness and behaviour, are decisive for life and death.

Without true, living, firsthand knowledge of the source of all being and the true purpose of existence, mankind is doomed to perish in darkness, suffering and death, through blindness, delusion and deception.

Countless people are seeking desperately for a solution in the threatening crisis which accompanies the end of the present Cosmic Day, and once again the Gnosis is raising its voice to show them the way to God's liberating knowledge. Out of the living reality of God, it once again proclaims man's high calling and shows those who still have ears to hear the ancient way of deliverance, which it has opened again in our times for those of good will.

There are those who are deeply disturbed by the self-created social disorganisation through which the world and mankind are again approaching ruin, and who inwardly realise the necessity of an immediate, fundamental reversal of life. In the profound wisdom of the

Egyptian Arch-Gnosis and its absolute requirements, such persons will joyfully and gratefully recognise the shining light of the Path to The Truth and The Life.

It is in their service that the young gnostic Brotherhood performs its task, and it is for them that this publication is intended. It seeks to enable them to approach the spirit of gnostic pupilship as closely as possible and give them a foretaste of the grace of this path.

May many be able to understand in time the call of the Gnosis and react positively to it for their eternal salvation and that of all mankind!

J. VAN RIJCKENBORGH

* See Glossary, page 264

I
THIRD BOOK
IGNORANCE OF GOD
IS THE GREATEST EVIL IN MAN

1. Where are you hurrying, O men, you whose minds are clouded because you are drunk with the word that lacks all Gnosis, the word of absolute ignorance that does not agree with you and that you will vomit in the end?
2. Stop and become sober: see again with the eyes of your heart! And if not all of you can do so, let those at least who can. The malignity of ignorance floods over the whole earth, ruins the soul which is penned up in the body and prevents it from reaching the harbours of salvation.
3. Therefore, do not allow yourself to be carried along by the violence of the stream, but let those among you who are able to reach the harbours of salvation make use of the counter-current to put into port.

4. Look for Him who will take you by the hand and lead you to the gates of the Gnosis, where the clear light shines in which there is no dark- ness; where no one is drunk, but all are sober and look up with their hearts to Him who wishes to be known.
5. But listen well: His Voice cannot be heard and His Name cannot be pronounced, nor can material eyes view Him. Only the Spirit-Soul is capable of so doing.
6. That is why you should first tear up the garment you are wearing: the fabric of ignorance, the basis of malignity, the fetter of corruption, the lightless prison, the living death, the corpse with sense-organs, the tomb you are carrying about with you, the robber who is lodged within you who shows his hatred by what he loves and his envy by what he hates.
7. Such is the hostile garment with which you have enveloped yourself, the garment which, by preventing you from breathing, drags you down to itself, so that you will not regain

your sight, whereby you might behold the beauty of Truth and of the Good enclosed in it, and come to hate your garment's malignity and see through its tricks and snares.

8. For it makes your sense organs insensitive by closing them off with an abundance of matter and filling them with sinful pleasures, so that you will not hear what it is so necessary for you to hear and will not see what you so much need to see.

II

FOURTH BOOK HERMES' ORATION TOTHE GLORY OF GOD

1. God, God's might and the divine nature are the glory of the All.
2. God is the beginning, the primaeval idea, the faculty of growth and the substance of all creatures; the Wisdom leading to the manifestation of all things.
3. God's might is cause, birth and growth; active power, fate, dying and renewal.
4. There was in the Abyss an infinite darkness, and Water and the active Breath of Creation. All this was in the Chaos through the power of God.
5. Then the holy Light freed itself, the primordial elements separated from the moist substance; they densified and all the gods together brought about a separation between the aspects of nature, now ready to germinate.
6. Out of the undefined and unwrought, the light

elements separated upwards, while the heavy elements found their support on the moist sand, so that the All, through the activity of the Fire, was differentiated into its component parts and, having been set in order by the Breath of Creation, was kept in continuous movement.

7. The Universe manifested itself in seven circles, and the gods presented themselves in the form of stars with all their constellations. Nature, in all its aspects, was shaped to form an organic order with the aid of all the gods present within it, and the circle which surrounded it and which was enveloped by an astral cloud, was moved on in its circulation by the divine Breath.
8. Each god, by his own power, put forth what he was bidden to put forth; in this way there arose four-footed and creeping animals, animals living in water, winged animals and all germ-bearing seeds, the grass and the fresh growth of all that blooms. The seed of rebirth was contained within them.
9. The gods also called into being the races of men, so that they would learn to know God's works and bear witness to the activities of nature,

10. so that they would increase in abundance, rule without restrictions over all that is beneath the heavens and come to know the Good Things. In this way they would grow while they increased and multiplied in abundance.
11. The gods brought forth all souls, which were sown in the flesh according to destiny and through the mediation of the gods within the circles, so that they would accurately observe the firmament, the course of the heavenly gods, the divine works and the activity of nature;
12. so that they would come to know the true Good, and the divine Might which keeps the wheel of fate in motion;
13. and in this way would learn to distinguish between good and evil and adopt the whole sublime Art of performing good works.
14. From the beginning *this* has been their Path: to gain life experience and wisdom regarding their fate from the circular course of the gods. Finally they are liberated and leave great monuments behind them on earth, which remind us of the sublime works they

performed as liberated ones.

15. Everything in the course of time that takes away light and spreads darkness: the formation of animated flesh and of progeny in the manner of young animals, and of all human works and everything that causes withering, will be made new again by Fate, by the renewal of the gods and the circular course of nature when its number has grown full.
16. For the divine is the cosmic All which has flowed together to form a unity and has been renewed through nature; for nature, too, is anchored in God's Omnipotence

III

STAY AWAKE, FOR YOU KNOW NEITHER THE DAY NOR THE HOUR

We would like to draw your attention again to the universal, archaic doctrine of which the writings of Hermes Trismegistus provide evidence, as far as these texts are still available to us. Our previous discussions concerning the Egyptian Arch-Gnosis were based on two books, and we will now continue with the third and fourth books.

We need not spend much time on the question of whether or not the texts we have selected are indeed the third and fourth books of the original writings. Numerous editions of hermetic literature have appeared in many languages during the course of the centuries, but an authentic sequence has never been established. Investigators only agree that hundreds, if not thousands of hermetic writings must have existed, most of which, however, have been lost. The few books left have been arranged in various ways according to the compiler's own point of view. For this reason we have decided to follow our intuition.

We would first like to place before you a brief address by Hermes: *Ignorance of God is the greatest evil in man*, and we will then turn to *Hermes' oration to the glory of God*. When you read these texts, you may find that their contents are very familiar, because you have repeatedly been confronted with the ideas discussed in them. However, this

should not cause you to put them aside. The point is that although you may already have grasped these things intellectually, they now come to you, driven by a powerful intention, with a renewed appeal, because the time has come, the time of declaration.

The beginning of Hermes' speech is not very flattering: "Where are you hurrying, O men, you whose minds are clouded because you are drunk with the word that lacks all Gnosis, the word of absolute ignorance that does not agree with you and that you will vomit in the end? Stop and become sober, see again with the eyes of your heart! And if not all of you can do so, let those at least who can. The malignity of ignorance floods over the whole earth, ruins the soul which is penned up in the body and prevents it from reaching the harbours of salvation".

In the Spiritual School we have often discussed the new astral field, the new gnostic realm, which has been made ready to fulfil its task. All those who are pupils of the young gnostic Brotherhood are very directly concerned in this.

And now they are given a warning because of the exclusive position in which they find themselves. It is a warning of a universal and archaic kind which comes to them from thousands of years ago. (The wisdom of which we are allowed to bear witness is more than 400,000 years old at least.) It is a warning intended for every group which is in the same exceptional position, a warning for every young gnostic Brotherhood. Its main point is that evil does not allow, cannot allow pupils to reach the harbours of salvation. If you seriously strive to participate in the inner life of the Gnosis, you can be sure that there will be a struggle over you. If you really persevere, you cannot escape this struggle.

In fact, it proves that the candidate has definitely entered the initial stage of acquiring the new consciousness. Just think in this connection of the temptation of Jesus the Lord in the desert when He started His work. "The malignity of ignorance floods over the whole earth." What is called malignity is the elixir of life in dialectics, the elixir of life in the counter-nature, the entire atmosphere of dialectics in which all creatures live. We will not deal with the question of how this life-elixir of the counter-nature, the breath of death, originated; how the malignity of ignorance emerged. The interested reader may obtain abundant information on this in our literature. Let us now confine ourselves to the fact that the malignity of the counter-nature, the life-elixir of dialectics, exists.

We, nature-born beings, are embedded, as it were, in a sphere of life which is disastrous for the manifestation of salvation. We breathe in the life sphere of death and, by virtue of our natural birth, are one with it to such an extent that this link may be considered complete. So everyone should consider this discussion as a very personal matter. No one should think about other people in this respect, but everyone should first direct his attention to himself.

Our unity with the elixir of death is especially determined by the nature and state of the blood, in which the past of the microcosm manifests itself. However, not only all our predecessors in the microcosm speak their language in the blood, but also hereditary factors play their role, which also means the predecessors in the microcosms of our parents. All these voices speak in our blood. Everything our almost endless line of ancestors have done or failed to do has a noticeable influence on our blood state. On this basis we attract forces, ethers and other influences which feed the blood and are congenial with it,

because like attracts like.

We also need to draw your attention to the organs of the human body which produce blood, such as the bone-marrow. These organs consist of cells which in turn consist of countless atoms; every atom is a small world in itself. If our bloodstream is a stream of death, and this is the case; if our blood-stream is one with the counter-nature, and this is equally so, the core is rooted not only in the blood but in the entire being, "down to the very bones", as the Bible states, right down to every fibre, every cell of the body. This is an irrefutable fact which none of us can circumvent and for which we have to make allowance.

The corporeality, the personality, is an emergency personality which is called to devote itself to the original man of whom a remnant is still present in our present-day microcosm. In the philosophy of the Rosycross this remnant is called the proto-atom, the Christ-atom or the rose of the heart.

It is the task of the emergency personality to devote itself to the original being in the microcosm, because we can sail into the harbours of salvation only after we have been transfigured, after we have become one with the original being within us. To enable us to fulfil this task set for us by God, we possess two organs which will ensure the beginning and the fulfilment of this journey home: the heart sanctuary and the head sanctuary. They have their own process of metabolism and greatly differ, in this respect, from the rest of the personality. The atomic structure of the heart and head sanctuaries differs from that of the other organs. From the birth of the personality the metabolic process of the important parts of the head and heart is kept separate from the other maintenance processes as far as possible, in order to keep open the possibility of fulfilling the calling of nature-born man

and the task connected with it: that of being absorbed by the original being; of giving oneself completely away in self surrender to the original divine man within the microcosm.

The sevenfold heart is the seat of Isis, the Mother of Life, the place where the proto-atom is preserved. It is also the place where the Seven-Light, the light of the seven rays, the light of the Holy Spirit, will have to find access. The heart may therefore be compared with the light-gate of Bethlehem.

In the Chinese Gnosis the sevenfold head is called "the town of nephrite", and in the Gospel it is called "Jerusalem". The Book of Revelations emphasises that we should transform this Jerusalem into the new Jerusalem, the city of God. In this city we find the heavenly heart, or the purple hall, or the throne room of the God within us. From the heart of Isis, from the heart of the Mother of Life, this God must be redeemed to be able to ascend his throne in the purple hall.

Now if you become inwardly alive to what must be done and what must be omitted in order to follow this divine calling, then there is the adversary, the malignity of ignorance. "This malignity", said Hermes, "floods the whole earth". This adversary will do its utmost to prevent us from entering the harbour of salvation.

So there is no reason to sit and sun oneself, mystically speaking, but rather to put one's shoulder to the wheel and begin working on one's own being, vigorously and with clear insight. The gnostic revelation of salvation is intended for and aimed at the individual lives of every one of us. Therefore, if one understands its call and is willing to respond positively, one will need to work perseveringly at one's personal life, for as long as there is still time. If one does so, one will at the same time also be entitled to work for the salvation of others and say:

"Where are you hurrying, O men, you whose minds are clouded because you are drunk with the word that lacks all Gnosis, the word of absolute ignorance?"

Drunkenness, a befuddling of the senses, is an abnormality of the consciousness. Mankind is kept in a state of constant clouding of the consciousness by means of the blood-stream, which is urged through the town of nephrite, the head sanctuary, by the rhythm of the heart-beat. In the long run, this continual intoxication causes a degeneration, injuring and finally annihilating the various vital functions of the personality. As long as the emergency body has not yet reached such a state of complete degeneration that susceptibility to the liberating light is definitely excluded, there remains a possibility for the clouding of the consciousness to yield for a moment, for example as the result of a very intense experience, which then acts as a shock. In such moments the head and heart can be used in accordance with their calling. That is why Hermes said that, during such moments, the word of ignorance will no longer agree with you and that you will vomit it. In this state of soberness you will be able to see clearly, with the eyes of the twofold heart - the heart of Isis and the heart of Pymander - what you have to do.

The Light power of the Gnosis, the life-elixir of salvation enters the pupil again and again and makes itself felt in his system. However, this light power is always corrupted by the malignity of ignorance. If, for example, you participate for some time in a conference at one of the gnostic foci, you will be fully charged with light power. For a short time it will vibrate in your blood, but very soon and rather easily, without you yourself knowing, you will be absorbed again by the malignity of ignorance and tied down to the earth. In this way the light

power is again lost because of this malignity of ignorance. Then it could happen that, exactly at the moment that counts, you will be in want of pure oil for your life-lamp.

It is not at all imaginary, but rather a certainty, that in times to come there will be moments when the call will be heard: "Go out to meet the Bridegroom". Then you will have to show whether you are wearing your wedding garment. In this connection think of the parable of the foolish and the sensible bridesmaids; the sensible ones had enough oil for their lamps, while the foolish ones, at the psychological moment, had none.

In the present, too, all who want to enter the Wedding Hall as welcome guests will have to bear in mind the warning: "Stay awake, for you know neither the day nor the hour..."

IV

THE FETTERS OF THE BLOOD

In Romans 7 we read:

"We know that the law is spiritual; but I am carnal; and through the flesh I have been sold to sin. I cannot understand my own behaviour: I fail to carry out the things I want to do, and I find myself doing the very things I hate. When I act against my own will, that means I acknowledge that the law is good. Then it is no longer I that do it, but sin living in me. I know of nothing good living in me; I mean in my flesh. Certainly, the will to do what is good is in me, but the performance is not. Instead of doing the good things I want to do, I carry out the sinful things I do not want to do. When I act against my will, then it is no longer myself that does it, but sin which lives in me.

"Thus, I discover in me the following law: whenever I want to do good, it is something evil that comes about. After the inner man I dearly love God's law, but in my members I see a different law that battles against the law of my reason and makes me a prisoner of the law of sin, which rules in my members. What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? Thanks be to God; it happens through Jesus Christ, our Lord!"

We would now like to discuss at some length the fact that all in whom the new soul is not born, all who have not completely raised the light power of the Gnosis up into the heavenly heart, the open space behind the frontal bone, live continually in a state of intoxication.

The narcotising substance responsible for this is called by Hermes "the malignity of ignorance". It floods over the whole earth and corrupts every new soul condition developing in the body. The narcotising substance is atmospheric, yet is also active in the blood, even down to every atom of the personality, with the exception of some parts of the heart and head which are not yet entirely in the grip of the nature of death.

The malignity of ignorance seeks to gain dominion over the heart and head also, and thus make them unsuitable for their high destiny. However, if things are still all right; if, as a consequence of serious pupilship, you have not yet passed the fatal point, the malignity of ignorance will not succeed in doing more than clouding the vital parts of the heart and head somewhat, in order to prevent or neutralise any positive, liberating activity of the heart and head. So man finds himself in the state of captivity so adequately described by Paul in Romans 7: By virtue of the light that touches me, I turn towards the light and definitely want to do what is good, but the power existing in my blood dominates me and, consequently, I do what is evil.

Quite obviously the Universal Gnosis of Hermes does not call out "sober up", to the man who is fundamentally and structurally fettered by this malignity, for the poor creature would not be able to respond. Hermes called to the intoxicated one, "Stop and become sober. And if not all of you can do so, let those at least who can".

This is a warning to everybody, before the condition of intoxication deteriorates to a definite, unrestorable state of abnormality. It will be clear that, at this great turning point in time, this call must be emphatically repeated, especially now: "Stop and become sober, see again with the eyes of your heart.

Vomit forth the words of ignorance from which you have become drunk. And if you cannot do so, let those at least who can. Do not wait for one another. Arrive at a spontaneous, liberating new deed of life".

Now some pupils might think that these are good words and a splendid task for those who are still outside the gnostic Spiritual School. "These words do not refer to us", they will argue, "for we do respond to the call of the Gnosis; we have already been integrated into the Spiritual School".

If only it were true that it does not refer to you! Do not forget that Hermes did not direct this call to the masses, just as Paul, in Romans 7, did not address people in general. No, they were speaking to a selected group. When Hermes spoke to this group, he said emphatically: "And if not all of you, as a group, can do so, let those at least who can".

Addressing such a call to the masses would be absurd. The speaker would not be understood, and, moreover, people would be furious. Just imagine how it would be if you were to say to the Western type of man, who considers himself superior, who is accustomed from birth to train himself intellectually and mystically and who is entirely attuned to working with matter; who is feverishly busy, virtually day and night, in the social, economic and political fields; if you were to say to this type of man: "You are intoxicated. Become sober and be converted", while in the West, in manifold mystical activities, the word God and the name Jesus Christ are pronounced countless times every second. Directing such a call to the masses would make no sense at all.

However, those who are seriously trying to break away from the grip of the nature of death are, because of this, the object of concentrated endeavours by the malignity of

ignorance. The others who, not knowing that they are intoxicated, exist in nature and allow themselves to be dragged along by the power of the stream, have nothing to renounce because they are as true and genuine as possible; genuinely in nature and of nature.

If the malignity of ignorance is present in your blood and if you try, as a gnostically orientated person, to withdraw from it, you will develop a great tension which will give rise to an intense danger. Therefore, if in a time like ours, you do not take hold of yourself radically, you will become and remain abnormal, more abnormal than the average man of nature. He is wholly engrossed in the delusion of nature, he is perfectly one with it. Perhaps you, too, are absorbed in the delusion of nature, while you deem yourself to be a gnostic. Therefore, we repeat: be sober, perfectly sober, and look at yourself attentively.

The blood flows through the heart and head; it is the river of death which intoxicates and encapsulates all the vital parts of the heart and head, the town of nephrite, so that you do not do the good things you want to do, as you have been touched by the light of the Gnosis. On the contrary, you frequently do exactly the opposite and consequently enter the practice of evil. So you corrupt your body and the harbour of salvation will stay out of your reach, while the new astral field spreads over the gnostic realm. You will stand continually in the malignity of ignorance, not consciously, not deliberately, not because you are distinctly bad, but you keep on falling back into your blood type, almost daily. Your blood intoxicates you, narcotises you, and that is the difficulty.

By virtue of your natural birth you live in a hostile land and because of the essence of your existence you stand in self-maintenance. Everywhere there is hatred, quarrelling, discord and extreme individualism. Your blood is attuned to it and your natural consciousness has to adapt itself accordingly. Because of your blood type, the type you were born with, you possess certain standards. You consider this to be good and that to be evil, this is positive and that is negative. You have certain standards of right and wrong and insight into many things, and so you have your sympathies and antipathies.

However, your own standards definitely differ from those of every other person. Consequently, you have your own personal culture; you live and act out of it and that is why you have conflicts!

Now you have found the School and you want to participate in the new life-state, the state of the living soul. You know of that very different life from the doctrine of Hermes, from the gnostic teachings, from the lives of the great ones. The light of the Gnosis that seeks to guide you into the harbour of salvation comes to you and pervades you.

However, you stand in the practice of life; people talk to you and you see them act, you see their way of life, you are aware of what they seem; even their simple presence has an influence on you. If you do not like someone the unholy fire flares up fiercely in you. All he says, everything he does, even his presence is against your blood type and clashes with your personal blood culture. Immediately your consciousness is intoxicated and your blood state reveals itself to the full. As a consequence of the antipathy

which the other one arouses within you, the malignity of ignorance rushes up in your blood, you are affected to the depths of you being. Consequently, you oppose the other in words or thoughts or actions. Then you are like the human animal of the beginning.

In this state of intoxication you cannot behave otherwise, you are an animal devoid of reason. If you have not yet realised this, you will discover it presently from the results, for you will unavoidably create disharmony. There will be discord within and around you. The hurricanes of your blood sometimes whip up their waves mightily, with disastrous results. At a given moment you will no longer understand anything and you will say, while looking at some third person: "How can he react in such a way? I had such good intentions!" Certainly, your intentions were good but they were restricted to your own standards, your own blood culture. Your actions came from within, but such actions equal those of a beast of prey. It sits purring and wagging its tail and nevertheless puts its sharp teeth in its victim's throat.

In this way you continually experience your intoxication, your drunkenness, caused by the malignity of ignorance. It is a state of sheer insanity, of horrendous stupidity while nevertheless, and we wish to add this in the same breath, the signature of being a child of God perhaps shines from your face. With the childship of God as a beaming element in you, you nevertheless deny the light.

This is what Hermes Trismegistus fulminates against with harsh words: "You should first tear up the garment you are wearing, the fabric of ignorance, the basis of

malignity". If you do not do this, your pupilship is senseless. If you are not going to change your blood type, you will remain the person you have always been:

"It is the fetter of corruption, the lightless prison, the living death, a corpse with sense-organs, the tomb you are carrying about with you, the robber who is lodged within you who shows his hatred by what he loves and his envy by what he hates".

That is what you have to destroy! See through the snares evil lays for you, Hermes Trismegistus exhorted.

"Such is the hostile garment with which you have enveloped yourself, the garment which, by preventing you from breathing, drags you down to itself, so that you will not regain your sight, whereby you might behold the beauty of Truth and of the Good enclosed in it, and come to hate your garment's malignity and see through its tricks and snares. For it makes your sense organs insensitive by closing them off with an abundance of matter and filling them with sinful pleasures, so that you will not hear what it is so necessary for you to hear and will not see what you so much need to see".

This is clear language, so let us not misunderstand it. Just as there is a God within you, in your microcosm, so there is also evil within you. Through the living evil within you, you deny the God who is imprisoned in your microcosm. Accept this, although you do not like the idea. Accept that the evil you experience is not outside yourself, does not come from a being that exists outside of you. Do not think that someone else can harm you without your cooperation. The evil you suffer through others as well as the evil that is manifested in you yourself, keep perfect pace

with the powers of evil existing within you.

Evil is in everyone; it is inherent in the personality. It can command you and it will command you, and unfortunately you will find satisfaction in it as long as you act out of your blood culture. Unless you make every effort to undergo a very radical change, you will remain in this situation which pulls you down and keeps you down. The stream of life must flow through the town of nephrite, the head sanctuary. Then the sensorial faculties will again be susceptible to the light, matter will be removed from it and the sinful pleasures will disappear.

Hermes was not thinking here of sexual dissoluteness or degeneration. That is not even mentioned in this very profound address. The word "pleasure" has two meanings: it is used to refer to pleasures of the senses and also to pleasures of the soul. In the Bible it is often used in the latter sense, as in Psalm 36: "You give them drink from the river of Your pleasures", and elsewhere: "The Lord takes pleasure in His people".

Sinful pleasure in the hermetic text means pleasure in and satisfaction with actions and thoughts arising from one's blood culture. He who allows himself to be imprisoned by his blood type and culture is also imprisoned sensorially. He does evil, thinking he is doing good, and in this he finds his satisfaction. This is the fatal intoxication of sinful pleasure. You cannot say that Hermes Trismegistus did not make himself clear.

If you now realise to what extent the malignity of ignorance is inherent in nature-born man and how it causes the clouding of the consciousness that characterises the whole of dialectical life, then you might

ask: "How can I escape from it?"

V

KARMA-NEMESIS AND THE WAY TO REDEMPTION

How can one escape from the grip of one's own blood-type and the ensuing clouding of the consciousness? Hermes' answer is:

"Therefore, do not allow yourself to be carried along by the violence of the stream, but let those among you who are able to reach the harbour of salvation make use of the counter-current to put into port.

"Look for Him who will take you by the hand and lead you to the gates of the Gnosis, where the clear light shines in which there is no darkness; where no one is drunk, but all are sober and look up with their hearts to Him who wishes to be known.

"But listen well: His Voice cannot be heard and His Name cannot be pronounced, nor can material eyes view Him. Only the Spirit-Soul is capable of so doing."That is why you should first tear up the garment you are wearing: the fabric of ignorance, the basis of malignity, the fetter of corruption, the lightless prison".

Are we then to look for a teacher, for a master or an adept who will accept us as pupils, as is customary in the world around us? Are we then to enter into personal ties? Are we to look for someone whom we can follow as an authority?

No! The text refers to Him whom we can see only with

the Spirit-Soul. The text refers to Him whose Voice cannot be heard with the physical ear, whose Name cannot be pronounced with the physical organs of speech and who cannot be seen with physical eyes. The text refers to Him who will not reveal himself through one or another reflection sphere method. The text refers to Him who is called Pymander or alter-ego; the Other One, the Spirit. You will have to seek the guide who is not to be found on the horizontal level of dialectics. This guide wishes to take you by the hand. You will only be able to experience this Other One in a very special way; with the Spirit-Soul, the unity of the spiritual consciousness and the heart which has been purified in the Gnosis.

If you open your heart for the light of lights, the rose of the heart will open and the colour and scent of the rose will console you. If you follow that light, in accordance with its aims and essence and if you cause it to circulate in your system, right through all the obstacles and against the intoxicating stream, you will be able to fix the nucleus of the light in the heavenly heart, in the open space behind the frontal bone. Then you will prepare this Upper Room, this purple hall in the town of nephrite in the right way and Pymander, having arisen from his sleep of death, will ascend his throne in the Upper Room and celebrate with you the Lord's Supper.

To celebrate the Lord's Supper will make real sense only if it can be received in the Upper Room. Pymander, the God within you, will then guide you to the gates of the Gnosis, to the gates of the Golden Head, where the bright light shines in which there is no darkness, where

no one is intoxicated but all are perfectly sober.

If you want to pass through these gates, if you are willing to liberate this Kingdom within you, you will first have to tear up the garment of ignorance, the garment of daily denial. This is the core of pupilship of the Spiritual School. This will keep you busy every day, if you take it seriously. You will have to nullify your blood type, your blood culture and thus the dialectical individualism out of which your entire character and conduct are to be explained, so that you change daily.

Through your ordinary, everyday habits and behaviour, which are to be explained out of your blood type, you deny the God within you. We are not alluding to exceptional behaviour, to exceptionally bad or evil things. No, we are emphatically aiming at your everyday attitude to life, as determined by your character and blood type. This attitude to life is the central power of sin, the cause of what is most monstrous, Hermes said. If, in the School of the Golden Rosycross, we talk about the endura, about the abolition of the natural self and the transfiguring ascent into the Other One, this is not merely superficial, academic knowledge transmitted as a means to an end, but it has a profound meaning which seizes the entire blood being. One cannot cast off the evil of denial by a resolution of the will: "I will never do it again". No, it requires an intense struggle, for your blood type is completely one with the dialectical universe.

The evil of ignorance, of denial, is atmospheric, it is one with the essence and the inherent law of the dialectical universe. If you want to understand this, you can consult

the fourth book of the hermetic treasury.

You will read in it that the great space of the seventh cosmic domain, which is called the garden of the gods, was formerly, before the dawn of manifestation, an infinite darkness in the sense of something not yet created; the chaos, or the abyss, as the Bible sometimes calls it.

In this darkness nothing but the Water of Life existed, the cosmic root-substance, Abraxis, which means "the properties of space". When the day of creation dawned, the holy light rose out of the darkness, the properties of the cosmic root-substance freed themselves and from the nature of darkness several nature-powers separated themselves, which Hermes called gods, or rectors. In the field of still unformed space seven powers, seven radiations became visible, the seven rays of the Seven-Spirit of the All-manifestation with the aid of which God, the Logos, is connected with His creation and His creatures.

Under the influence of the rays of the Seven-Light, in their unlimited diversity and multiformity, the whole of creation burst into a magnificent garment of colours and shapes, while the Universe, ordered by the breath of creation, was kept in motion by a circulation of divine Spirit radiations. The planetary forces, the planetary spirits and their systems, created by their own power what they were bidden to create. In this way, for example, the various kingdoms of nature on this planet developed.

All this, though of great diversity, contained the seed

of rebirth. In the grandiose garden of the gods all this life, which developed everywhere and was maintained by universal Spirit-radiations, would awaken in that from which it had formerly sprung: the Universal Spirit itself. In this way, the entities who once could be called "men" in the true sense of the word also came forth out of the womb of eternity. The word "man" is derived from "Manas", which means "thinker", someone who knows the truth and wisdom of God and who knows God's plan.

The men of the beginning were called to fulfil the divine laws in the vast universe of the seventh cosmic domain; to put the knowledge of God's plan into practice with the aid of what was made available to them by the creations of the nature-gods, the rectors. In the garden of the gods everything was made available to men. It was granted to them to multiply by splitting the spirit, which means as God out of God, as spirit out of spirit. In this way the universe of the seventh cosmic domain was filled with glory.

There is a universally applicable law of nature, which links together everything in the entire universe and organises all the multiplicities of creations and forces, movements and actions into one single faculty. This law of nature can be described as a key power; it is a tremendously powerful faculty. In mythology, this primordial power, this basic law of creation, is called Nemesis, which means that it always remains the same, that it cannot be affected. That is why in the Greek world of ideas Nemesis is referred to as the goddess of avenging justice who punishes vice and persecutes every misdemeanour and every delinquency.

Another name for this primordial power is karma. As a principle it is absolute and unchangeable. That is why it was once said in the Universal Doctrine that "Karma-Nemesis creates peoples and mortals. But, once created, it is they who make Karma-Nemesis either a fury or a rewarding angel. Indeed, wise is he who venerates Nemesis".

In its undeviating immovability this arch-power of the All, as the Logos of nature, keeps the great plan of God absolutely safe. The spirit of God radiates a plan into the abyss; the power of the spirit awakens the power of nature and the All begins to move and manifest itself. Now there is one controlling factor: Nemesis, which safeguards God's plan. It is a power that knows no negotiating, radiates no wisdom, no good and no evil, no positivity nor any negativity; it is a power that only maintains the will of the Logos, right through all deviating or opposing influences. If you consider this, you will see that it is overwhelmingly magnificent. God's plan is upheld eternally; it cannot be affected; it will be carried out. But at the same time, what an enormous danger it brings with it! Whenever you violate the law of Nemesis, it corrects you, it appears as the avenger, as "fate". Fate, or blind fate, is the name by which we best know Nemesis. That is why Nemesis is represented as a goddess with a bandage over her eyes.

Perhaps you will now understand what happened in the distant past. Part of mankind abandoned the wisdom of the Spirit and experimented on its own. At the same moment Nemesis appeared as the correcting one: God cannot forsake the works of his hands. The correcting

law of nature appeared. In this way the fire of disaster was ignited in the vast universe. The violation of the law was answered by the fire of fate. In this maelstrom man was cut off from the Spirit; in this state he was man, Manas, thinker, only in name.

In his lack of wisdom he began to serve the various gods of nature. But however each planetary deity, each planetary power of nature, differs from every other, these powers of nature cannot do otherwise than accomplish their mandate of creation. Since the planetary powers are servants of mankind, you can imagine how, through a degenerated mankind, the planetary powers were continually pushed out of equilibrium and, consequently, were corrected by fate, by Nemesis. So worlds perish through fire; so unholiness invokes new unholiness and counter-natural forces. So mankind stands in the atmosphere of the malignity of ignorance; ignorance of the original human state of life. So every microcosm possesses in its auric being a still unpaid bill of fate, of Nemesis, a bill which must be paid down to the last penny. And whenever one makes a partial payment against this bill by means of one's fateful course through the nature of death, one almost always develops a new debt. All of you know Karma-Nemesis very well!

How can you escape from this circle of the doomed? Nemesis will not help you. She never has; she cannot do so. She only corrects, she only demands retribution, but without any hatred.

However, a way of redemption does exist. The Spiritual School seizes every opportunity to speak about

it. Whenever it does it does not preach, it does not seek to offer edifying words and doctrines. It continually emphasises that, if you want to escape your fate, you will actually have to go the way of redemption. You will need to begin to rend the garment of ignorance, to annul your blood type, for it contains the cause.

The universal path of redemption is again shown to you. Therefore, walk this path! Rend the garment of daily denial you are wearing. If you do so, you will begin to make peace with Nemesis, with the goddess of avenging justice.

VI

THE REALISATION OF GOD'S PLAN

Once again, we would like to draw your attention to Nemesis, the goddess of avenging justice, the natural law usually known as fate; the goddess with whom you and all your fellow men still have an open account. Her warning letters, calling for continued part-payment, reach you continually and their sphere of action is in your blood, in your entire life. They manifest themselves as fate, threat, sorrow, distress, weakness, disease and death. On her part there is no sadistic pleasure at all in afflicting you in this way, because Nemesis has her eyes covered with a bandage. She corrects impersonally and she will keep doing so as long as you have not yet begun once more to walk the path to true humanity.

If you think this over, you can imagine with what enormous sorrow this planet is burdened, what woe is spread over the earth, filling all the kingdoms of nature. Indeed, the planet on which we live suffers intolerable pain - and the fire of Nemesis keeps on raging!

This is the right moment to draw your attention to the exceptional point of view of the Universal Gnosis among all the other points of view we know in this world. People ask one another: "What are you? What denomination do you belong to? What are you interested in? What is your hobby? Do you like philosophy? Or occultism?" People talk like this because they are possessed by the malignity of ignorance; because their personality-vehicles and

state of being are crystallised; because they no longer possess any semblance of the true original man's glory. That is why your seeking in the midst of the most intolerable grief and pain is at most a pastime; you try to hide behind it.

You should realize that there is only one way to meet the demands of Nemesis and settle your account with her, only one method - that of the Universal Gnosis. There is no other solution. The Gnosis not only asks you to take part in some worship, to sit in a temple with an earnest face; it does not ask you just to be a loyal member of a community or to send up prayers and observe rules and do exercises. The Gnosis calls not only for your interest, it calls for your whole self. It asks you to go the path; everything or nothing!

One may ask: "Is it in fact still possible to settle accounts with Nemesis? Hasn't the general degeneration progressed to such an extent that restoration is impossible?"

If that were so, your path through life, viewed objectively, would be tragic and dramatic in the extreme. We say "objectively", for you would then no longer even feel the dramatic, tragic aspect of life, you would no longer experience it as such. You would take life as it is, just as so many people do; just doing what others do, following the law of self-maintenance, the law of an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. You would take the grip of Nemesis for granted and accept it, saying "Well, such is life", as if there were nothing more to be said.

If this is your attitude, the Gnosis has nothing to tell you and never will have anything to tell you. Then you

will no longer be able to rise out of your intoxication, then you will no longer be able to become sober. Then the Gnosis will have to wait for your death, for the dissolution of your personality within the microcosm. As soon as the microcosm again possesses a new personality, the Gnosis will try again to reach it. However, how much time will have to go by before that stage is reached! That is why Hermes said: "At least let those respond who can".

The people gathered in a gnostic Spiritual School are mostly those who "suffer pain in the ego" as a Dutch author once put it. We have had to discuss things that may have caused you pain, but it remains to be seen whether we have wounded you to such extent that you are suffering pain "right to the depths of your ego". Many people suffer intolerably, but the ego, the dialectical "I", still roars and tries to escape from what is intolerable, in one way or another. If the School is obliged to state a truth that causes pain to the natural being in order to provide liberating insight, it may happen that some people become hardened in their I in an attempt to escape from this woe in a manner that differs from what the Gnosis teaches.

When it is said that many "suffer pain in the ego", this means that they are filled with pain and hopelessness right to the highest pinnacle of their dialectical state, involving all aspects of their I-being. Such people experience the course of dialectics as a tragedy, as inhuman to such an extent that they protest and look for a way out. Perhaps they have not yet heard of a

correcting Nemesis, but intuitively they realize that the generally accepted philosophy of life is wrong. They seek the path, with the pain they are suffering in the ego constantly rising. When such people have found the path they no longer have any hesitation. They go, directly and absolutely, accepting all the consequences. As a result of their experiences they see the path as a solution, as the only possibility, as their joyful journey home to the Father.

If this is the situation you find yourself in, then the last words of the fourth book will apply to you, too:

"From the beginning this has been their path: to gain life experience and wisdom regarding their fate from the circular course of the gods. Finally they are liberated and leave great monuments behind them on earth, which remind us of the sublime works they performed as liberated ones.

"Everything in the course of time that takes away light and spreads darkness: the formation of animated flesh and of progeny in the manner of young animals, and of all human works and everything that causes withering,* will be made new again by Fate, by the renewal of the gods and the circular course of nature when its number has grown full.

* Because withering is the opposite of growing, which God has set as a task for man: "Grow while you increase". (See Volume I, First Book, verse 47, and this volume, Fourth Book, verse 10).

"For the divine is the cosmic All which has flowed together to form a unity and has been renewed through

nature; for nature, too, is anchored in God's Omnipotence."

Let us try to analyse this so that, after all the serious and oppressive facts we have had to present, a clear insight will be obtained into the way the young Gnosis goes with its pupils.

You will have to understand that what we have in mind is not experience of life and wisdom in the ordinary sense. In the heart and head sanctuaries a very special life exists that may still be slumbering, but which nevertheless is present. Your sevenfold heart, as the mother Isis, is capable of revealing this life, of living it. After you have entered this life, it will be granted to your heavenly heart in the head sanctuary, the purple hall in the town of nephrite, to participate in the one, absolute wisdom.

You can begin immediately with this birth in Bethlehem and the victory on Golgotha if only you are willing to tear up the garment of ignorance, of denial, the garment of the blood culture behind which you have barricaded yourself as if behind the walls of a fortress. Your entire character, your entire manner of thinking and acting, your nature-born being must be reduced to rubble; it is the basis of your malignity, the fetter of corruption, the lightless prison, the living death, the corpse with sense-organs, the tomb you are carrying about with you. All these consequences of your conflicts with Nemesis, yours and those of your predecessors in the microcosm, must be nullified - immediately and absolutely - by you.

The new morning is beckoning. The new gnostic realm has become a reality and manifests itself in a steadily growing, powerful experience. Do you want to participate in this? You can, if only you have at your disposal an entirely new being, if only you have opened wide the doors of the still sleeping life within you.

That is why what we have discussed has been placed before your consciousness in such undisguised language. The point is that you prepare yourself in time for the Wedding which will be celebrated, the Wedding of the Lamb, the Alchemical Wedding of our Father Brother Christian Rosycross. Open the sevenfold heart for the Light of the Gnosis and try to make this light circulate within you in the shortest possible time, by means of an incessant, concentrated attention. Live in a new way with all your fellow men. If you cause the light to circulate, the liberated Pymander will rise out of his grave and ascend his throne in the heavenly heart. From that moment on the Spirit, the God within you, will take over the command of your life.

Please understand that we do not want to preach or to present yet another aspect of our doctrine. The essential thing is for you to understand and consciously bear in mind that the time of fulfilment, the harvest time of this period of life, has come.

If you want to go the way of the Gnosis, isn't it obvious that you will have to restore the harmony between you and Nemesis, the harmony between you and the primordial law of nature in the garden of the gods? Only in this way will you be able to break through the circular courses of the gods, of the nature aeons, the circular

courses that keep you imprisoned. The nature aeons will continue to exist and to fulfil their tasks forever. But as soon as you establish harmony between yourself and the primordial law, all the nature aeons, all the forces that surround and oppress you and keep you imprisoned, will lose their destructive aspects as far as you are concerned and their great conflict with you will cease.

The renewal of times not only takes place in certain periods, determined by the course of the seven rays with regard to the world. It may also occur for anyone, at any moment, if he is truly able to seek and to find the one life and the one wisdom, and can begin to live in harmony with Nemesis. And then just watch the results!

The hermetic philosophy provides you with a broad perspective of the results that emerge when you, and ever more who go with you, walk the path of liberation and restoration. As soon as you enter the world of the living soul, you will have freed yourself from the wheel of birth and death. The soul will then no longer be bound to the flesh in dialectical nature, and if many tear themselves free of the wheel of birth and death, sexual propagation and the birth of animated flesh, and all the ingenious human activities connected with these things will decrease.

The earth, as a dark, dialectical planet, will become more and more depopulated. As nature always tries to satisfy the needs of its creatures, the planet will, as soon as this period begins and "the number of the circulations of nature has grown full", enter a phase of rest, of restoration, of equilibrium with the Logos. Everything

material will disappear and all that is forced, all the necessities of this nature, will cease to exist.

If you go the path, if you go together, as a group, this development will be accelerated. The natural aeons will be renewed by fate and the circular courses of nature will again begin to revolve, but in a different way. As a result of this period of rest and the disappearance of the old, our mother- planet will awaken in a renewed state. The entire earth will then have regained its equilibrium with the primordial law, with Nemesis, the goddess of divine justice.

Only then will the plan of God be truly fulfilled as far as our dark planet and its dark inhabitants are concerned. The earth will become the holy earth once more, a divine work- shop of which the Bible says: "The whole earth will be filled with God's glory".

Birth and all the works of God on earth will be restored in a perfect state. The entire earth will be possessed as an inheritance not by animated flesh in the dialectical sense, but by living soul entities who will use this workshop for its task.

In this way everything in the course of time that takes away light and spreads darkness, everything that, by its variance from the divine mandate, causes withering, will be renewed by Fate, through the renewal of the gods and the circulation of nature, and it will regain its equilibrium with the Logos.

"For the divine is the cosmic All which has flowed together to form a unity and has been renewed through nature; for nature, too, is anchored in God's Omnipotence".

VII

THE HEART-CRY OF THE UNIVERSAL GNOSIS

In view of what has been discussed so far, one should be able to understand why, in Biblical terms, there is rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents. For if fallen mankind returns to the old paths of salvation and again seeks life and wisdom; if mankind rediscovers life and wisdom, dialectical nature will no longer have any right to exist! So it will, after a period of rest and restoration of the earth-cosmos, disappear totally, and then the entire space of the seventh cosmic domain will once again be able to be called the garden of the gods in the full sense of the word. In this respect, the Gnosis is the Way, the Truth and the Life.

So let us realize fully the tremendous importance of the values with which we are confronted in the hermetic philosophy. The way of the Gnosis means not only your redemption, but at the same time the redemption of the world and mankind. That is why you should consider what is said by Paul in Romans 8: "Creation waits with eager longing for God's sons to be revealed, for creation was made subject to fruitlessness... and we know that up to the present the whole of creation has been groaning in all its parts as if in the pangs of childbirth".

All of creation - and this is an axiom - depends

entirely upon you and us. All of us, everyone individually and all of us together, by virtue of our being, hold the destiny of the world and mankind in our hands. That is why we dare to speak of the new gnostic realm, because we have not only our own redemption in mind but also realize and experience very clearly that the Gnosis exists for the world and mankind.

You will therefore need to fathom very deeply the tremendous importance of the Gnosis and your relation to it, and understand that our call is not intended simply to ask you to participate in our efforts for a while. Our call conveys the heart-cry of the Universal Gnosis, of the whole of creation, to cooperate actively in the manifestation of the children of God. It stands to reason that, if you respond to this call, you will begin with yourself. For how can you help a sunken human being to become a child of God if you yourself are still ploughing through the dirty gutters of dialectics?

Finally, we wish once again to draw your attention to the 16th verse of the fourth hermetic book, where we read that the divine will manifests itself when the cosmic All, having flowed together to form a unity, has been renewed through nature. The Universal Doctrine, the holy language of all times, refers to this singular activity of "flowing together to form a unity" in all kinds of ways. It is an activity that periodically makes itself felt very strongly. It takes place through a change in the atmosphere, the appearance of the

light of Christ in the air, the manifestation of the Son of Man in the clouds of heaven.

The new astral field, which has spread over the new gnostic realm, is a symptom of the coming renewal that will manifest itself in those who attune themselves entirely to its vibrations. As a result of this the new nature will again exist in the Godhead. The new gnostic realm is a foreshadowing of this coming magnificence. It is in this light that we should see what has happened during the past few years in the life of the Spiritual School. We are thinking, for example, of the creation and consecration of new foci of the young gnostic Brotherhood.

With the aid of the universal gnostic chain, which reveals itself in the new astral field, you can accomplish the great process of liberation, of transformation of what is unholy and mortal, into what is divine and immortal, and you can thus fulfil your true calling in the service of God, the world and mankind. The first necessity is that you tear up the garment of ignorance, the vesture of the malignity of denial. Dare to entrust yourself to the light of the Gnosis and open wide the seven chambers of your heart. Put the axe to your attitude to life, to your blood type, and start today. If you have already started, continue this work with renewed strength and make every effort, because that is the point of your entire pupilship.

We drive the sword into our own being, and in this way we rend the garment of the malignity of denial, we tear up the garment of ignorance.

VIII
FIFTH BOOK
FROM A SERMON OF
HERMES TO TAT

1. I give this explanation in the first place, my son, out of love for man and reverent devotion to God. There is no piety more righteous than to pay attention to the essential things and to give thanks for them to Him who made them, which I will never cease to do.
2. But as there is nothing real and true here, Father, what should a man do to live in the right manner?
3. Live a God-serving life, my son! He who is truly pious will love wisdom beyond all measure; without love of wisdom it is impossible to reach the highest piety. He who has gained insight into the essence of the All and has learned to understand how, and by whom and for whose sake everything has been joined to form an order, will give thanks for all this to God, the Demiurge, the Architect of the World, the all-bountiful Father who surrounds him with bene-

faction and guards him faithfully.

4. By giving thanks he will become devout and by his piety he will also know where Truth is and who it is. Because of this insight his devout directedness will continually increase.
5. Never, my son, will the soul, even if it is in the body, be able to slip down into its opposite, if it has reduced the weight of its debts so as to grasp what is really Good and True.
6. If the soul comes to know Him who called it into existence, it will be filled with immeasurable love; it will forget all evil and can no longer be separated from what is Good.
7. This, my son, must be the aim of piety. If you return to this state and live in the right manner and if you die in blessedness, your soul will certainly know whither it should wing its flight.
8. This, my son, is the only way to Truth, which was also followed by those who went before us and on which they received the Good.
9. Sublime and well-trodden is this road, but difficult for the soul to follow as long as it is in the body.

10. First it has to struggle against itself, to bring about a great separation and allow one part to gain victory over it. For a conflict arises between one part and the other two parts: the former tries to escape while the latter try to drag the former — that is, the soul — down from below. The result is a fight and a great trial of strength between the part that wants to escape and the two others that strive to detain it.
11. However, it makes no small difference whether the one side or the other wins, for the one strives with great effort towards the good, while the others make their home in the domain of perdition.
12. The one yearns for freedom, the others embrace slavery.
13. If the two are vanquished, they remain locked up within themselves, inactive and lonely, abandoned by the one that rules. But if the one part is defeated, it is carried off as a captive by the two and deprived of everything and it is punished by the life it lives here.
14. See, my son, this is the guide on the way that

leads to freedom: you must give up your body before it dies and overcome the life of conflict; then, if you have won that victory, you will return to the Highest.

* * *

15. And now, my son, I will summarise in brief aphorisms the essential things: you will understand what I am going to say if you remember what you have heard before.
16. All that really *is*, is moved; only the non-existing is motionless.
17. Each body is subject to change; but not all bodies are capable of dissolving.
18. Not every creature is mortal; not every creature is immortal.
19. What is capable of dissolving, is perishable; what is permanently unchangeable is eternal.
20. What is ever being born is ever being destroyed again; but what has come into being once and for all is never lost, nor does it become

something else.

21. Firstly there is God; secondly the Cosmos and thirdly Man.
22. The Cosmos is for Man's sake, and Man for God's.
23. The part of the soul that perceives by means of the senses is mortal, but the part which responds to Reason is immortal.
24. Every manifested reality is immortal; but every manifested reality is nevertheless changeable.
25. All that exists is twofold; nothing that is stands still.
26. Not all things are moved by a soul; yet it is a Soul that moves all that exists.
27. All that is susceptible to suffering gains experience; all that gains experience suffers.
28. All that is subject to pain, namely the mortal creature, is also subject to joy; not all that knows joy, namely the immortal creature, knows pain too.
29. Not every body is subject to disease; every

body that is subject to disease is also subject to dissolution.

30. The Spirit-Soul is in God; reason is in man; reason is in the Spirit-Soul; the Spirit-Soul is not susceptible to suffering.
31. Nothing in the mortal body is true; in the incorporeal there is no falsehood at all.
32. All that has come into being is subject to change; not all that has come into being is perishable.
33. There is nothing good on earth; there is nothing evil in heaven.
34. God is good; man is bad.
35. Good acts out of free will; evil acts involuntarily.
36. The gods intend good works for good purposes.
37. The good order is sublime righteousness; the good order is the law.
38. The divine law is time; the human law is evil.
39. Time is the revolving of the world; time is the destroyer of man.
40. Everything in heaven is unchangeable; every- thing on earth is changeable.

41. Nothing in heaven is subjugated and dependent; nothing on earth is free.
42. There is nothing that heaven does not know; on earth no knowledge exists.
43. What is earthly has no part in what is heavenly.
44. All things in heaven are above any blemish or revilement; all things on earth are worthy of blame.
45. What is divine is not mortal; what is mortal is not divine.
46. What is sown does not in all cases come to birth; what is born has with certainty also been sown.
47. For a transitory body there are two time-spaces: that from conception to birth and that from birth to death. For the imperishable body there is only one time, beginning at the moment of creation.
48. The dissolvable bodies grow and diminish.
49. Transient matter revolves in opposites: genesis and destruction. Imperishable matter effects changes either within itself or in what is of equal rank.

50. The birth of man is the beginning of dying; the dying of man is the beginning of birth.
51. What is born will thus also die; what dies will thus also be born.
52. Of the essential things some exist in bodies, some in the world of ideas, some in the world of forces. The body is also in the world of ideas, but the idea and the force are also in the body.
53. What is divine has no part in perishability; mortality has no part in what is divine.
54. What is mortal does not go into an immortal body; but rather, what is immortal takes part in what is mortal.
55. The manifesting forces of God do not direct themselves upwards, but downwards.
56. All that happens on earth bestows no benefit at all on the matters of heaven; but the matters of heaven are of the greatest importance for what belongs to life on earth.
57. Heaven is the home where those are welcomed who wear the imperishable body; the earth is the dwelling-place of mortal bodies.

58. Earthly existence is devoid of reason; heaven is in accordance with divine reason.
59. The harmonies of above are heaven's foundation; the decrees of law on earth are imposed on the earth.
60. Heaven is the first element, the earth is the last.
61. Providence is the divine order; fate is the servant of Providence.
62. Chance is a blind, orderless impulse, the chimera of a force, deceitful illusion.
63. What is God? The never deviating, unchangeable Good. What is man? An ever-writhing evil.

* * *

64. If you keep in mind these aphorisms, it will not be difficult to remember the explanations I have already given you in greater detail, since these aphorisms are their summaries.
65. However, avoid discussions with many; certainly not because you want to deny them your wealth, but rather because the multitude will

only think you one to be laughed at. Like attracts like; but the unlike is never friend to the unlike. The words I have spoken will only attract very few listeners, or perhaps not even those few. Moreover, these words have the following special characteristic: they urge evil ones on to still greater malignity. That is why it is necessary to be on guard against the multitude; they do not conceive the liberating power and glory of what is being said.

66. How do you mean this, Father?
67. Like this, my son. The entire animal life in man is utterly inclined to evil. It comes into the world with evil innate in it and therefore takes pleasure in evil.
68. If now this animal being is told that the world has had a beginning and that everything takes place according to Providence and fate, inasmuch as allotted Destiny * governs all, will that not be much worse? For if this being despises the All because it has had a beginning and attributes the causes of evil to the allotted Destiny, it will ultimately no longer refrain from any evil deed at all.

69. Therefore, you must be watchful with regard to them, so that they, in their state of ignorance, will be less wicked for fear of what they cannot inwardly comprehend.

*** Karma-Nemesis**

IX

THE PRIMORDIAL LAW OF THE GNOSTIC MYSTERIES

We will now discuss the fifth book of Hermes Trismegistus. The beginning is a confession of the true love for God and of true love for all mankind as the guiding principle for a truly liberating life. This shows clearly that the familiar evangelical story that we find in the Bible and which is related to the above is unmistakably hermetic.

Someone came to Jesus and asked: "Which is the first and foremost commandment?" The answer was: "Love God above all and your neighbour as yourself". This is "the whole law and the prophets"! This is the key to the door which leads to liberating life. It is a hermetic axiom. We will now investigate this inescapable fact, in order to enable you to test yourself on the basis of this standard.

"Love God above all and your neighbour as yourself". Do you fulfil this primordial law of the gnostic mysteries? You will perhaps reply with the lamentation which is as old as the dialectical world itself. This complaint is heard in the second verse of the text: "But as there is nothing real and true, Father, what should a man do to live in the right manner?"

How can we comply with the classical primordial

law, when this world is like it is? We do not need to describe the nature of our dialectical world order as we have so often done before. We are at present indeed confronted with so many dark clouds that we need only mention this lamentation. You know about it, because it is part of you; everyone knows this lamentation from his own life's experience.

If someone decides to follow faithfully the instructions of the primordial gnostic law, he will very soon find that he meets great obstacles. If, for example, you consider the love for your ego, the self-love which is always predominant; if you think of the hatred which is the result of all self-maintenance; of the countless different norms in life, by far the majority of which will fill you with great repulsion; if you think of the countless tendencies which frighten you, then without doubt the perfect love of your fellow men, exercised spontaneously, will meet numerous misgivings and insuperable obstacles within you.

What should we do to achieve a correct balance with the primordial gnostic law and receive the key to liberating life? Hermes said that we, who live in a world of physical phenomena, should try to penetrate to what lies behind them. Then we will understand. Then you will understand your fellow men and be able to help them. You must try to obtain knowledge of how it happened that man fell and degenerated to this present state of life and behaviour. Once you possess this wisdom, which is not intellectual knowledge but first-hand inner wisdom, as a

property that streams throughout your whole being and which you cannot ignore, you will love your neighbour - that is, mankind as a whole - and you will also understand the nobility of your deeper self.

To come to this wisdom you will have to lead, as Hermes put it, a God-serving life, you will have to become pious. "He who is truly pious will love wisdom beyond all measure, for without love of wisdom it is impossible to reach the highest piety".

So we have to ask ourselves what piety means as a way to arrive at wisdom, as a method of raising us to the Arch- Gnosis.

The answer might appear to be simple and you could say: "I know what piety is, I know perfectly well what it means". You would then tend to continue and devote your attention to other aspects of the hermetic philosophy. But do you really know what a God-serving and pious life is? If you know it so well and if you lead such a life, may we then ask: "What are the results?" Results which, as Hermes confirmed, would have placed you in the midst of the absolute wisdom of the Mercury-consciousness. For piety is the key to wisdom.

When we speak of a pious life, we often think too much of what is normally considered to be a religious life. Throughout the centuries mystics have buried us under various statements concerning piety. Such virtue is considered to be connected with a life in a closed cell and with many self-chastisements and other torments or, in general, with the life of religious people who fulfil their religious duties very faithfully

and conscientiously.

There are millions of such people and there always have been. But, where then is the truth, the liberating truth which must necessarily be the result of a pious life?

"He who has gained insight into the essence of the All and has learned to understand how, by whom and for whose sake everything has been joined to form an order, will give thanks for all this to God, the Demiurge, the Architect of the World, the all-bountiful Father who surrounds him with benefaction and guards him faithfully. By giving thanks he will become devout and by his piety he will also know where Truth is and who it is. Because of this insight, his devout directedness will continually increase".

Almost all the pupils of the young Gnosis possess the seriousness required for pupilship. If the School were to find that this is not the case in some pupil, he would have to leave the School. Serious pupilship and a religious life in a church or sect have the same value; they are at best a basis on which to begin; they form the foundation stone. However, the miserable thing is that many place themselves on this stone and remain standing there or sit down on it, labouring under the delusion that a certain religiosity or an outwardly serious pupilship are sufficient for liberating life or for wisdom.

He who clings to a certain religious form of expression or associates with a habitual pupilship will unavoidably crystallise. Because of this

crystallisation it will become increasingly difficult for the light to approach such a pupil. Therefore, this kind of pupilship, as it is sometimes understood, involves an enormous danger.

As soon as the foundation stone has been laid, building must begin. The building must rise into space. Something will have to be realised which did not previously exist, and when it is realised it must be used. Consequently, religiosity and devoutness are entirely different from piety.

The fifth book of Hermes is, as you will have seen, part of a dialogue between Hermes and Tat, or Tatius. The name "Tat" or "Tatius" implies kingship, of being called to kingship, of becoming a higher, true man. Tat is told that the key to becoming a true man lies in piety, that is, in the courage to persevere in the face of impediments, against all opposition, to persevere in spite of what people may say and in spite of the situations and difficulties that may be gathering around you.

If you cannot summon up this courage, if you do not possess this perseverance, if you do not desire to break through, you will never attain wisdom, never arrive at love for mankind in the sense of the primordial law of the Gnosis. To "love God above all" means to persevere in spite of everything, even if it sometimes does not suite you with respect to your everyday life. The wisdom that is of God will come to you if you show this courage of conviction consistently. Then you will have passed the gate. If you really dare to entrust yourself to the mighty light-

force of the Gnosis, in perfect sincerity, and push all the difficulties aside without accepting them, without acknowledging them, you will have passed the gate. Then the wisdom which is of God will come over you, and this wisdom is always identical with love, which is in everyone and for everyone. Just think of the first two streams of the universal Seven-Light; the first stream of manifestation of the divine fullness is followed immediately by the stream of universal Love.

If you have understood this, you will realise that it gives you the key to all that is Good. The Gnosis comes to you and offers you the key to the secret of liberating life. If you can see this, you will know that nothing can hinder you on the path, provided you invariably and consistently practise piety. However, if you do not want to use this key you will achieve nothing at all; nothing more than an honest, bourgeois pupilship as Mr. or Mrs. So and So. Then your pupilship will be nothing but a kind of furnishing and a camouflage for your dreary, miserable dialectical existence.

These problems, if you want to call them such, are very old. For example, just read the letter of James, in which the emphasis is placed on action, which means on that element of your pupilship with which you are able to break through to attainment.

However, do not be mistaken again. Many think them- selves to be not only religious, but pious as well. They may tell us: " Haven't we provided proof in

the past years? Aren't we loyal in every respect? Haven't we made available our money and our property, our time, health and diligence?" The answer will have to be: "But however magnificent and splendid this may be, have you never tried to make a compromise? Have you never consciously put off necessary things? Have you never, when you heard the inner voice say: "You'll have to take part in this", simply left it unanswered on account of all sorts of dialectical motives?"

The Gnosis demands your whole self. The Gnosis does not care about the circumstances of your everyday life. It cannot do so, nor is it allowed to do so. Has it not been so that just when you stopped doing what you were required to do, piety was about to manifest itself within you? That is why in the Bible these things are always explained with the utmost clarity. Just listen to what Jesus told his disciples: "Anyone who prefers father and mother to me is not worthy of me; anyone who prefers son or daughter to me is not worthy of me; anyone who does not take up his cross and follow in my footsteps is not worthy of me. Anyone who finds his life will lose it, but anyone who loses his life for my sake will find it".

Should you prefer quotations from world literature, think of the well-known Ibsen-principle: *all or nothing*. Do you have the courage to follow this advice? It does require courage, the courage of piety instead of sanctimoniousness or bourgeois excuses. That is what the Gnosis demands of you; it is the contents of the dialogue between Hermes and Tat. Tat

was a seeker and Hermes did not keep him busy with mystical talk. Hermes touched the weak points of seeking man with the sword of his words: the heart must be opened for the gnostic light. The Spiritual School never tires of telling its pupils about this.

You will only be able to do this in true piety. It is only in this way that you will be able to open your hearts for the radiations of the Seven-Spirit. The fifth book of Hermes Trismegistus points this out at the beginning. It is only in this way, by a truly God-serving life, that you can settle your account with Nemesis. If you reject such a life practice, fate will follow you in spite of your so-called serious pupilship. Then you will continue to fall from one trouble into another; no sooner will you have overcome one difficulty or recovered from whatever blow, than vexation will begin again the very next day, only in a different form. That is how things are in dialectical nature.

However, if you open your heart in true piety for the light of the Gnosis, the light will enter and you will arise in wisdom. And without wisdom the sublimity of piety cannot be contemplated.

If you really want to be a pupil of the gnostic Spiritual School, step over the frontier into the circle of eternity. Only when you have passed this frontier will you truly "stand on the carpet". Then you will be able to link yourself with the Triangle and the Square, with the Holy Seven-Spirit.

X

THE IMITATION OF CHRIST

We have seen that he who truly lives his pupilship and, as a consequence, puts piety into practice; he who allows the Seven-Spirit to enter his heart sanctuary and, with the courage of godliness, accepts the consequences, will grow daily in grace and wisdom, in the great change of soul-birth.

The Spiritual School always runs the risk that, if it frequently repeats certain tenets, the pupils will become somewhat accustomed to them; the tenets are then merely repeated. Of course this is done with respect and sincerely, but these tenets are, in this state of being, experienced at best in a religious way - and worldly religiosity can never be liberating.

Such religiosity, as we have already mentioned, is at best a beginning, the laying of the foundation stone. It always entails a separation in time and space; a separation between the religious person and the Logos, between the religious person and the aim, between time and eternity, now and later, death and life, here and there.

However, true piety completely nullifies all separation, for if you practise it, if you persevere in your pupilship, you will be working directly on the liberation of the God within you. Then you will immediately attract the aim; the eternity of the imperishable, living soul-state will descend into

time; the future liberation will immediately become a fact in the present; the death of the I-nature will immediately become the life of the soul-man. In this way your daily dying will become a daily resurrection, a real Easter event.

Being a pious and devout person in the gnostic sense differs entirely from being a religious person. A religious person recognises and accepts a deity in the same way as a citizen recognises and accepts a government. He shows a certain reverence for and a proper gratitude to his god; he performs his religious duties, but otherwise he remains in bondage, completely of the earth. He celebrates the great days of the Christian year; he knows his church festivals, his religious anniversaries; he remembers Jesus the Lord in His dying and resurrection. However, it will never occur to him that he has to follow Him in His dying and that he can, even must, participate in His resurrection.

It is precisely in this respect that real gnostic pupilship stands or falls. The hermetic philosophy tries to make it clear that by devotion, by the courage of piety, it is you yourself who hold your salvation, your sanctification in your own hands. He who realises and experiences this will give his speechless thanks to the divine architect. The original principle of true self-freemasonry is that everyone is capable of placing the imperishable building of his own salvation on the one foundation stone. You should understand that, no matter what the circumstances may be, it is given to every human being to walk the

path of return. Everyone, without any exception, can do so. However, the problem is that theoretical knowledge of this possibility is not at all liberating. You must put theory into practice. You must bring to life the possibilities granted to you through the courage of piety. And having said this, let us stop pouring out our troubles to one another and saying that it is so difficult and so complicated. For it is not at all difficult and, in fact, not in the least complicated. If only you can summon up the necessary courage, your certainty will be matched by your experience. The gratitude, which results from experiencing the living truth, will cause the devotion of the candidate to increase still further. It then becomes even more positive, more dynamic and more irresistible.

People sometimes say to us: "Alas, who am I? What can I do? I am only a ..." and then follows one or another commonplace. If you talk like that, you will remain as you have always been. You have possessed all the possibilities for your liberation from your very birth. Listen now to what hermetic philosophy reveals:

"Never, my son, will the soul, even if it is in the body, be able to slip down into its opposite, if it has reduced the weight of its debts so as to grasp what is really Good and True".

If the soul has been born within you through piety and is growing in your mortal existence, whereby the heavenly heart opens and you grow in insight and first-hand knowledge with regard to goodness and

truth, a moment will come, as Hermes said, when the result of piety will acquire such a range of action that you will no longer be able to lapse into the opposite.

"For if the soul comes to know Him who called it into existence", if it encounters its Pymander in the open space behind the frontal bone, "it will be filled with immeasurable love; it will forget all evil and can no longer be separated from what is Good". If the soul has turned back to its origin and has been resurrected in it, it cannot do otherwise than love, because love is the essence of the living soul-state. In this way the aim of true piety is reached.

The aim of piety is to be resurrected in the nature of death, without being part of it any longer, through soul-birth and its results. This means to celebrate the real Easter event, a personal, everlasting Easter festival; to be in the world but no longer *of* the world.

When used in this sense, the expression "in the world but no longer of the world" really acquires a profound meaning. It not only implies vegetarianism, abstinence from nicotine, alcohol and so on; it does not have an exclusively religious meaning. It explains that, if only you make use of the possibilities, you can already be perfectly free although you still live in the nature of death. All this stems from piety.

If you have fulfilled the aim of true piety in this way, "if you return to this state and live in the right manner and if you die in blessedness, your soul will certainly know whither it should wing its flight. This, my son, is the only way to truth, which was also walked by those who went before us". All who in the

course of world history have gone this way have without exception "received the Good". All of you, without exception, possess the possibilities to practise true piety. The results of this effort are eternally certain: all who have followed this way have obtained the Good. They have forgotten all evil and can no longer forsake the good. This can come about in one lifetime, during your life! This is the eternity which can prove itself in your time.

Therefore, you must dispense with all mystical talk; merely repeating the holy language is of precious little importance. Use every second to practise piety. You will then experience that eternity can prove itself in your time.

Why must resurrection take place in time? Why does resurrection precede ascension? To prepare you, as a Tat, as a priestly man, as one who is called to king-priesthood, to perform perfectly the work of the love that serves.

"Love God above all and your neighbour as yourself'. If by piety you ascend in divine love and possess the fiery love of the living soul-state, then you will no longer be able to refrain from serving mankind. You will passionately desire to help others to follow the path of liberation, which you yourself have walked. In what better way would you be able to offer your help than as a liberated soul who still has the nature-born personality at its disposal. To practise piety is a way that leads you from the birth of John to the birth of Jesus, from Christmas to the

resurrection and from the resurrection to your ascension.

We wish to emphasise again that this imitation of Christ is entirely within your reach. If this were not the case the gnostic Spiritual School would cease to exist today, for the world has enough religiosity and enough religious institutions. However, the presence of the Gnosis, its activities and its power are to be explained by the fact that you are able to realise eternity in your time. What the religious person, full of reverence and devotion, considers to be something that happens outside himself, can be undertaken by the truly devout person within his own being. You can begin this task immediately and continue with it, if instead of being a religious person you are willing to be a devout person.

Endlessly the church repeats the staging of the story of the Son of God, which results in a total deadening of the feeling of the masses accompanied by bouts of eating and drinking on Church feast-days. At best, there will be a few who cannot forget the Christ drama until finally they discover that the way of Christ is a way they have to go themselves, in and through piety.

He who decides to replace his religious attitude with the practice of piety will immediately be "ignited by the Spirit of God", as the classical Rosicrucians stated. The great process of transformation will begin at that moment. This process involves the perishing of the nature-born soul-being according to the law which is inherent in

it. Consequently, it means dying in order to live. This having "died in Jesus the Lord" is followed by an awakening, a rebirth from and through the Holy Spirit.

We hope you will understand how important it is that we are permitted to and indeed must tell you all this, using the Arch-Gnosis as our basis. We convey this Easter message so that you will make the necessary reversal in your state of life, as the time is ripe and the new gnostic realm awaits you. This represents the turning from religiosity to piety, from ordinary pupilship to real, essential, professing pupilship.

If you do this, you will walk, as Hermes said, "the sublime and well-trodden road", which may also be called the path of profound peace, the path from Bethlehem to Golgotha.

XI

THE PATH FROM BETHLEHEM TO GOLGOTHA

We have seen that the path of profound peace, the path from Bethlehem to Golgotha, lies open before us all. The words of Jesus, "Be my followers" can certainly be realised. That is why Hermes Trismegistus said: "Sublime and well-trodden is this way".

However, he realistically added: "but difficult for the soul to follow as long as it is in the body". Let us now examine these difficulties in greater detail.

"First the soul has to struggle against itself, achieve a great separation and allow one part to gain victory over it. For a conflict arises between one part and the other two parts: the former tries to escape while the latter try to drag the former - that is, the soul - down from below. The result is a fight and a great trial of strength between the part that wants to escape and the two others that strive to detain the soul.

"However, it makes no small difference whether the one side or the other wins, for the one strives with great effort towards the good, while the others make their home in the domain of perdition. The one yearns after freedom, the others embrace slavery. If the two are vanquished, they remain locked up in

themselves, inactive and lonely, abandoned by the one that rules. But if the one part is defeated, it is carried off as captive by the two and deprived of everything and it is punished by the life it lives here.

"See, my son, this is the guide on the way that leads to freedom: you must give up your body before it dies and overcome the life of conflict; then, if you have won that victory, you will return to the Highest."

You will understand that this text places before us the true resurrection of the soul, the liberation of the soul from the hold of natural birth. This is a difficult task, but one that makes victory all the more beautiful.

The inner struggle every candidate has to fight is described in the gospels in the capture of Jesus the Lord, in his cross-examination before Herod, Pilate and the Sanhedrin, in his humiliation, his way of the cross and his death. Finally we see his grandiose victory on the third day, the feast of resurrection. You will find the entire evangelical story of Jesus' suffering and resurrection, down to the minutest detail, described in the verses quoted from the fifth hermetic book. The Jesus drama, the Jesus epos, signified the birth of the soul and its course through matter, its liberation from matter and its ascent into the world of the living soul-state, from where it returned to serve mankind, to be helpful to the other chained ones.

If you are pupils of the young Gnosis, you will know that the soul belongs to the triunity of the Light,

of the true being: spirit, soul and body. Each of these three aspects of the being has its own inherent function, so that co-operation between the three is perfect and harmonious. The soul acts as an intermediary, as a mediator between the spirit and the body. Its positive part is directed to the spirit, its negative part to the body. So the outpouring of the spirit power into the body takes place via the intermediary, the soul.

Let us consider the case of the pupil of the young Gnosis who has decided to walk the path of piety. The consequence will be the birth of the new soul. What does this mean? A light-power radiation of high serenity which is not of this world will penetrate the nature-born being via the heart sanctuary and take up residence in it. That is the birth of the new soul. The immediate effect is an ever increasing inner struggle, an ever increasing tension.

Many pupils tell us time and time again that they live with this tension and cannot escape from it. That is only natural! As the radiation of the living soul-state enters the heart sanctuary, the sword is thrust into your being, and the result is a tension which, at a given moment, can no longer be tolerated, leading to a great crisis. This will result in the liberation of the new soul-state, in resurrection.

When the new soul is born, the body is influenced by a new light force. Yet, equally, many other forces are at work in the body, natural forces which are absorbed by the root system of the serpent fire from

the surrounding dialectical field. As soon as the new light force chooses to dwell in the body and acts as a new intermediary principle, it is, as it were, taken prisoner at that very moment. The new light in us is then waylaid by the natural powers represented by Herod's soldiers, the bands of the high priest of the natural being, the mercenaries of Pilate.

The new soul-principle cannot and must not avoid this, even if it were possible. It agrees to be taken prisoner within the system, for its task is to surrender voluntarily to this body. It must be the mediator in order to save the whole being and urge it to transfiguration. That is why Jesus the Lord must, in great calmness, voluntarily allow himself to be taken prisoner.

In this lies the essence of any potential transfiguration! No one else can accomplish it for you. A great man who perhaps lived two thousand years ago cannot do anything for you; at best he is an example to be followed. It is you yourself who must walk the path. That is why Jesus the Lord said: "Be my followers". Perhaps you can visualise the extent of the initial struggle of the new soul principle before it can achieve the great separation and be able to speak the positive "*consummatum est*", "it is accomplished". That which is true, pure and undefiled must deliberately and knowingly join with the unclean, the sinful, the dialectical. It must, in perfect love, allow itself to be spat at, kicked and flogged; it cannot and must not escape this. At the beginning of this very painful process, the new soul-being may ask

beseechingly: "Cannot this cup pass me by? Is there no other possibility?" But this cup must be emptied to the last drop in order to attain the goal.

The new soul element has two poles. One is directed to the Fatherland, to the Father, to the spirit, to the approaching Pymander. The second must direct itself to the nature-born personality to allow the immortal, the new power of salvation, to flow into the mortal. This is the reason for the inner struggle you must experience from the very moment you celebrate your true pupilship.

We have had to wait many years before we could talk about this. However, the moment has come in the course of development of the young Gnosis when true pupils will understand this and can be considered strong enough to be able to cope with it, to bear it. Consider the following:

Two absolutely heterogeneous states of being combine. In the Gnosis, one undertakes to link the heavenly with the dialectical, in accordance with the example given by all the great ones who said: "Be my followers". If you link these two heterogeneous states in your system, great pain will result. One pole of the new soul element will flee to the spirit, to Pymander. The second pole will have to encounter the nature of death. While the new soul element makes every effort to strive after The Good, after the essence of the spirit, it must at the same time suffer the conflict with the two essential powers of nature: passion and desire. What grief will be the result! On the one hand

there will be intense longing for liberation, with every heartbeat; on the other, there will be contact with the powers of defilement and slavery.

In this way the cross is erected. The vertical and the horizontal are joined together, solidly planted in the earth; what is heavenly bends down towards the earth and goes its way of the cross on earth; it must do so. The top of the cross is directed towards what is heavenly and at the heart of the cross is nailed the rose of the soul.

Do you feel the inescapable grief of such a nailing? The vertical is continually scourged and tortured through this voluntary surrender; the Spirit cannot bear it, cannot stand it. And if the horizontally-active soul power is drawn upwards for a while, this is again an impossibility. The result will be a scorching pain, the scorching of burning. The horizontal cannot abandon its nature-being and the vertical cannot become established in the nature of death, although that is exactly what it is supposed to do on a voluntary basis. This process, this way of the cross, as the hermetic philosophy summarises, is the guide to freedom: "You must give up your body before it dies and overcome the life of conflict; then, if you have won that victory, you will return to the Highest".

This guide is the cross with the blood-red rose, the cross of voluntary self-sacrifice, the cross of purification. Nailed to this cross, the young soul must wrestle and fulfil its task.

Therefore, if you walk the path of piety, you should not be surprised that you have conflict in your life

and still so much in yourself with which to struggle. What is taking place is the necessary encounter between two antagonists that are completely irreconcilable and that, by their encounter, cause a great inner fire, the fire of the cross. This fire cannot fail to appear, it must rage. The new soul-state must first have overcome mortal life. This, stated Hermes, is what you should very well understand and struggle through with your inner being.

There are people who take on the struggle caused by the path with their I, with their ego of self-mortification. Such people make this inner struggle into a conflict of a highly personal nature. They proceed from the mistaken idea that all this pain, trouble and grief strikes them because of the fact that they still have an I; because their lower nature plays a trick on them in one way or another; because they are still that bad or that sinful. But this has nothing to do with what we have been discussing. Please, see the situation very clearly:

As pupils, you have opened your heart sanctuaries to the new power of the sixth cosmic domain, the power of the living soul-state. It penetrates your blood, your nerve fluid and advances to the head sanctuary; it fills your whole being and causes soul birth. However, there is also the other power which is absorbed by the root system of the serpent fire system; this power also finds its way into your being. These two entirely incompatible powers cause the burning fire. In this way your soul suffers and so does your I. You should not think that the I is the cause or

that the soul is the cause. No, it is the encounter of two incompatible forces, two different tensions, two antipathetic electromagnetic powers.

What should you do now? Live the endura! Do not allow the I to meddle in this process. If you feel grief and tensions, do not work them off on other people, but experience your grief as the necessary purification process of the holy Rosy- cross. If you experience this grief to the depths of your being, the gnostic light power will be active in you in a most mighty and dynamic way. As we said before, there have always been those who consider the struggle caused by the path as a struggle of a personal nature. They become, as it were, completely bound up in the I, and so they put all their efforts into self-mortification. However, it is precisely the I who should stand aside. The I should not step in anywhere; it should become quiet. Just let this struggle, this purifying fire, rage!

Just think of the ancient monastic habit of self-chastisement and voluntary mutilation in the struggle against the flesh. However, the struggle of the way of the cross is not a struggle against the flesh. It is a struggle between the sixth and the seventh cosmic domains that takes place within you. It is impossible to be victorious if these things are tackled with the I. Such self-mortification is suicide. A human being cannot bear it and death will be the result. Therefore, we emphatically repeat, you must not fight against yourself like a desperate man. Then you will only invoke all sorts of forces which are active in

you. You will then place your I in the service of one of the two parties. The results will be a speedy consumption of energy, until death follows.

What should you do then? You should exercise devotion until piety has been found. Give this the first priority in your life. For the I it will mean the endura. Withdraw from the inner conflict of the two natures, do not be a party to this conflict and let the new soul perform its voluntary work, its sacrifice within you. This is what the initiated mystics had in mind when they said: "Let Jesus Christ do his work within you".

Do not force yourself to withdraw, as if into a corner of your being, from which your I can peer at what is going on. No, you must desire the endura with all your heart, now, in the present. It must be your deepest longing, for which you yearn in self-forgetfulness and serving love. If you do that, the new soul element will be born in you and you will begin your way of the cross, your way of the rose and cross - the meeting between the two irreconcilable elements. So the soul will not seek to fight, because the soul is only love; and the I will not fight for it then desires only the endura. What will take place is an unavoidable encounter between the two irreconcilable electromagnetic forces. Through this meeting a circulation will develop in your life, a grief, a struggle of that which hastens upwards and must experience and endure the fire of its sacrifice.

No one knows how long this fire, this struggle, this grief, will last. No one knows for how long all the

results of the way of the cross will make themselves felt in your being. It is something that cannot be forced. It is a process that you must accept, willingly and joyfully. The process will last and burn entirely in accordance with the nature of your microcosm, your being; entirely in accordance with your karma and the merciful radiations active in your microcosm. But at a time when you don't expect it, perhaps right in the midst of the fire of some trial, it can suddenly appear that the mortal has been overcome, and that the "*Consummatum est*" can be spoken.

Therefore, accept in perfect objectivity your path of the rose and cross and do not meddle in it with your I. Then the hour of liberation will certainly come. Your soul will arise and celebrate its morning of resurrection. This will be the first new day, the awakening in the Golden Head, the beginning of the new morning, the morning of eternity.

XII

THE TWOFOLD NATURE OF MAN

We have been enabled to experience the support and guidance of the hermetic philosophy, and in this way we have been permitted a foretaste of the morning of resurrection. We have seen and experienced that the whole Christ drama should be seen as referring to ourselves and that we are bound to walk that path. Through piety a dialectical human being can be transfigured and merge into the Other One.

Piety, the high wisdom that results from it and the grief of purification together form the guide on the path. After all this has been shown by the fifth book of Hermes Trismegistus, the text takes a different turn, beginning in the fifteenth verse. Here, Hermes suggests that Tat return to the starting point and make a summary, in order to focus more light on some aspects of the universal reality. Hermes pointed out that we will understand what he is about to say if we remember what we have heard.

So, in summary of what we have discussed, we ask: "What is the difference between natural-religious and occult orientations and the orientation of the Gnosis and its School? The answer must be that the natural-religious person assumes that after death he will arrive in the heavenly spheres and will stay there forever; the person with occult tendencies believes

that his I can be the basis of an unending evolution. This is an important point that you should take into account and on which the Arch-Gnosis has again and again focused attention for thousands of years. That is why we read: "Each body is subject to change, but not all bodies are capable of dissolving".

This means that not all bodies can merge into a higher order. Only some of them are able to do so: "Not every creature is mortal; not every creature is immortal. What is capable of dissolving is perishable; what is permanently unchangeable is eternal. What is ever being born is ever being destroyed again, but what has come into being once and for all is never lost, nor does it become something else".

What does the hermetic doctrine teach about these words? Among other things, it teaches that every form manifestation in the cosmos is subject to change. However, do not forget that there are two kinds of change, two kinds of development. There are entities whose form manifestations really do develop in an evolutionary sense and eventually attain perfection; who proceed from strength to strength and from glory to glory. There are also entities who are definitely subject to total perishability. Therefore, we have to accept the law that not every creature is mortal, nor is every creature immortal. Every creature can and must choose between life and death. We, in our state of being, still have that choice. We can choose between life, real life in a higher sense, and death.

True life, however, will not fall to your lot just for

the asking. There are states of development in which the course of true life has developed to such an extent that death can no longer strike. But there are also states in which the reverse is true, in which the descent into death has gone so far that life can no longer be grasped. The young Gnosis has always made a point of telling its pupils this and reminding them that the total emptying of the microcosms which, after death, arrive on the other side of the veil, is a fact.

This is corroborated by some passages in the Arch-Gnosis. Dialectical man lives under biological conditions such that he may be carried off by death at any moment, in a fraction of a second. It is true, isn't it, that the mortal and fragile body can be destroyed at any moment? "What is ever being born is ever being destroyed again".

In contrast to this there is the entirely different type of man, the lasting or heavenly type. The heavenly type is unchangeable and everlasting: "What has come into being once and for all", in a higher sense of the word, "is never lost, nor does it become something else".

This makes clear how necessary it is to follow in Christ's footsteps, that is, to take the Rosycross on one's shoulders and walk the path; to cause the man of death to change into the man of life through transfiguration. This idea, which has been proclaimed by the Gnosis of all times, is somewhat alarming; for example, it becomes clear that billions of entities at present belong to death. On the other hand, this idea is very powerful, sublime and imperative in character,

if we bear in mind the foundations of the All-manifestation: God, Cosmos and Man.

The All, the cosmos, is God's form-manifestation, so that through it God's creature might become like God. So God's creature is urged on by the command: "Be perfect, as your Father in heaven is perfect".

Man was given a twofold soul to enable him to fulfil this great, magnificent and divine vocation. The part which perceives with the senses is mortal; the part which responds to reason is immortal. The sensorial soul is the part which responds, for example, to heat and cold, to light and darkness, to all the laws and situations that occur in nature. If it is cold, it makes you put on more clothes. If it is hot, the opposite happens. Man's natural soul is the genuine aeonian soul. As such, it participates in all the ups and downs of nature. It walks on all the paths of nature; it obeys nature in order to turn it to its best advantage; to enable the entity for whom it acts as mediator to pass through the cosmos towards God; and to ensure devotion to the one aim: God.

The realisation of the one aim is the task of the second soul, the soul that responds to reason. This rational soul is the one that possesses wisdom; the one that is seized by God, by the Spirit, the one that is connected with the Spirit. The aeonian or natural soul should pass through the All under the guidance of the rational or Spirit-Soul. The spontaneity of the responding faculty of the aeonian soul must be intelligently controlled by the Spirit-Soul.

God is the eternal one, the unchangeable one. The cosmos, on the other hand, is in a state of permanent movement and change according to its task. Consequently, the Spirit-Soul, which is of God, is unchangeable and immortal. The natural soul, just like nature, is changeable and mortal, nullifying itself, always adapting and changing itself.

When we speak of two types of man - and the hermetic philosophy seeks to draw our attention to this fact - it is clear that the type of man who is subject to change and mortality possesses nothing but the natural soul and lives out of it entirely; the Spirit-Soul has become latent in such a man; his existence is devoid of reason. In all respects he bears the signature of what is irrational, changeable and mortal. This type lives only a natural existence and is no longer able to realise God. However, the Bible teaches that man exists to glorify God. For instance, the Sermon on the Mount, in Matthew 5, admonishes: "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven".

The original text reads, in the proper hermetic sense, "realise", instead of "glorify". The translators of the Bible did not grasp this point. Because of their religiosity they could well understand that somebody could glorify God and show gratitude. They could not imagine that someone could realise God. That is why they translated it as "glorify"; and we know what the churches mean by that.

What has the creature who is subject to nature and to

death, to do now? Well, that is obvious. The latent Spirit-Soul, the rational soul, must be awakened to life again, to activity. This soul was not able to die, because it is immortal; it was led to general inactivity because the I wanted to follow nothing but the natural soul, and so it degenerated existentially and condemned itself to immeasurable suffering.

However, there is always a good side in every adversity. Everything that suffers gains experience. Experience is the fruit of suffering and frequently unbearable grief. This grief and suffering which you know so very well, are the unmistakable characteristics of a fundamental immortality. Indeed, the animal creature, although it feels pain, does not feel grief. Pain is always a bodily experience and influences the inner condition only temporarily. Someone who suffers, changes; through pain the brute may temporarily become a meek creature. Disease accompanied by pain makes a bustling, quick-tempered person yielding and quiet.

However, grief is always related to the soul. Grief is the lamentation of the soul. Of course, it is not impossible for someone who suffers pain to experience grief at the same time. But someone who has nothing but pain returns to his previous nature as soon as the pain has disappeared. His nature will not deny itself. Real grief causes a deep wound and may in many cases have a purifying effect. That is why experiences of grief and the suffering caused by it are in man's present state of being undoubtedly the only method of forcing the natural soul to call to its sister,

the Spirit- Soul; to awaken it out of the grave of the living dead and transfer to it, in accordance with the plan of salvation, the control of life. In this way the essence of immortality is once again enabled to demonstrate itself through transfiguration.

If you awaken your Spirit-Soul and give it control over your life, you need no longer ask yourself, in doubt, whether your existence is subject to death. For then you will possess the one, true life. Piety and godliness bring the Spirit-Soul to life again and lead it, through purification, into the trinity of the All-manifestation: God, cosmos and true man. We hope and pray that you will soon enter this trinity. "Blessed are the poor in Spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven".

Tranquility will be discovered only by him who has brought the rational soul, the Spirit-Soul, to life again. In fact, you should see this statement as a hermetic axiom, and be aware of what is said in the fifth hermetic book in this connection: "The Spirit-Soul is in God, reason is in man; reason is in the Spirit-Soul, the Spirit-Soul is not susceptible to suffering".

The Spirit-Soul is Pymander, it is in God. Reason, the rational soul, is in man; the rational soul is in the Spirit- Soul. In other words: the rational soul in man is at the same time connected with the Spirit, with Pymander, who is also in this man. Pymander is beyond all suffering. So when, as you proceed on the path, you find your Pymander, when you have awakened and liberated him, you will be raised, together with him, above all suffering.

Now examine yourself thoroughly as to whether you still experience grief in the sense described. Do you still need experience through grief and its results? Then let it be so, for in that case you are not yet able to learn its lesson in any other way.

It would, of course, be foolish and unfeeling to wish someone grief and suffering. However, if you have understood this hermetic wisdom, you can certainly be fervently grateful for the experience of grief, because of the valuable lesson it can teach you. Your gratitude may then stem from the fact that the latent Spirit-Soul, the voice of the Sphinx which lies buried in the sands of the desert, is still able to speak to you and shows some activity and, in the ultimate analysis, is still alive. Therefore, you should always be alert as to whether your experience causes you pain or grief. As you know, pain is an animal reaction and therefore spontaneous and without reason. Grief, however, is the reaction of the rational soul in bondage.

How will you know whether you experience pain or grief? Well, you can always know from the results. Pain by itself causes resistance, opposition, passion, hatred, desire for retaliation. The clenched fist is the response to pain; it arouses the concentrated urge of self-maintenance of the I. Grief, on the other hand, awakens the desire for a liberating life, it is connected with love and especially with compassion. Through grief we learn to speak those magnificent words: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do".

Through grief, the willingness to forgive rises high

in the human heart and the heavenly rose garden opens wide its gates. It is this rose garden which the rational soul chooses as its dwelling place and in which it may behold Pymander. Such grief that consoles is what we wish you with all our hearts.

Grief and physical pain may very well occur together. So physical pain may sometimes prove very useful to man. But do not just suffer your pain; always approach your physical difficulties from the side of the soul. Then the fourth aspect of the Spiritual School will be able to do much for you. If you are elevated into the Spirit-Soul you will, at a given moment, go beyond all grief and no longer be susceptible to any suffering whatsoever.

If you have understood all that has been discussed so far concerning the fifth book of Hermes, if all this has affected you in the right way, you will know from within the meaning of devotion, piety and godliness and you will possess true love of the one wisdom. Then you will be able to benefit from going deeper into the hermetic philosophy and from considering the sixth book of Hermes Trismegistus.

XIII
SIXTH BOOK
GENERAL DIALOGUE
BETWEEN HERMES AND
AESCLEPIUS

1. HERMES: All that is moved, Aesclepius, is it not moved *in* something and *by* something?
AESCLEPIUS: Most certainly!
2. HERMES: And is not the space in which something is moved necessarily greater than the thing moved? AESCLEPIUS: No doubt.
3. HERMES: Also, is not that which causes movement stronger than what is moved?
AESCLEPIUS: Of course it is.
4. HERMES: Must not that in which movement takes place necessarily be of opposite nature to the thing moved? AESCLEPIUS: Naturally.
5. HERMES: Well then, is this Universe not greater than any other body? AESCLEPIUS: Yes, certainly.

6. HERMES: And is it not entirely filled with many other great bodies, or rather, with all the bodies that exist? AESCLEPIUS: It is so.
7. HERMES: Thus the Universe is a body. AESCLEPIUS: Yes, certainly.
8. HERMES: And it is a body that is moved. AESCLEPIUS: Yes, certainly.
9. HERMES: Of what size then must be the space in which the Universe is moved, and of what kind? Must it not be far greater than the Universe in order to allow continuous movement, without the Universe becoming oppressed and so stopping its motion? AESCLEPIUS: Immensely vast must be that space, O Trismegistus.
10. HERMES: Is it not of an opposite nature, Aesclepius? The opposite of the nature of the body is the incorporeal. AESCLEPIUS: Undoubtedly.
11. HERMES: Space then is incorporeal. But the incorporeal is either of a divine nature or it is God. (By divine I do not mean what has been created, but what has not been created). If the incorporeal is of a divine

nature, it has the nature of the essence of creation; and if it is God it is one with the nucleus. Indeed, it may be comprehended as follows:

12. For us, God is the highest object to which the thinking can direct itself; for us, but not for God himself. For the object of contemplation becomes attainable for the one who thinks in the light of insight. Therefore, for himself God is not an object of contemplation; for as he is not separate from the essence of contemplation, he contemplates himself. For us, however, God is separate: that is why he is the object of our thinking.
13. When we now consider universal space, we perceive it not as space, but as God; and if, for our thinking, space appears as God, it is no longer space in the customary sense of the word, but the effective power of God which embraces everything.
14. All that is moved does not move in something that is moved itself, but in something that is immovable; the motive force itself is also immovable, because it cannot take part in the movement it causes.

15. AESCLEPIUS: But, Trismegistus, in what manner then are the things here on earth moved together with the things causing their movement? For you said that the sinful spheres are moved by the spheres of the sinless.
16. HERMES: Here, Aesclepius, is no question of a common movement, but of a counter-movement. For these spheres are not moved in the same direction, but in opposite directions. This antithesis gives the movement a fixed point of equilibrium, because the reaction of the opposite movements manifests itself in this point as immovability.
17. As the sinful spheres are moved in a direction opposite to that of the sinless sphere, they are moved, in this counter-movement, by the stationary point of equilibrium around the resisting sphere. It really cannot be otherwise.
18. You see there the constellations of the Great and Little Bear, which do not set and do not rise and always turn around the same point: do you think that they are moved or do they

stand still?

19. AESCLEPIUS: They are moved, Trismegistus. HERMES: And of what kind is their movement, Aesclepius ? AESCLEPIUS: They continuously turn around the same centres.
20. HERMES: Correct. So the circulation is nothing but the movement around the same centre, a movement which is completely governed by the immovability of the centre. The revolution forestalls deviation, and by forestalling the deviation the revolution is perpetuated. Thus the counter-movement also stands still in the point of equilibrium, because it becomes static through the resisting movement.
21. I will give you a simple example, the correctness of which you can confirm with your own eyes. Look at mortal beings such as man when they swim: while the water flows, the resistance, the counter-force of the swimmer's hands and feet keep him stationary, so that he is not pulled down by the water.
22. AESCLEPIUS: This example is very clear,

Trismegistus.

23. HERMES: Every movement is thus caused in something and by something which itself is immovable. The movement of the Universe and of every corporeal living being is thus not brought about by causes outside the body, but by causes within the body, operating outwards from within by means of a conscious, rational force, be it the soul, the spirit or any other incorporeal entity. For a material body is incapable of moving an animated body, nor can it move any body at all, not even an inanimate body.
24. AESCLEPIUS: What do you mean by this, Trismegistus? Wood and stones and other inanimate things, are they not bodies causing movement?
25. HERMES: Most certainly not, Aesclepius. For it is not the body itself that causes the movement of the inanimate, but what is within the body, and that is what moves both bodies: the body which moves and the body which is being moved. That is why the inanimate cannot move the inanimate. So you see how heavily burdened the soul is

when, alone, it must carry two bodies. It is thus clear that what is moved, moves in something and is being moved by something.

26. AESCLEPIUS: Must movement be brought about in an empty space, Trismegistus?
27. HERMES: Listen well, Aesclepius: Nothing of what really is, is void; nothing that is part of what really exists is void, just as it is expressed by the verb "to be", which means "to exist". For what is would not have reality, would not be, were it not perfectly filled with reality. What really is, what really exists, can therefore never be void.
28. AESCLEPIUS: Then are there no empty things, Trismegistus, such as jars, pots, vats and a variety of other such things?
29. HERMES: Stop it, Aesclepius! How can you make such a mistake? How can you take for void what is completely full and filled?
30. AESCLEPIUS: What do you mean by that, Trismegistus?
31. HERMES: Is not air a body? Does not this body permeate all that exists and does it not

fill all that it permeates? Is not every physical body composed of the four elements? Full of air, then, are all things you call void and if they are full of air, they are also filled with the four bodies of the elements. So we come to a conclusion opposite to the one you made: everything you call full is void of air, because the place of the air is occupied by other bodies, so that there is no room to admit air. All things you call void must be called filled to overflowing and not void: because in reality they are full of air and breath.

32. AESCLEPIUS: There is no disputing that, Trismegistus. But what again did we say that space was, in which the Universe is moved? HERMES: It is incorporeal, Aesclepius. AESCLEPIUS: And what, then, is the incorporeal?
33. HERMES: It is Spirit, completely encompassed within itself, free from all corporeality, free from error, free from suffering, intangible, immovable in itself, containing everything, saving, liberating and healing everything; that from which the good, the truth, the archetype of the Spirit and the archetype of the Soul emanate like

rays.

34. AESCLEPIUS: But what, then, is God?
35. HERMES: He is none of all these, but the cause of their existence and of all that is, also of each creature in particular. He has left no space at all for the non-existent; all that exists comes into being from what is and not from what is not: for the non-existent lacks the ability of genesis while, on the other hand, what exists will never cease to exist.
36. AESCLEPIUS: But what do you say God actually is?
37. HERMES: God is not reason, but the cause to which reason owes its being; He is not breath, but the cause to which breath owes its being; He is not light, but the cause to which light owes its being. Therefore, God should be worshipped as "The Good" and "Father", names which belong to Him alone and to no one else. For none of those called god, nor any man or demon, can be good in any degree, but God alone. He alone is good and no one else. All others cannot comprehend the essence of The Good. They are body and soul

and lack the place where The Good can reside. For The Good comprises what is the essence of all creatures, both corporeal and incorporeal, both perceptible and those belonging to the world of abstract thought. This is The Good, this is God.

38. Therefore, never call anything else good, because that is godless. And never call God anything else than The Good, because that too would be godless.
39. Indeed, all use the word "good", but not all understand what it is. That is why not everyone understands God and so, in ignorance, they call the gods and some men good, although these can never be or become good because The Good is the absolutely unchangeable characteristic of God. It is inseparable from Him because, indeed, it is God Himself.
40. All other gods, as immortal ones, are honoured by the name god. But God is The Good not on the basis of homage but by virtue of His essence. The essence of God and the essence of The good are one: they form together the one origin of all races. Good is He who gives all and

does not take anything. Indeed, God gives all and does not take anything. Therefore, God is The Good and The Good is God.

41. The other name of God is Father, because He is the creator of all things. Creating is the characteristic of the Father.
42. Therefore, in the life of those whose consciousness is correctly directed, to give birth to the Son is a matter of great seriousness and zeal and of deepest attachment to God; while it is the greatest misfortune and the greatest sin for someone to die without the childship of God and to be punished by the demons after death.
43. This is the punishment: the soul of this childless one will be condemned to assume a body that is neither male nor female, which is a doom emanating from the Sun. Thus, Aesclepius, participate in joy if no one is without childship, but embrace with your compassion the one who stands in misfortune, because you know what punishment awaits him.
44. May the nature and scope of what I have said, Aesclepius, provide you with

preliminary knowledge regarding the
essence of the All.

XIV

THE NATURE AND ACTIVITY OF THE ALL

In chapters IX to XII we discussed the first thirty verses of the fifth book of the *Corpus Hermeticum*. For the time being we will not discuss the other verses, because we think the remaining text is easy to understand.

Let us now turn to the sixth book of Hermes Trismegistus, the *General Dialogue Between Hermes and Aesclepius*.

Aesclepius, or Aesculapius, was in ancient times the god of medicine. So, in a broader sense, Aesclepius is the helper, the healer. In this dialogue, Hermes teaches a pupil who, as appears from his name, knows that he is called to follow the path of service to the Gnosis, to be able to co-operate in healing diseased mankind, to raise what has fallen and to repair what has been broken.

In the sixth hermetic book, Aesclepius is given a thorough introduction to the nature of motion, to the cause and method of the motion of the All. The hermetic philosophy, as you will have seen, always develops its arguments from a very elementary beginning, as a basis, and then proceeds to what is highly abstract. One who uses this key and never

deviates from it will always be able, step by step, to think it through and finally understand what should be understood.

Many people are in the habit of beginning their thinking processes with the abstract, the unknowable, and trying from there to understand the concrete. Such a method of thinking can never be satisfactory but will lead to speculation and mystification. For instance, the mystic often says that this or that should be done. In most cases the reason remains vague and this often results in either denial or acceptance of things on authority.

It is claimed that the Bible is the word of God and that not a single part of it can be disavowed. But no one knows why the Bible in particular is the word of God. The result is that one accepts on authority what another denies, while a third neither accepts nor rejects but is totally indifferent. Obviously this method of thinking does not in any way serve the truth, and in place of it, vagueness, lies and severe conflict arise. The hermetic method of thinking is the only safe and correct one, because it guides our thinking from the knowable, the facts, to the abstract. That is why the Arch-Gnosis has always applied this method. All who hunger and yearn for liberation receive this method, because it yields the purest results.

You will always be able to judge from a person's manner of thinking whether or not he is a real seeker of truth. In the Netherlands an example of this was Benedictus de Spinoza, who without doubt applied

the hermetic method of thinking.

After this introduction, let us now consider the text and understand the beginning, which is simplicity itself: All that is moved is moved in and by something. The thing in which something is moved is greater than the thing moved. What causes movement is stronger than what is moved.

Let us take the body as an example. It has the ability to move, it moves in and through a space and there is a force which causes this movement. Consequently, the space in which the body moves is larger than the body itself. Also, the force which moves the body is greater, more powerful than the inertia of the body. This will be obvious to everyone. So, according to verse 4, the substance in which and through which the body moves must be of an opposite nature. The body is a form that is crystallised to a greater or lesser extent; it is inert and dense, while the space through which it moves is subtle, light and transparent. The force by which it moves has the same signature. That is why the philosophy of the Golden Rosycross says that our world order is moved by opposites, that it is dialectical. The sixth book of the *Corpus Hermeticum* indicates that thousands of years ago the same idea was conveyed to seekers of the truth. If you understand this, we will go one step further.

"Hermes: Is this Universe not greater than any other body? Aesclepius: Yes, certainly. Hermes: And is it not entirely filled with many other great bodies,

or rather, with all the bodies that exist? Aesclepius: It is so. Hermes: Thus the Universe is a body. Aesclepius: Yes, certainly. Hermes: And it is a body that is moved. Aesclepius: Yes, certainly. Hermes: Of what size then must be the space in which the Universe is moved, and of what kind? Must it not be far greater than the Universe in order to allow continuous movement, without the Universe becoming oppressed and so stopping its motion? Aesclepius: Immensely vast must be that space, O Trismegistus. Hermes: Is it not of an opposite nature, Aesclepius? The opposite of the nature of the body is the incorporeal. Aesclepius: Undoubtedly.

So all existing bodies together form one body: the Universe. Here every body has a space around it and a force by which it can move. The nature of space and force, on the one hand, and that of the body on the other, are opposed to one another. One may conclude that all bodies, which in essence form one large body, possess these two natures of opposites. Since all bodies, although essentially forming one large body, differ from one another, we might say that there is a billionfold variety of natures and so an immeasurable range of opposites that move the entire All. The entire All-manifestation might be called the body in which these countless natures manifest themselves.

We all have a body and move through a space, a special life-field, which is the force that moves us. Although we, as human beings, form one life system, although we belong to one and the same planetary

body, it can hardly be maintained that we are of one and the same nature. No, our natures are very different from one another! As we said before, an immeasurable range of opposites moves the entire All. So the entire All-manifestation can be called the body in which these countless human natures manifest themselves.

However, this immense body of the All-manifestation, and all the cosmic domains of which it is composed, are moved in and by something. Following the thought-process outlined above unavoidably leads one to this conclusion. Following the same process, one can also gain some idea of the tremendous space in which the All-manifestation moves, a space which must necessarily be of an opposite nature. Hence the conclusion of the sixth hermetic book, which states that the all-encompassing space in which and by which the All-manifestation is moved, is the incorporeal.

This opposite nature of the All may be studied to a certain extent. In view of the above, one must conclude that the material, in its infinite variety, must be surrounded and bounded by the immaterial, the incorporeal. The corporeal can be accounted for only by the incorporeal. Or in the words of Hermes: "What has been created is generated by what has not been created". And Hermes refers to what has not been created, to what encloses, permeates and moves everything, as divine, or as God. However, we should not see what is all-enclosing merely in terms of space. In our life-system we distinguish between space and

bodies. The billionfold variety of all that has been created is surrounded by something that can no longer be called space, but sheer force. That is why one should not speak, as astronomy does, of infinite space, but should realise that space itself is encircled by force. This all-embracing force is God. The divine force is the immovable, the unknowable, the intangible and also the inconceivable. By means of the hermetic method of thinking we may determine the nature of God and speak of it as the source from which everything originates, but we should never make the mistake of trying to find God in bodily space, because He is most definitely not there. We can at best find the divine - that is, the activity of the divine force - in physical space, in the various cosmic domains. God himself is the all-surrounding force-field by which the vast space is embraced.

Any activity can always be defined and described, and is therefore always limited. So one must conclude that ultimately, everything that is moved does not move in something that is moved itself, but in something that is immovable. The motive force itself is also immovable, because it cannot participate in the movement it causes. Following the classical Rosycross we, too, speak in our philosophy of the Immovable Kingdom. Hermes expressed this very clearly in verses 13- 14:

"When we now consider universal space, we perceive it not as space, but as God; and if, for our thinking, space appears as God, it is no longer space in the customary sense of the word, but the effective

power of God which embraces everything. All that is moved does not move in something that is moved itself, but in something that is immovable; the motive force itself is also immovable, because it cannot take part in the movement it causes."

The divine may exist in the overall motion of things, but God Himself is the source of power from whose immobility the divine activity originates. A truly enlightened pupil of the Gnosis can manifest himself in the divine, but he can never be God himself as long as he has not reached the end of the long way back: the "good end"* as it is called.

So we see again that there is a workshop, a space filled with bodies, where divine activity can develop. However, this activity must not and cannot be called God, for God Himself recedes from us into the unknowable, which is nevertheless all-encompassing. By means of this hermetic logic we can know, in the abstract, who, what and where God is. To a certain extent we can determine His nature; we can discover His activity. But it is impossible to know Him in deepest reality as long as the Sonship, the "good end" has not been achieved. That is why the Bible states: "No one has ever seen God; it is only the Son, who is in the Father's heart, who has revealed Him to us". The Father's heart is the radiation of

* See Volume I, First Book: Pymander, verse 65.

Love, the second ray of the Seven-Spirit, which emanates from the Source. He who awakens to divine activity in that Love is a child of God, a Son of God. He has then become an activity of God. The divine powers are freed in him and a powerful motion develops. He who stands in this activity knows God and can interpret Him, as Hermes Trismegistus does in his sixth book.

If you have followed this line of reasoning so far, a problem may have occurred to you which is formulated by Aesclepius in verse 1 5. We will try to fathom this problem in the next chapter.

Briefly summarising our introduction to the sixth hermetic book, we find there is an all-encompassing Source of power that encloses all domains of the cosmos. It must be possible to obtain a link with this Source, and it seems to be a logical necessity. The aim of the sixth book is to convince us of this; it is not the aim to provide an in-depth philosophical treatise regarding the nature of God or the activity of the divine power. The only aim is to explain to the pupil, Aesclepius, who has realised to what a sublime task man is called for God's sake and who tries in surrender and devotion to follow the path of the Gnosis, that he is to make that link.

Our insignificant existence as an unconscious being of nature on mother earth is the most illogical phenomenon in the whole All-manifestation. He who is linked with the radiations of the Source of power will be sanctified, healed. By the miracle of the grace

of his healing he will, in turn, become a healer in the service of the Gnosis; he will become a mature Aesclepius.

The sixth book appeals above all to your insight, to your inner thinking. You are not only asked to listen, but also to participate in thinking and descending into the depths of your inner being where, in serene tranquility and silence, the eternal call of man's true vocation in life can be heard and understood.

XV

THE UNASSAILABILITY OF GOD'S PLAN

In the course of our considerations we found ourselves, together with Aesclepius, faced with a problem which was deliberately woven into the dialogue between Hermes and Aesclepius in order to shed the right light on it. It was stated in verse 14 of the sixth book that the motion of the All is encompassed by the motionless:

"All that is moved does not move in something that is moved itself, but in something that is immovable; the motive force itself is also immovable, because it cannot take part in the movement it causes".

Now the question arises within Aesclepius: "But in what manner then are the things here on earth moved together with the things causing their movement? For you said that the sinful spheres are moved by the spheres of the sinless".

Hermes replies: "Here is no question of a common movement but of a counter-movement", not of moving together, but of moving against each other". This reply is alarming, but at the same time also consoling. What did Hermes mean? Let us try to understand.

Imagine the universe in a perfectly virgin state, as

described in the prologue of Genesis; the universe prior to creation. However, this emptiness is only apparent, because what is seemingly empty is a space filled with primordial substance, with cosmic root substance, which is the true nature of the beginning. In ancient Egyptian cosmology this is often referred to as the Mother, or as Isis, and when the Gnosis speaks of Mary, it means the same state of virgin primordial substance.

Seven rays emanating from the Immovable Kingdom affect this primordial nature. They are the seven powers from the field of the universal Spirit of God and each of them is itself sevenfold. These seven times seven rays influence one another. They represent absolute life, absolute love, absolute intelligence, absolute harmony, absolute wisdom, absolute devotion and absolute liberating action. It should be easy for you to understand that the seven rays influence one another and that in every ray the six others must be present, if you remember that, to be truly liberating, every action must include life, love, intelligence, harmony, wisdom and devotion.

As soon as the seven rays which emanate from the immovable, the solid, the unassailable, enter the primordial nature, the universal Mother Isis, movement and activity will occur in it. This movement is always an absolutely co-operative movement. The primordial nature then demonstrates - by what emerges from it - what is contained in the Deity. Emanating from the unknowable, the seven rays demonstrate the intentions of the Deity in the

primordial nature - by their activity and the manifestations thus caused in the primordial nature. It is through co-operative movement that the divine is propagated and manifested in the space of nature.

If one bears in mind that all that has become manifest originated from the seven mutually determining divine rays, it will be clear that everything that has been created must bear within it the image, the essence, the nucleus of the divine. Everything that has been created contains a divine aim that can only be realised by co-operative movement. As soon as someone succeeds in moving harmoniously with God's plan, which acts within him by means of seven rays, the plan will be realised in and through him.

This is a tremendous conclusion to which the Egyptian philosophy of Hermes Trismegistus leads. He who enters and perseveres in co-operative movement will realise God's plan in himself. In the whole of creation there exists a perfect co-operative movement towards absolute divinity, but there is also the possibility of pronounced counter-movement. The possibility of achieving divinity, which is granted to the creature, implies absolute freedom. This freedom arises from the nature of the seven mutually determining divine rays. The Bible testifies of this when it says: "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom".

That is why we see both co-operative movement and counter-movement in the All-manifestation: the freedom to enter the divine genesis of the All and

become children of God, fundamentally and structurally; and the freedom to offer resistance and thus to lapse into the chaos of degenerated dialectics. We see and know dialectics. We can also see and know - if we want to - the life of the Deity, the result of co-operative movement. We also see and know an intermediate group, which is breaking away from the counter-movement and its consequences and ascending into the co-operative movement, the first consequence of which is transfiguration - that is, the undoing of the results of counter-movement.

Primordial nature is the field of development which is contained in the Deity. What will come when this development has been completed and crowned with success is a question to which the School can give no answer, because it is beyond its comprehension.

The Universal Doctrine teaches that the creature is called to become one day like God, to rise from the created into the uncreated or, to use the words of the ancient Chinese, to break through from the something into the nothing - that is, into what is boundless, into what simply cannot be spoken about.

Let us now return to the counter-movement. You know what ghastly distress and confusion, what unnaturalness is caused by degenerated dialectics. You also know the consequence of counter-movement: crystallisation.

However, there is a great consolation: death. You should consider this carefully. It was possible for the counter-movement to come into being because of

freedom, but if one uses that freedom to choose movement, activity, one always creates consequences. Any given action will entail a corresponding result. The consequence of counter-movement is death. In other words, the result of counter-movement always annihilates itself.

Don't you find that magnificent? Isn't it inexpressibly consoling? The counter-movement, the refusal to co-operate voluntarily in the realisation of God's plan, which is the basis of our existence, cannot last forever, until finally it occupies the entire All-manifestation and breaks through to the immovable, thereby becoming static. Just imagine how terrible that would be!

No, what is not included in the divine state, what does not originate from the divine state in harmonious co-operative movement, is so unreal, so powerless, so subject to crystallisation that, at a given moment, it must collapse. Then it will become quite clear that it is essentially nothing, that it annihilates itself. Only what is of the Spirit of the Lord is everlasting. Anyone who stands in counter-movement, who lies imprisoned in counter-movement, will be struck by continual dissolution and death until he realises, thanks to the divine which lies submerged in all that has been created, that counter-movement is not co-operative movement and offers no salvation at all. In fact, its results are always broken up and dissolved. The path of salvation can be discovered only in association, in perfect harmony with the seven universal rays; in this

way one can become an Aesclepius in a twofold sense.

Have you already experienced that the continual struggle with yourself and your surroundings keeps you imprisoned in tension and distress? If this is the case, isn't it a consolation to know that, whatever one does, one day insight will be gained on the path of experience and sooner or later everyone will enter the temple of renewal? Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. We cannot force you, for that would be against the principle of freedom and therefore undivine. However, at a given moment you will rise in freedom to the one grace, to your destiny in the service of God, after having been purified and taught by personal experience and mortification.

You are repeatedly informed about the path and its requirements and we would gladly continue to inform you. We would like to go on shedding light on the Universal Doctrine, on the imperishable, magnificent path. However, we cannot do so, for time is pressing. The School of the young Gnosis is not only an institution that teaches, it is also and primarily a Living Body. The Living Body is a progression; it always goes forward and invokes ever more strongly the seven times seven rays of the divine light, so that they burn like a mighty fire over the sanctuary.

That is why, under the rays of this fire, we cannot just go on repeating: "This is what the path looks like, and now please take the first step". No, if you want to join us - and you have the freedom to do so - then you will have to come without any reservations and

accept all the consequences. If you use your freedom to cling hand and foot to the earth, just remain with the earth. However, if you want to proceed with the Living Body of the School and co-operate with it, then now is the time to do so. We are discussing these things to help you gain insight and achieve profound self-knowledge. You will have to find out in a short time what is in cooperative movement within you and what is in counter- movement with your divine destiny.

If you have an inquiring mind, you might still ask how it is possible that at a given moment death strikes all who stand in counter-movement. The answer is simple, as appears from Hermes' reply to Aesclepius:

"As the sinful spheres are moved in a direction opposite to that of the sinless sphere they are moved, in this counter- movement, by the stationary point of equilibrium around the resisting sphere. It really cannot be otherwise." (...) "The circulation is nothing but the movement around the same centre, a movement which is completely governed by the immovability of the centre. The revolution forestalls deviation, and by forestalling the deviation the revolution is perpetuated. Also, the counter-movement stands still in the point of equilibrium, because it becomes static through the resisting movement".

By this, Hermes meant to say that if you abuse your freedom and act against the divine intention which in immobility governs the motion of the All, the

resistance provoked by your counter-movement will then grow to such proportions that the result of your undivine life can no longer withstand it and is annihilated.

Counter-movement produces resistance. The vibration of this resistance increases until scorching and destruction come about. The resistance is not caused by the Deity but by you yourself. Therefore, sorrow about difficulties on the path of life is irrational, for you created them yourself, although it often seems to you as though your fellow men were to blame. The Deity does not fight against, punish or judge you in the ordinary sense. You do it yourself. Whether because of your microcosmic past or because of what you do in the present, you invoke resistances and eventually perish through them. If that is how you are, you are not living, but you exist in a constant state of perishing which you, erroneously, consider to be life.

Let us strive and work perseveringly to transform our lives into true co-operative movement, so that we may find mercy in the seven powers emanating from the Logos. For the one life only develops out of true co-operative movement.

XVI

VOLUNTARY SELF-SURRENDER: THE FINAL DEATH OF THE I

We would like once more to discuss the great crossroads in life, where the paths of co-operative movement and counter-movement meet.

Those who, as pupils of the Spiritual School, participate in the young Gnosis, are fully aware that the development of the School as a group, as a Living Body, as the young Gnosis which has been accepted into the Universal Chain of the preceding Brotherhoods, entails a strong and positive influx of the seven rays of the Seven-Spirit. For this reason, the urge to move in co-operation with the radiation of God, with the Holy Spirit, has become extraordinarily strong as far as our collectivity is concerned. A Whitsuntide is thus being fulfilled in the Living Body.

However, as long as you stand in counter-movement, all this will cause intense resistance in you. This resistance does not come to you from outside, but as we have seen, it is you yourself who cause it. By your attitude to life, your state of being, you yourself develop a steadily increasing resistance which results in constant mortification. All this is explained to make you become a true healer, an Aesclepius, in the shortest possible time. This requires, as is said in verse 44 of the text, "some preliminary knowledge regarding the essence of the

All".

You are a cell of the Living Body of the young Gnosis, which has developed in such a way that it has experienced much grace, and great tasks and forces have been poured out over it. These tasks can only be carried out, can only be reacted to positively, by means of perfect co-operative movement with the seven rays which emanate from the Deity, from the Immovable Kingdom.

You are the young Gnosis! You are a cell of the Body. And now that the whole Body of the Gnosis is seized by the fire of positive movement, the maintenance of any counter movement will create great danger for you. This should be quite clear to you, so clear that you can never forget it again. As we said before: taking part in counter-movement creates resistance, because all motion is ultimately surrounded by the Kingdom of God. At a given moment this resistance destroys the result of the counter-movement.

Driven by the I, driven by the nature of death, you often develop things on the basis of your natural state. But just at the moment when it seems your dream is about to come true, things change into their opposites and death overtakes you. What you imagined you were building, is broken. This process shows you that as a result of your natural inclinations you have moved in a circle, only to be brought back time and time again to the same point, to start again right at the beginning.

If you remain in counter-movement even though you have been taken up as a cell in a gnostic School, in a system which follows the path of co-operative movement in a most dynamic way, then the result will no longer simply be a process which ultimately leaves you empty-handed. Rather, an incident will occur, a burning, a great injury, an annihilation of your soul-state. That is why the warning can be found in all holy language, that sins against the Holy Spirit have serious consequences. They will affect the soul and the mentality, the heart sanctuary and the head sanctuary.

You are an animated being, moved by certain immaterial forces to which you respond emotionally and mentally. Head and heart are driven by what animates you. If what animates you exists in counter-movement, the result will always be death, the annihilation of the result of the counter-movement. What animates you must make this discovery again and again, until it decides to die the last death; the death of voluntary self-surrender, the endura, the self-surrender to co-operative movement, to the Spirit of God and His seven rays, to the plan which underlies the process of genesis. He who dies this death in absolute selflessness will develop, with perfect certainty, the new soul state, for he clears the way for a new movement. So the new soul is born, a new thinking develops and from these develop an unwavering co-operative movement with the Logos and a complete transfiguration.

But let us go over all this once more: with your

natural soul you consciously enter a gnostic Body, a Spiritual School which clearly exists in the seven rays. You are then taken up with your nature-born being into a very special radiation field that you have never before experienced and you stand in a totally new motion. Suppose that in this new motion, in the stream of the seven rays, you were to maintain your nature-born existence and carry on willing, feeling, thinking and acting just as you did before, because you are not at all prepared to die the last death of the I, the endura. Suppose you were to remain determined to maintain your I, your ordinary nature, your character, your type, while existing in a radiation field in which great, new forces are manifested.

We ask you: where would the resistance you yourself created have its immediate effect - in the results of your mistakes, as is normal in the world of dialectics? Or in the deliberately maintained cause of your mistakes? The answer is plain: in the cause of your mistakes, in the natural soul and the mentality. You would then be burnt, as it were, and your soul and mentality would be denatured in the process. You would become highly abnormal. The ultimate result would be a decline far below the Lemurian beginning. There are many psychologically disturbed people already. How many feeble-minded persons there are; many, countless of them have juggled and played with great spiritual forces.

That is why the School must now speak of a great crisis which concerns all members of the Living Body. It is a crisis caused by the fact that the seven seals are

being broken in the Living Body - a process also described in the Book of Revelations.

The Spiritual School stands in an apocalypse, in the fire of revelation. It is certainly not necessary that the opening of these seven seals should bring with it seven plagues, seven griefs, seven great painful processes and a sevenfold annihilation of our sevenfold emergency order. On the contrary, the aim of a gnostic school of initiation is to cure you, to make each of you an Aesclepius. But then it is also necessary for you to enter into co-operative movement and bring the counter-movement to an end, immediately and forever, by means of a last death, an endura.

We are very much aware that at this moment we are burdening your soul with troublesome things. You would much prefer to be told something quite different, but you are told all this to give you some "preliminary knowledge about the nature of the All". That is what will benefit you most. It is also why Hermes Trismegistus said in verse 25: "So you see how heavily burdened the soul is, when alone, it must carry two bodies".

You are all in motion and we ask you: what is causing your motion at this moment. You are very active in your life, you are very busy. You are busy all the time - but with what? Examine what it is that makes you so hard pressed for time. Explain quite objectively your activity which tires you so and burdens your natural soul to such an extent.

Is it co-operative movement or is it counter-movement? Is it a constant striving in counter-

movement to keep your difficulties at arm's length, to ensure that things don't go wrong? Isn't it so that in spite of your frantic struggle and great fatigue, you never succeed and the resistance becomes even greater, so that from time to time things are suddenly brought to a standstill, or in other words, death comes in one of its forms: exhaustion, despair or illness? Isn't it so that you are always busy with nothing but taking measures, carrying out tactics, determining lines of action? But every- thing falls to nothing in your hands, a lifeless nothing, and you keep on asking yourself: "Where did I go wrong? Why is there still grief and pain, fatigue and hopelessness? Why don't things take a turn for the better? Didn't I do everything conceivable to put things straight?"

Well, all this happens because you remain in counter-movement, in the conflict of opposites. And we tell you at such length about the clear, logical necessity of liberating co-operative movement, in order to make you decide to enter into it, in clearly demonstrable action, as the great reversal that must take place in the life of every human being. Then fate will leave you immediately, and you will arrive at a controlled and more efficient use of your time and energy.

Co-operative movement, the new attitude to life of the true pupil of the young Gnosis, imparts equality of vibration as a group, great inner rest and tranquility and the disappearance of all tensions. It also frees the pupil from the imprisonment and madness of the modern passion for work. Therefore, let us open

ourselves entirely to the grace of co-operative movement, to the mighty grace of the rays of the Seven-Spirit, to the direct descent of eternity into time, to the pouring out of the Holy Spirit, a new Whitsuntide bestowed on the young Gnosis. Let us join this new community of salvation.

XVII

THE MYSTERY OF THE HOLY GRAIL

We have explained that as soon as the seven rays, which emanate from the Immovable Kingdom, enter the primordial nature, motion is caused in the latter. This motion is co-operative movement. The primordial nature then demonstrates, by what proceeds from it, what lies enclosed in the Deity. In the course of its development, a gnostic Living Body will at a given moment surround itself with a new astral field which originates directly from the primordial nature, from Mother Isis. It then spreads throughout that part of the world where the gnostic Body is active.

When such a new gnostic realm has been formed and the required foci have been established, a new movement will develop in the Living Body, which will increase by the hour, as a result of the breaking of the seven seals. The seven seals of the process of true life, of the development of the true man, are broken and the seven rays of the Deity are revealed in a direct way. The Gnosis as mediator recedes before the fullness of the Holy Spirit.

As you can read in the Gospel of John, Christ says to his disciples: "It is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Comforter will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. And when the

Comforter comes whom I will send you from the Father, namely the spirit of truth which proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness of me".

So it will be clear that when the Gnosis as intermediary recedes before the fullness of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, an entirely new state will come into being. A new attitude to life and a new necessity of life will emerge with compelling power for all those who are involved in the process.

Matthew 24, which we advise you to read, describes this state of affairs as we are now experiencing it. In this connection, the author of the Gospel of Matthew says that "this generation will by no means pass before all these things have happened". This statement has often been ridiculed and people have said scornfully, "Alas, how many generations have passed since the beginning of our era without all this having happened". However, the events announced in Matthew 24 have to do with the course of development of the Gnosis. Just as it was necessary in those days for the Gnosis to undergo the things described, so we in our times are also confronted with the same developments.

The Bible also speaks of the breaking of the seven seals in a negative sense as regards the world and mankind. This is elucidated in the Book of Revelations and we will not go into it here.

Instead, we would like to discuss another question that might arise in this connection: "What should we understand by the fact that the seven seals are *closed*?" Our answer is that this concerns a state of

temporary neutralisation of the absoluteness of the Seven-Spirit in certain regions of the primordial nature. In Europe the direct influences of the Seven-Spirit have hardly been noticed during the last seven hundred years, because such a neutralisation took place in that part of the world. Now, however, the radiations of the Seven-Spirit and their effects on the world are regaining their intensity. And as regards the young Gnosis, the scope and activity of the Seven-Spirit are increasing by the hour, for you will understand that at a given moment in any gnostic development, the neutralisation will cease completely, and this is what has now happened to the young Gnosis.

This process is exemplified in the Christ drama. Christ came and chose his disciples, or in our terminology, he established his group. He led the way to the path of the rose and cross and made this path and its requirements known to the group. The group became a community, a Living Body, an Ecclesia. At that moment Jesus the Lord withdrew as mediator. "It is to your advantage that I go away", he said, "because the Comforter will come after me". Then Jesus preceded the group to the new life-field. The withdrawal of Jesus the Lord as mediator is in a certain sense only apparent; the Gnosis leads the group to the new life-field and there they will meet again.

As soon as the Gnosis as mediator, as radiation factor, has withdrawn, the Seven-Spirit radiates in its fullness. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit follows

immediately. To say that the group of the young Gnosis, in line with the rest of the Universal Gnostic Chain, will stand before the same experience, is neither far-fetched nor spectacular. We are following all those who walked the path before us.

We too are standing before the gates of a totally new state of life, in which a new mystery lies enclosed: the mystery of the development of a new, higher consciousness, the mystery of deification. So, as we said before, it is a matter of the utmost logic that, after having received some "preliminary knowledge regarding the essence of the All", we say to each other: "Let us understand what the Seven-Spirit requires of us, so that we too may prepare ourselves in the Upper Room".

As explained earlier, the seven rays grant us absolute life, absolute love, absolute intelligence, absolute harmony, absolute wisdom, absolute devotion and absolute liberating action. As these seven rays influence one another, it is obvious that there are seven times seven or forty-nine aspects or rays with which every candidate in the new mystery will have to comply.

All who enter the Head Temple of the School of the Rosycross in Haarlem, will discover this inescapable idea expressed, above the place of Service, by the five-pointed star of Bethlehem - symbol of the reborn soul - surrounded by the seven times seven rays that emanate from the Immoveable Kingdom and urge one on to divinity. That is why, following the breaking of

the seven seals, the Temple of the Rosycross which formerly existed in Haarlem has now made way for the Temple of the Holy Spirit, the sanctuary of the Brotherhood of the Holy Grail.

We would now like to discuss the forty-nine aspects of the Holy Grail, especially as regards what is expected of you as a living cell in the Gnostic Body.

Above all, the candidate is expected to have a great and sober honesty. He must be ready to undergo that most important of all deaths: the death of the "I", the endura. Among other things, this will enable him to avoid the danger of burning mentioned earlier. Everyone who does away with the main resistance in the self will immediately be renewed according to the soul. Everyone who is renewed as to his soul will at once become receptive to the language of the Holy Spirit. This will tell you that you have to accept its guidance with great honesty.

Even if you cannot yet fully understand the entire fullness of the Spirit, simplicity, honesty and purity of intention will never fail you. On the basis of soul rebirth, you will be able to grow in sanctification with the openness and un-selfconsciousness of a child.

With your renewed soul, and in the purity of your childhood, you will eventually come to stand before the throne of the holy Seven-Light, and you will kneel before the first ray, the ray of absolute life. What is absolute life? It is the life of the original man, the life of the true soul-mankind. Absolute life is something great, something magnificent, something

immeasurable. It is your all-encompassing vocation. You have been born in an emergency-order body in the nature of death so that, as a result of a path of experience of opposites, your consciousness may awaken to the Absolute. Only in this way can you manifest God's glory.

That is why there needs to be a mighty yearning in you, an overpowering urge towards true life, to which everything you have and know is subordinate. All will be well if you approach the first ray of the Seven-Spirit with this powerful longing to reach the absolute life. A positive irradiation by the Holy Spirit will immediately follow and you will in principle be linked with the fire of Pentecost, with the all-embracing Good. You will learn to address this Good, the Seven-Spirit, in whom and through whom your salvation must manifest itself, as "Father". "Creating is the characteristic of the Father", said Hermes.

"Therefore, in the life of those whose consciousness is correctly directed, to give birth to the Son is a matter of great seriousness and zeal and of deepest attachment to God; while it is the greatest misfortune and the greatest sin for someone to die without the childship of God and to be punished by the Demons after death. This is the punishment: the soul of this childless one will be condemned to assume a body that is neither male nor female, which is a doom emanating from the Sun. Thus, Aesclepius, participate in joy if no-one is without childship, but embrace with your compassion the one who stands in

unhappiness, because you know what punishment awaits him.

Here the Egyptian Arch-Gnosis points out with absolute clarity the aim of life, your destiny as willed by God: to give birth to the Son, the inner Christ, the true, immortal man within you.

If this calling is ignored, denied or rejected, if you keep on following the path of blind self-will, the doom emanating from the spiritual Sun will inevitably be attracted. Its seven- fold radiation power will have a negative effect and will make you, now and in the future, insensitive and sterile in head and heart as regards both the masculine, creative aspects and the feminine, revealing aspects of its work of salvation. Then you will have to follow to the end the path through the darkness, the endlessly long path of suffering and sorrow which you yourself have chosen.

However, if, in a mighty yearning for salvation, you approach the absolute life, you will discover that you have been blessed to such an extent by the first ray of the Seven- Spirit that a consciousness, an experience of childship is generated within you. It will connect you directly and positively with the beginning activity of the six other rays of the Holy Spirit. The six flames will break through!

In the absolute life, love is to be found! All who enter through the gates of the first ray will learn for the first time what love really is. Love includes true understanding of the natural soul in its as yet unreborn state, an understanding of man's struggle

and of his mistakes, committed in ignorance. Out of this love, such a one will have patience; if necessary, endless patience. For you know, at least in theory, and you should read about it again in 1 Corinthians 13, that love has the ability to wait; love bears all things. Can you now understand that anyone who is able to receive the Seven-Spirit in a positive way, and thus becomes a son of the Fullness, will also be intelligent? Do you now see that where true understanding, true love and endless patience are present, there the Way must be also - the Way and the knowledge of how life and love must be fulfilled in their absolute sense? Do you now realise how obvious, how necessary it is that the seven rays influence one another?

Has all that we have said not made clear that absolute harmony and a profound inner tranquility must predominate in such a way of life? Will such a person not see the portals of wisdom opened wide before him? Will devotion to all that is created not become quite natural to him? And do all these things together not testify most profoundly of a way of life of liberating action?

The new mystery has opened for you. It is as a Golden Head, above which burns the fire of Pentecost. What is preventing you from entering? Go in then, and enter into the peace of your Lord.

XVIII

NEW, LIBERATING POSSIBILITIES

"Good is He who gives all and does not take anything. Indeed, God gives all and does not take anything. Therefore, God is The Good and The Good is God. The other name of God is Father, because He is the creator of all things. Creating is the characteristic of the Father."

"O holy Seven-Spirit, we who are linked in the young Gnosis and who have climbed the Golgotha of renewal, we approach You with our whole being and bow in humility before Your absoluteness."

It is in this way that the candidate should approach the newly revealed mystery. We hope and pray that very many will become conscious of the new liberating possibilities that have been granted to seeking mankind; that they will understand the aim of the work of the young Gnosis: to make all those who are ready, open for the light of the new day which is now dawning for us. Our fervent prayer is that you will from now on abandon all counter-movement and that whenever it approaches you, you will always recognise it in time.

Mankind as a unity, as a brotherhood of the beginning, has been broken to pieces, and we see the fragments in man's extreme individualism. All these individualities move in space and are moved by a

force. But the space and force are also individualised. If you are also like this, you too stand in the midst of all those countless others as an I, as a rock-hard, unapproachable, individualised being, separated from all others. You are lonely and, in more than one respect, imprisoned. All those who are lonely and imprisoned are moved about in their respective spaces by their respective forces. They are all in motion, it is true, but it is the motion of the counter-nature. You live side by side, but you do not understand each other at all. You do not tolerate one another; indeed, you are unable to do so - until the Gnosis has been sought and found.

The Gnosis is the born Aesclepius, the healer, the Lord of Love. The Gnosis seeks you out in your isolation and captivity and acquaints you with the path. Anyone who wishes to follow this path must break away from the hell of counter-movement and, by dying the last death of self-surrender to the Gnosis, to the Lord of Love, cause the new soul-state to awaken. Such a one will immediately enter the new mystery of the Holy Spirit, the mystery of the divine genesis, the mystery by which the Son manifests himself.

In the young Gnosis, this genesis is granted to you. It is a genesis in which you are given all that is truly Good, and in which nothing can be taken away from you any longer. It is a genesis in which the Father of the All, in His Son, brings Himself forth within us.

The one, eternal salvation is open for you; come, approach its majesty. Arise now, into this wonderful

life, leaving behind all earthly strife.

XIX
SEVENTH BOOK
HERMES TELLS
TAT OF THE MIXING VESSEL AND
THE ONENESS

1. HERMES: Since the Demiurge created the whole world by His Word and not with His hands, consider Him as that which is present, as the forever unchangeable reality, the Creator of all things, the One and Only, who created all that is according to His Will.
2. Indeed, this is His body, which is untouchable, invisible, immeasurable and indivisible and which cannot be compared with any other body. He is neither fire, nor water, nor air, nor breath, but these and all other things are from and through Him.
3. Since He is The Good, He did not wish to dedicate this offering to Himself alone, nor to adorn the earth for Himself alone, but sent down man as an embellishment of this divine body, a mortal creature of an immortal being. If the earth surpasses its creatures by its life everlasting, man surpasses the creatures of the earth by his reason and the spirit.

4. Man reflected on God's works and was elated by them and learned to recognize their Creator. Thus, O Tat, God imparted reason to all men, but not the Spirit. Not that He grudged it to anyone, because grudging does not come from above; it comes into being here below, in the souls of those who do not possess the Spirit.
5. TAT: Why, O Father, did God not impart the Spirit to all men?
6. HERMES: It was His will, my son, that the link with the Spirit should be obtained by all souls; however, as a prize for the race.
7. TAT: How did He achieve this?
8. HERMES: He sent down a great Mixing Vessel, filled with the powers of the Spirit and He appointed a herald and bade him proclaim to the hearts of men: "Immerse yourselves in this Mixing Vessel, you souls who can; you who believe and trust that you will ascend to Him who sent down this Vessel; you who know for what purpose you were created".
9. Those who gave heed to this proclamation and were purified by immersion in the powers of the Spirit, became partakers in the Gnosis, the living knowledge of God, and, as they had received the Spirit, became perfect men.
10. However, those who have sinned against the

proclamation by not listening to it, remain within the limits of reason, as they have not received the powers of the Spirit and do not know for what purpose they have been created, nor by whom.

11. 1 1. The sensorial perceptions of such human beings are almost equal to those of irrational animals; and as their nature is a mixture of passions, they have no admiration for what is worthy of reflection and contemplation; they devote themselves to their bodily pleasures and desires and believe that man has come into being for such things.
12. However, those who have partaken of God's gift are no longer mortals, as proved by all their deeds, but divine men who understand with their Spirit-Soul all that is on earth, in heaven and, perhaps, above heaven.
13. Having beheld The Good, those who have raised themselves in this way have learned to consider their sojourn here on earth as a disaster. They repudiate all things corporeal and incorporeal and hasten to reach the One and only.
14. These, 0 Tat, the manifestation of the Spirit-Soul, the emergence of divine things and the beholding of God are the gifts of the divine Mixing Vessel.
15. TAT: I, too, want to experience immersion in it, 0

Father!

16. HERMES: You cannot love your true self unless you first hate your body, my son. But if you do love your true self, you will possess the Spirit-Soul; once you possess the Spirit-Soul, you will also partake of its living knowledge.
17. TAT: What do you mean by this, Father?
18. HERMES: It is impossible, my son, to adhere to both material and divine things. As there are two states of existence, the embodied and the bodiless, the mortal and the divine, you will have to choose consciously between these two, for one cannot adhere to both. As soon as the choice has been made the waning of what has been rejected will be proved in the active force of what has been chosen.
19. Thus the good choice will show its glory not only by the deification of the one who has made it, but also by demonstrating his attachment and devotion to God.
20. The bad choice, on the other hand, leads to the destruction of man and is, moreover, a sin against God. Just as, in processions, people walk in the middle of the road and can do nothing else than hinder others in their movement, so those who have made the bad choice can do nothing else than

move in this way through the world, urged on by their bodily desires.

21. Therefore, O Tat, the gifts emanating from God have always been, and will always be, at our disposal. It is for us to see to it that what emanates from us is in harmony with it and does not fall short. For it is not God who is the cause of our wickedness, it is we ourselves who choose it in preference to The Good.
22. Do you realise, my son, how many vehicular states, crowds of demons, veils of matter and courses of stars we have to pass through during our wearisome ascent to the One and Only? The Good cannot be reached by way of a convenient crossing. It is limitless and without end, and in itself it is without beginning, too, though to us it may seem to have had its beginning in the Gnosis, the All-knowledge of God.
23. Indeed, the Gnosis is not the beginning of The Good, but it imparts to us the beginning of what we will come to know of The Good.
24. Let us therefore take hold of this beginning and accomplish with haste our passage through all that awaits us; for it is difficult indeed to abandon what is so familiar and to leave behind all that one has, in order to turn back to the ancient and first things. What is visible imparts delight, while the

invisible gives rise to disbelief and doubt. To the ordinary eye evil is wellknown and manifest, while The Good is invisible. It has neither form nor shape, it is unchangeably like itself and, therefore, unlike any- thing else. That is why the incorporeal is invisible to corporeal man.

25. Because of all this, the unchangeable, that which remains like itself, is more excellent than the changeable and the changeable is poor in comparison with the unchangeable.
26. The oneness, the one and indivisible, the origin and root of everything is present, as such, in all things. There is nothing without origin. The origin, however, as the starting point of everything else, has its origin in itself only.
27. The number one, as the origin, contains all other numbers within itself, without itself being contained by any of them. It brings forth all numbers, without itself being brought forth by any other number.
28. All that has been brought forth is imperfect and divisible, and subject to increase and decrease. What is perfect, however, has none of this.
29. Since what can increase derives its increase from the oneness, it succumbs through its own feebleness if it can no longer offer room to the

oneness.

30. Thus, O Tat, I have drawn for you, as far as is possible, an image of God; if you carefully contemplate it inwardly and steadfastly observe it with the eyes of your heart, you will, believe me, my son, find the way to heaven. Or rather: God's image itself will guide you on this way. Inner directedness to this image causes those who have begun to turn towards it to be held captive in its power and to be drawn upwards by it, just as a magnet attracts iron.

XX

THE PRIZE FOR THE RACE

The seventh book of the *Corpus Hermeticum* is intended for one who has come to a complete deadlock in dialectics; one who has become conscious of the futility, the hopelessness of this existence, but who has sufficient inner stability to look for a way out, for a solution. Therefore, in the seventh book this person is called Tat, which means one who is called to kingship, to become the higher, true man. To him, the divine Mixing Vessel, the Chalice, the Holy Grail, is extended. If he is willing to drain this cup, he will find the solution on which he has set his heart; the great problem of his life will be solved.

If you can identify yourself with such a person, if inwardly you are in such a state, then this seventh hermetic book has much to tell you. It interprets an eternal truth which was put into words thousands of years ago, in a way which is of great importance to us all and can have an extremely liberating effect.

Let us try to understand this truth and as we do so, let us bear in mind that the seventh book not only explains the Holy Grail, but by virtue of the Call it contains, seeks to release the power of the Holy Grail, the power of the seventh ray of the Seven-Spirit.

"Since the Demiurge created the whole world by his word and not with his hands, consider him as that

which is Present, as the forever unchangeable Reality, the Creator of all things, the One and Only, who created all that is according to His will."

In the Gospel of John we read: "In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God". You should not think of this word as an activity of the throat, a spoken word. You should think of it as the Logos itself, the Logos which is outside everything, which encloses all that exists.

For us, creatures, the word is the most essential aspect of the Deity. It is the mighty, creative activity that emanates from the Father. We should consider this creative activity as the direct, manifesting expression of the divine mentality.

As creatures, we think of something and on the basis of our idea, the object of our thoughts, we often arrive at action. However, God's ideation-power creates, manifests and therefore acts, in a direct way. That is why Psalm 33 states: "He spoke, and it was there. He commanded, and there it stood". That is also why we read that God, the Demiurge, created the whole world, not with His hands, but by His word.

Thus, this has nothing to do with our human mental activity, but relates to something quite different. In saying this, we do not wish to denigrate the mentality. We have received the ability to think, to understand things, and, guided by our understanding, to act in a rational way. We should be extremely grateful for this gift. Man is a being whose component parts certainly belong to each other, but have not as yet been properly unified. The reason for

this is that he still lacks an essential element.

We are aware of an emotional activity, often followed by thought and then by an activity of the will; we express our feelings, thoughts and will by means of language. This results in actions, which may be successful, but which all too often have deplorable consequences. In the Logos, in the word, however, all these aspects co-operate harmoniously and manifest themselves perfectly. The Logos is an unlimited being with which the human being cannot be compared in any respect whatsoever.

"Indeed, this (creative word) is His body, which is untouchable, invisible, immeasurable and indivisible and which cannot be compared with any other body. He is neither fire, water, air nor breath, but these and all other things are from and through Him. Since He is The Good, He did not wish to dedicate this offering to Himself alone, nor to adorn the earth for Himself alone, but sent down man as an embellishment of this divine body, a mortal creature of an immortal being. If the earth surpasses its creatures by its life everlasting, man surpasses the creatures of the earth by his reason and the spirit."

This last point is particularly important: man has received reason and the spirit; reason to make him realise to what depths he has fallen and, under the influence of the light of the Gnosis, to make him understand his divine vocation; he has received the Spirit, or Pymander, to raise him from the animal state to the state of the true man, to the true childship

of God. Let us dwell a little longer on these two pre-eminently human aspects. "Man", said Hermes, "reflected on God's works and was elated by them and learned to recognise their creator".

You know that mankind has been full of astonishment and religiosity with respect to this world ever since its foundation. Astonishment extends in all possible directions; people talk and write incessantly about it; philosophies to explain it have appeared one after the other throughout the centuries. Experiments designed to respond to the meaning of life are thousandfold.

So, on the one hand, we see contentment, joy, gratitude and delight in life. Just think of the Flemish author Felix Timmermans, who had such success at the beginning of this century, the man of insatiable delight in life, in eating and drinking. On the other hand, in times like ours, we hear the language of disillusionment and despair and no less the language of protest, on account of the fact that something like death can exist, and on account of the multifarious afflictions that pursue mankind; astonishment at the state of distress life offers.

Then there is the language of compromise, of escape from the world as expressed in the familiar sentiment: after death everything will be better. There is the language related to the splitting of the personality and the culture of the personality: if only you cultivate yourself, everything will straighten itself out.

Finally, we know the language of hopeless drivel

and degeneration. This diversity, this confusion of languages which we all know so well, proves the existence of an unenlightened mental activity. What is the reason for this so detrimental and hopeless confusion? Hermes' answer is: "God imparted reason to all men, but not the Spirit".

Not everyone has Pymander, the Spirit, at his disposal. Therefore, all who do not possess the Spirit remain in the chaos of astonishment. Astonishment follows astonishment and so the masses remain in hopeless confusion. A person without Pymander cannot have anything else than uncomprehending astonishment.

Why then, one may ask, is the Spirit, Pymander, withheld from the majority of mankind? Why haven't all received the Spirit? But Pymander is not kept from anyone at all! The text clearly states: "It was God's will that the link with the Spirit should be obtained by all souls; however, as a prize for the race".

That is why we have the legend of God's Paradise. In the middle of the pure, original creation - God's Paradise - the prize for the souls, Pymander, the healing Spirit, stood as a tree of life.

You should have a clear understanding of this. The Spirit- Spark bearer, the person with the rose-heart, represents the potential childship of God, the one pole of the faculty for higher awakening latent in man.

As soon as the rose-bearer - mortal according to his nature and immortal according to his vocation - finds himself in life, he must ask in astonishment:

"Why was I born? What is the purpose of my being here?" This astonishment is followed by adoration, for this question receives an immediate reply from the proto-atom, the rose-heart. A radiation flashes through the whole being; the voice speaks.

Thus the answer dawns in the consciousness: "You are here in this mortal life to become conscious of your high calling, the call to immortality, which emanates from God, and to devote yourself entirely to this high calling as a rose-soul; to dedicate yourself to the prize for the race, the prize of the souls, Pymander.

The negative divine seed of God, which lies concealed within us - the seed grain of Jesus, the rose-heart, the proto-atom - then receives the positive element. This positive element bursts inwards; the Mary or Isis principle receives the Holy Spirit, the Osiris principle, and so the Son of the Deity is born.

Hermes went on to say that those who do not know the astonishment of life and who negate the call of the light: "remain within the limits of reason, as they have not received the powers of the Spirit and do not know for what purpose they have been created, nor by whom. The sensorial perceptions of such human beings are almost equal to those of irrational animals, and as their nature is a mixture of passions, they have no admiration for what is worthy of reflection and contemplation; they devote themselves to their bodily pleasures and desires and believe that man has come into being for such things".

Then man goes astray, and folly and confusion

develop; crystallisation and submersion in the sands of the desert come about. Nevertheless the high, divine gift waits for all that is submerged. It is waiting for you too, if only you are willing to devote yourself positively to your high calling. However, for this you must first put things straight within you, for you are among those who, in the beginning, remained standing in astonishment; who initially found no reason to take up their vocation. That is why the centuries and likewise the years of life now lying behind you have created so much crystallisation in your microcosm. Therefore, there is much within you that needs changing and dissolution. That is why you must give first priority to guiding your soul to rebirth.

The young Gnosis therefore places its pupils, laden with the dregs of the past, before the task of tearing themselves out of this strait-jacket and reaching the new soul state. When you have reached the perfect soul state, the prize of the perfect souls will be waiting for you. The Paradise soul of the origin will have again become worthy of receiving the prize of the souls: the Spirit, the high, divine gift, Pymander, Holy Grail, referred to in the seventh book of Hermes as the divine Mixing Vessel. We would like to discuss this Vessel in the following chapter.

XXI

THE HOLY MIXING VESSEL

As an introduction we would like to quote from 1 John 5: "Who is it that overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God? This is He that comes with water and blood: Jesus Christ. Not with water only, but with water and blood. And it is the Spirit that bears witness, because the Spirit is Truth. For there are three that bear witness in heaven: the Father, the Word and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one."

Now we would like to quote verses 6 and 8 of the seventh hermetic book: "It was His will, my son, that the link with the Spirit should be obtained by all souls; however, as a prize for the race.

"He sent down a great Mixing Vessel, filled with the powers of the Spirit and He appointed a herald and bade him proclaim to the hearts of men: Immerse yourselves in this Mixing Vessel, you souls who can; you who believe and trust that you will ascend to Him who sent down this Vessel; you who know for what purpose you have been created."

In antiquity, a chalice-shaped vessel was used for mixing water and wine. Whenever the Bible speaks of mixing water and wine, or water and blood, such stories are almost always connected with the self-sacrifice of those who go out to serve the great work

of liberation. Water, or bread, is the symbol of the holy ether-forces; wine, or blood, is the symbol of the holy astral power, which is freed by sacrifice to serve the liberation of mankind. Think for example of the Biblical story about the wedding at Cana. Also, when one of the soldiers pierced the side of Jesus with a lance after he had died on the cross, blood and wine flowed out of the wound.

The hermetic Gnosis explains that it was God's will "that the link with the Spirit should be obtained by all souls; however, as a prize for the race", and it mentions the great, heavenly Vessel for mingling water and wine, filled with the powers of the Spirit, sent down by God so that those who immersed themselves in it would be purified and could return to their former glory. This, too, is a splendid description of the work of the Brotherhood of the Holy Grail.

The prize for the race, the prize for the souls, is the immersion, the purification, the baptism of water, wine and spirit in the Mixing Vessel, the Holy Grail. This baptism is open to everyone; it is withheld from no one. It cannot possibly be kept from anyone. Yet it can manifest itself only to those who have at their disposal a worthy, pure soul. This soul creates a certain state of vibration in the head sanctuary. This enables the radiation of the Seven-Spirit to flow into the human being in a positive way and make a binding with the rose heart, the latent spirit-principle within him. If you think of this, you will easily understand why throughout the ages people have

spoken of a cup, a grail, a bowl, a vase, a vessel from which the living water flows. The thirsting soul which has become mature refreshes itself with living water from this cup, the living water of the New Testament.

The quest for the Holy Grail is anchored very deeply in man, which explains the reason for the innumerable legends concerning the Holy Grail, King Arthur and the Round Table. The Grail is a missing link for nature-born man. In this light, it is also clear why the Brotherhood of the Holy Grail exists, for the Grail is the fulfilment. The Rosycross brings knowledge of the path. The Brotherhood of the Cathars, the pure ones, taught about joining in group unity to walk the path. But the crowning of the path is the Grail. That is why the final initiation of the preceding Brotherhood, which took place in the Cave of Bethlehem, was connected with this coronation feast. The candidate was linked with the Grail; he drank, not symbolically but in reality, from the cup of the New Testament; he was connected with his Pymander.

It should now be clear to you why the Triunity of the Light must co-operate: Grail, Cathar and Cross with Roses. This has been the case from the very foundation of the world, in order to proclaim the gospel of liberation to all souls who are eligible, and to help them on the path. That is why we read in verses 8 and 9:

"He sent down a great Mixing Vessel, filled with the powers of the Spirit and He appointed a herald and

bade him proclaim to the hearts of men: Immerse yourselves in this Mixing Vessel, you souls who can, you who believe and trust that you will ascend to Him who sent down this Vessel; you who know for what purpose you have been created.

"Those who gave heed to this proclamation and were purified by immersion in the powers of the Spirit, became partakers in the Gnosis, the living knowledge of God, and, as they had received the Spirit, became perfect men."

This text speaks of two different kinds of baptism: first the immersion, the purification, the rebirth of the soul; then, the Grail. The Bible also deals with this subject, which proves that much in this holy book has been derived from the *Corpus Hermeticum*. The Bible distinguishes between the baptism of conversion, of change, and the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Mankind, which still stands in the state of astonishment we spoke of earlier, has become completely confused as a result of this. In churches and sects, baptism has become an exclusively symbolic act. There is infant baptism and baptism of adults, sometimes by the hundred. The baptism of the Holy Spirit is symbolically imitated in the celebration of the Eucharist. Such symbolic imitation has no meaning whatsoever. Only art is called to express symbolically and repeat in its own way what the Holy Language teaches. Man can be deeply affected and moved by an artistic expression inspired by the living truth.

Our rejection of modern, meaningless symbolism does not, of course, apply to the symbolic customs of

the ancients, which were based on profound inner knowledge. The preceding Brotherhood, for example, was not able to make use of the printing press to make its writings known to the public. That is why spiritual tenets were presented in the form of symbolic language and ritual, so that by continually hearing, seeing and understanding, the seeker's insight would be deepened and he would react positively. However, if symbolic acts are imitated without any inner knowledge, simply following religious tradition, in ignorance and without power, they become corrupt and ridiculous.

In addition to symbolic action, there is also gnostic magic. In many respects living symbolism and gnostic magic are alike. Yet inwardly, and later as regards their results, they are not at all alike. We will try to explain the meaning of gnostic magical action.

Suppose you become a pupil of the Spiritual School and, as we have just explained, find yourself faced with the requirement of the baptism of reversal, because the universal Seven-Spirit can do nothing until your soul has become pure and worthy. The baptism of reversal is an inner conversion which you will have to prove by your way of life. In dialectics, people put things the other way round. If everything is all right externally, if people can give their faces the right makeup, depending on how it fits in with their plans, they consider themselves civilised. You will realise how foolish this is. Therefore, the prerequisite is inner reversal and its reality will quite naturally become evident in your life.

If, in this state, you live your pupilship, it may happen, for instance in the Temple or outside it, that gnostic soul radiations are transmitted to you and consolidated within you, through the gnostic magical action of brothers and sisters. In this way you are helped to get over certain deadlocks and difficulties.

When you have prepared yourself, with the aid of the School, for the baptism of the Holy Grail, of course the same law applies again: it is only merit that promotes. If you have entered the state of soul maturity, some obstacles may still exist on the biological and purely physical level. For example, an endocrine organ may not as yet be able to react sufficiently due to hereditary weakness or a natural organic disturbance. The obstruction may then be neutralised by means of gnostic magical action. As changes take place in the racial body over the centuries, these obstructions are generally not of the same kind. Seven hundred years ago, the disturbances and obstructions in the endocrine system were quite different from what they are now. The help of gnostic magic will naturally be adapted to this, and must therefore avoid old customs and look for efficient new ways. In this way, an apparently simple action may often have enormous consequences.

You should bear in mind that we are speaking of gnostic magic and not simply of ordinary magic. With regard to the application of gnostic magic, protestant churches and sects have lapsed into an altogether externalised symbolic action and have therefore

become powerless. As a consequence they have, at best, a cultural and ethical function.

But this is not the case with many other churches and societies. These definitely do use magic in their rites and symbolic acts. However, this magic is totally dedicated to, and so to the advantage of, the church or group aeons. And as magic, in the long run, influences the bodily and personality structures, there will also be changes in the endocrine system, the blood, the serpent fire and indeed every atom.

If someone submits himself for years to such magic, either as a receiver or as a transmitter, or both, he will carry its signature and its consequences with him in every atom, and never, or only after many, many years, will he be able to get rid of it. You will understand that the School always takes this into account. All the preceding Brotherhoods did so and they followed an even more radical policy than the young gnostic Brotherhood, which definitely has to consider all this, particularly as it consists of such a heterogeneous group of people.

Why is it necessary for the young Gnosis to take this aspect into account? The answer is obvious: because the aeons of nature, in their urge towards self-maintenance, will do everything possible, must do everything possible, to delay the development of the Gnosis. That is why they send those who serve them everywhere to fulfil particular missions.

The Gnosis has only one aim: to make you drink from the cup of the Holy Spirit, not to let you be drowned in the cup of some aeon or other. Are there

any of these servants of the aeons active in the Spiritual School? How can they be recognised, how can one see through their aspirations and what should be done to protect the work?

From a dialectical point of view we would be able to give very detailed answers with the aid of the knowledge of signatures. We could explain how we usually act in cases of need. But what would be the result? You would keep such a watchful eye on one another that the possibility could not be ruled out that the group would fall apart and the School would become a ground for disputes, with many pros and cons, fierce criticism and severe tensions. It would mean playing into the hands of the aeonic forces which are bent on obstructing the development of the Gnosis. In fact, under no circumstances is anxiety necessary if only you do what is said in verse 9:

"Those who gave heed to this proclamation and were purified by immersion in the powers of the Spirit, became partakers in the Gnosis, the living knowledge of God, and, as they had received the Spirit, they became perfect men."

That is the recipe. Let nothing stop you from remaining directed towards the one aim, the one task. Keep perfectly and steadfastly directed towards that aim. As long as you do not do so, you will find that efforts are continually made, in all kinds of ways and using all kinds of means, to plunge you back into a state of unawareness and astonishment. That is why the prescription has been given: let nothing keep you from your devotion to the one aim, the one task.

That is the best means of protection.

God's sun shines on good and bad alike. It may happen that bad people, in the sense of being enemies of the work, also enter the Spiritual School or are already there. Basically, this is not a difficulty. However, since all receive the light and power of the Gnosis and experience its effects in the same way, the results will show who is evil and who is not, who has hidden motives and who has not. Therefore, none should be restrained by the suggestions and influences of adversaries, whatever their names may be. To sow anxiety, worry and fear, to cause unrest and panic, is a well-known tactic by which you should not be deceived. Be positively directed, then nothing, nothing will be able to harm you.

When, presently, you enter the Grail mystery and are allowed to taste the baptism of fire, you will know at a glance all the adversaries; you will know them better than they know themselves. In every situation you will then know what you have to do.

XXII

RECEIVING THE HOLY GRAIL

"Those who gave heed to this proclamation and were purified by immersion in the powers of the Spirit, became partakers in the Gnosis, in the living knowledge of God, and, as they had received the Spirit, became perfect men."

The process of reversal, the process of the first baptism, is well-known to you. It has been discussed countless times in the School and explained in detail in our literature. It is the first task of pupilship of the Spiritual School.

Anyone who brings about this reversal in the light power of the Gnosis, in the light power of the universal gnostic Chain, causes a transmutation of the five soul fluids in the system of his personality. The soul fluids determine the composition and nature of the atoms of which the personality is composed.

It is in this transmutation that the soul is purified and reborn; a rebirth which especially influences and modifies the head sanctuary, so that the system is opened for the out-pouring of the Holy Spirit. In the Gospel the beginning of this procedure is referred to as receiving the sign of the Son of Man, which concerns the transmuting modifications which must take place in the head sanctuary if one is to participate in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

In this way, the candidate is prepared for his meeting with Pymander. Thus the purified soul receives the prize of the perfect souls. It is only when one possesses Pymander that one is truly a man. Only then does one emerge from the animal state. Then, one is a Manas, a thinker in a God- fulfilling sense.

What actually is Pymander, or the Spirit-Soul, or the Holy Spirit? Is it possible to distinguish this Spirit when it has manifested itself? Yes, it is possible. The following explanation may be useful.

Seven rays emanate from the Logos, seven activities, seven immense streams of power, which move the entire All. By the word "All", you should understand "primordial substance". The entire universe is filled with primordial substance. This, together with all the life that awakens from it, is moved by seven streams, seven rays, the seven Lords of Fate, as they were called by the classical Rosicrucians. All the biological activities of nature, including animal life, are to be explained by the activities of the seven rays.

All that takes place in the dialectical universe, all that moves and develops, no matter how and where, is subject to a plan. Everything is awakened and crushed again, everything rises and wanes, including the human kingdom which, apart from its ability to reason, does not differ in any way from the animal kingdom. Everything is subject to a plan, which is aimed at awakening a possibility of a new development in all of biological life. If this project

fails or cannot as yet succeed, then what has been created is dissolved again to awaken, later, out of the womb of eternity, to be given a new possibility.

The plan of the Logos and its Seven-Spirit concerns the awakening of a new possibility in us all. If this fails, we will perish. We are then subject to the law: "You are dust and to dust you shall return". We shall then remain chained to the effects of the wheel of life and death.

The rhythm and periodicity of the cosmic days and nights, of the tidal movements of the All, are controlled and put into effect by the seven rays of the Logos. Thus the seven rays have an elevating effect on the creature. If this process of elevation does not succeed, the creature will be denatured: "You are dust and to dust you shall return". Animal man, natural man, is constructed in such a way that he *can* be elevated and *can* react positively to the seven rays, in this way rendering denaturation and death unnecessary. So the prize for the perfect souls is freedom from death.

When the soul purifies and regenerates itself, when it is reborn and carries out the transmutation of the personality in harmony with this soul-birth, then, as a matter of course, the soul man will also be confronted by the seven rays of the Logos in an entirely different way.

As soon as you entrust yourself to the gnostic light and start to walk the path, a transmutation, an atomic change will develop within your nature-born state, in the body you now possess, a change which will

primarily affect the heart and head sanctuaries. Your head sanctuary will be prepared to receive the Seven-Spirit in a positive way. As soon as the soul has been born, the seven streams of the Seven-Spirit will penetrate the seven cerebral cavities. It is thus obvious that the perfect soul will receive the seven radiations in a different way from that in which the man of nature receives them.

As the radiations of the Seven-Spirit descend into the heart, they meet the proto-atom, the Rose, which contains the structure of lines of force of the true man, the latent spiritual principle. As soon as the rays of the Seven-Spirit touch the reborn soul, the Rose is awakened to life.

If you have a plan regarding a given object, this will give rise to a structure of lines of force in your astral body. If someone then asks you to tell him about your plan, you will look, eyes turned inwardly as it were, into that structure and describe the plan. You will trace all the lines of force and the image will become visible to your audience.

The same applies to the proto-atom, the rose of the heart, which contains the image of the true man. This image can be awakened and take shape only if the Seven-Spirit can act within you by means of the matured soul.

If we look at this activity from the point of view of the head sanctuary, the radiations of the Seven-Spirit acting on the seven cerebral cavities form Pymander; seen from the heart sanctuary they form the Spirit-

Soul, the structure of lines of force of the true man. This Pymandric man, this structure of lines of force which is within us and urges us on, raises us out of the animal state into the world of the living soul state. It places the microcosm in a new reality and under a new law. Those who have thus been baptised and purified in the power of the Spirit, will achieve a perfect human existence and participate in the Gnosis, the living knowledge of God. They will acquire a new state of consciousness, in which knowledge is an absolute faculty.

Dialectical knowledge is likewise a consequence of a faculty. In the dialectical, animal state the ability to think exists and by means of it knowledge is acquired; disjoint, fragmented, relative knowledge. However, if the Pymandric state predominates, absolute knowledge becomes a faculty. Then one will not acquire knowledge by means of intellectual training, but knowledge will be an essential part of the personality. The opposite development is described by Hermes as follows:

"However, those who have sinned against the proclamation by not listening to it, remain within the limits of reason, as they have not received the powers of the Spirit and do not know why they were created, nor by whom. The sensorial perceptions of such human beings are almost equal to those of irrational animals; and as their nature is a mixture of passions, they have no admiration for what is worthy of reflection and contemplation; they devote themselves to their bodily pleasures and desires and

believe that man has come into being for such things. However, those who have partaken of God's gift are no longer mortals, as proved by all their deeds, but divine men who understand with their Spirit-Soul all that is on earth, in heaven and, perhaps, above heaven. Having beheld The Good, those who have raised themselves in this way have learned to consider their sojourn here on earth as a disaster. They repudiate all things corporeal and incorporeal and hasten to reach the One and Only."

When the new state has been reached by means of the Holy Spirit and the candidate has been connected with his Pymander, he will enter an entirely new state of life, because "state of consciousness is state of life".

When the seven rays of the Logos touch the seven cerebral cavities in this positive way and enter them on the basis of the purified soul; when Osiris meets Isis, that is, when the Spirit meets the soul, then out of this encounter the Son of eternal fullness will arise. This is the new state of consciousness, a state which, though in the world, is no longer of the world. The process of generation and manifestation of the Pymandric man takes place in the ordinary physical body of nature-born man. In view of his physical existence the person concerned is still in the world, but by virtue of his Pymandric state, no longer of the world.

If a dialectical person is loosely attached to his vehicle, so that the splitting of the personality can

easily occur, such a person - and very often at the most inconvenient moments - is more in the reflection sphere than in the physical sphere of dialectics. When he then looks into the life of the physical sphere, it often appears to be unreal to him. As you will know, this situation may also occur during the transition from waking to sleeping.

Those who possess such sensitivity (this splitting of the psyche often occurs in women) and hear of the gnostic path for the first time, or launch themselves upon it with their natural I, often make the serious mistake of assuming that their state of being is already the Pymandric state. Their actions and behaviour then give rise to all sorts of deplorable consequences. This is a dangerous and complicated state of I-centrality, but we use it as an example to explain the following.

The Pymandric state of being entails many difficulties and is far from perfect. This is because the candidate does not enter this phase with a transfigured personality, but with a transmuted personality, a nature-born personality that has been subjected to some change. Transmutation always precedes transfiguration. Therefore, at that moment, the pupil does not as yet possess the new personality which belongs to the world of the living soul-state, the sixth cosmic domain. That personality has yet to manifest itself.

There is a new soul, a golden wedding garment, that surrounds the old personality. And the entrance of the Spirit has come about, so that the bride meets

the bridegroom and transfiguration, the Alchemical Wedding of our Father Brother C.R.C., can begin.

Just imagine yourself in this state. The Spirit has entered, Pymander and the soul have united. The new-born soul man feels released. His consciousness comprises the seven rays and via these seven rays he is capable of merging with the All, and of descending to wherever his consciousness drives him. He knows himself to be immortal and he experiences this immortality. He understands with his Spirit-Soul everything that is on earth, in heaven and above heaven. He surveys the majestic plan of the sublime Deity. A released one can read this plan in all things. He beholds The Good, the only autonomous Good. However, in this state he knows himself still to be connected to a nature-born personality. He is still in the nature of death, in the midst of a social confusion that is so vast, so stupid and frightening that he feels as if he is in a snake pit. He considers his sojourn here in the nature of death as an adversity. Therefore, he rejects this drab reality in a decisive and fundamental way, in a manner never done before. He accepts all the consequences so as to rise to the One and only.

You will understand that the rejection of "all things corporeal and incorporeal" concerns both the physical sphere and the reflection sphere of dialectics. For the brother or sister who has been released the tinsel splendour of the nature of death becomes as nothing.

In this state of most majestic glory, coupled with the most dreadful experience of distress, which in

most cases has to be undergone in a weak body, the brother or sister has received the Holy Grail.

The Grail is the outpouring of the Seven-Spirit in the head sanctuary. The Grail grants an awakening in the new morning, but at the same time a vision into an unfathomably black night. There is of course a reason for this. In this state of no longer being of the world, but nevertheless being in the world (and how!) the brother or sister can serve the Logos in two fields, in the world of the living soul state, the Golden Head, but also in the nature of death. This he will do; he accepts it.

That is the Holy Grail, the divine Cup. On the one hand liberation, on the other, service. It is being able to serve on account of being liberated, and being liberated on account of the service rendered. On the one hand one experiences new grief, one enters a new state of grief, but on the other hand one experiences a magnificent glorification. On the one hand there is the prayer: "Father, if it is possible that this cup pass me by", and on the other hand: "Not my will, but Your will be done", and one empties the cup to the last drop. That is to accept the way of the cross until the morning of the resurrection, to descend voluntarily after the morning of resurrection, without complaint. That is the Holy Grail. Freedom, the reward of the liberated ones, is always born in and through sacrifice.

XXIII

THE PATH AND THE SACRIFICE

In the last chapter we discussed how, after the baptism of fire, the Holy Grail must be accepted and fulfilled by sacrifice. This represents an entirely new sacrificial path, because what is involved here is the great sacrifice of the liberated man on behalf of the nature of death.

Now comes the heart cry of Tat: "I, too, want to experience immersion in the divine Mixing Vessel, Father!" If you are a pupil of the Spiritual School, Tat's wish is probably yours, too. For what other reason would you have joined the School? Hermes' answer to Tat's question is that pupilship has to begin with sacrifice. The path begins and ends with a sacrifice. The offering Tat has to make is the offering of the "I" of nature, the ego of the body:

"You cannot love your true self unless you first hate your body, my son. But if you do love your true self, you will possess the Spirit-Soul; once you possess the Spirit-Soul, you will also partake of its living knowledge."

Perhaps you will now see something of the path before you. It begins with the sacrifice from below upwards and ends with the sacrifice from above downwards. The first is the sacrifice of the dialectical self, the second is the sacrifice of the heavenly self. Both these offerings must be made and can be achieved only through love. Self-surrender, about

which the Mystery School continually talks to its pupils, can be accomplished only through boundless love for the liberating life and through the associated understanding that the key to the new life lies hidden in one's own self; new life is the prize of the perfect soul state.

Many people find the path of the Gnosis very interesting and desirable, because all past ways have shown negative results and did not remove the distress of the nature of death. But interest and desire will not bring you a single step further on the path of liberation. Both are expressions of the I of nature, of the body which, in distress, seeks a solution. Self-surrender, elimination of the I, is in fact considered to be a great distress, a dreadful misfortune and very strange. When the Bible states that "anyone who loses his life for My sake will find it", people consider this statement to be the strangest ever addressed to a nature-born man.

Pupils of the School of the Rosycross certainly talk a lot about self-surrender and this expression as well as words like selflessness and self-mortification are readily used. But these are the most difficult things a nature-born human being can be asked to do. If you want to walk the path of the Gnosis, you are placed before what is most difficult and can be understood only through love. Indeed, love is prepared for sacrifice; if love is great enough it is prepared for any sacrifice whatever. Sacrifice then becomes a matter of course, something that could not be otherwise; then the offer will not be difficult for us and it will

always have a liberating effect.

It is always love which determines the orientation of your mind. What you love, you never forget, neither by day nor by night. This explains why so many sometimes forget the most elementary guidelines of the path. Just at the moment when they need them, sometimes at the most important moments in life, they forget them. This shows that they do not yet possess sufficient love for the path. It also demonstrates the fact that one can suppress the development of such love through a false approach to life. Such pupils try to follow the elementary guidelines of the School with their I of nature. They hear and read what the path requires of them and try to live up to it with their I.

The result is that without exception great tensions develop within them. What is repressed gives rise to tensions and after some time these must discharge themselves like a thunderstorm. If these volcanic outbursts of the I indicate rock-hard egocentricity, the reason is that real love for the path has not yet awakened. Then the pupil has been trying to walk the path with his I. If one tries to walk the path and be a serious pupil with one's natural being, this is not self-surrender, but self-repression - and self-repression always avenges itself sooner or later. Then one will experience strange things: one moment one will seem to be entirely on the path, the next things will be altogether wrong. This is referred to in verse 18 of the seventh book, in which Hermes tells Tat that he cannot adhere to both material things

and divine things, to the body and the bodiless; to what is mortal and what is immortal: "You will have to choose consciously between these two, for one cannot adhere to both".

If the choice has been made, all the necessary consequences will have to be accepted; the Sermon on the Mount states that "one cannot serve God and Mammon". You must choose! Then "the waning of what has been rejected will be proved in the active force of what has been chosen". Thus the good choice will show its glory through the deification of the one who has made it".

However, a problem now arises which over the years has been voiced in every possible way by a great number of pupils: how can I know whether I love the path sufficiently? How can I know whether I will not eventually be confronted by bitter disillusionment? What will I have to do or refrain from doing in a specific situation? Hermes' answer is: "The good choice also demonstrates (the pupil's) attachment and devotion to God". Anyone who gives himself up to the Gnosis and the path in spontaneous and loving surrender will see before him, in a flash, the way in which the path must be walked. Everyone for whom this is the case will continually receive instructions, will neither err nor fail in any respect.

"The bad choice, on the other hand, leads to the destruction of man and is, moreover, a sin against God. Just as, in processions, people walk in the middle of the road and can do nothing else than hinder the others in their movement, so those who have made

the bad choice can do nothing else than move in this way through the world, urged on by their bodily desires. Therefore, O Tat, the gifts emanating from God have always been, and will always be, at our disposal. It is for us to see to it that what emanates from us is in harmony with it and does not fall short. For it is not God who is the cause of our wickedness, it is we ourselves who choose it in preference to The Good."

Just listen to Hermes' advice: "The good cannot be reached by way of a convenient crossing. It is limitless and without end, and in itself it is without beginning, too, though to us it may seem to have had its beginning in the Gnosis, the All-knowledge of God. Indeed, the Gnosis is not the beginning of The Good, but it imparts to us the beginning of what we will come to know of The Good. Let us therefore take hold of this beginning and accomplish with haste our passage through all that awaits us.

Why with haste? "For it is hard indeed to abandon what is so familiar and to leave behind all that one has, in order to turn back to the ancient and first things". In this respect there is no exception, for "what is visible imparts delight, while the invisible gives rise to disbelief and doubt. To the ordinary eye evil is well-known and manifest, while The Good is invisible. It has neither form nor shape, it is unchangeably like itself and, therefore, unlike anything else. That is why the incorporeal is invisible to corporeal man. Because of all this, the unchangeable, that which remains like itself, is more

excellent than the changeable, and the changeable is poor in comparison with the unchangeable".

If, in your heart, you feel love for the Gnosis, love for the path; if you have awakened this love, then begin quickly and "accomplish with haste your passage through all that awaits you".

If you are willing to accept this recommendation, you will also have to pay particular attention to the contents of the 22nd verse: "Do you realise, my son, how many vehicular states, crowds of demons, veils of matter and courses of stars we have to pass through during our wearisome ascent to the One and Only?"

With these few words Hermes draws attention to the immeasurable path which extends before us, after we have definitely turned towards the light. According to ordinary human standards, in terms of the order of time and space, this path seems to be almost endless. But in the light of the Gnosis, in the consciousness of eternity, it is one radiant ascent to the reality of the liberating life. In a continuing transfiguration, in an uninterrupted life of purity, light and divine power, the Pymandric man ascends through all the regions of matter. He manifests himself in an ever finer, more volatile and subtle vehicle and in this ascent of glorification, via the "way of the stars", he escapes the influences of the aeons which once, and for such an infinitely long time, kept him imprisoned.

This way back to the oneness, back through the seven cosmic domains, to the highest heat-sphere, is

long, very long. However, it means to go from power to power, from glory to glory. It is a way of true life, relieved of grief, in the bliss of a re-established, perfect harmony with the Father of the All, in absolute service as a true Son of God. In accordance with his vocation, one fulfils the will of the Father in joyful voluntary action for the benefit of creation and the glorification of the name of the Creator.

Anyone who recognises from within, as a life-giving reality, this image of man's development as intended by God, will in great joy and gratitude put into practice the liberating words of Christ: "He who loses his life of doom for the sake of the Gnosis, will find, through the Gnosis, his ascent into the oneness of Life".

XXIV THE RETURN TO ONENESS

The seventh book of the *Corpus Hermeticum* was discussed in the seventh month of the Jupiter year of the young Gnosis.* Thus the still very young Living Body of the School of the Golden Rosycross came into contact with the philosophy of the Arch-Gnosis. Perhaps you will understand that this has tremendous consequences. As the seventh book testifies, the image that was shown has the special faculty of holding in its sway those who engross themselves in it and steadfastly observe it with the eyes of their hearts, attracting them upwards to itself as a magnet attracts iron.

We want you to understand clearly that, if you have received the preceding explanations with a heart opened to the gnostic light, you are connected once again with the work of salvation of the Universal Gnosis. It is then quite certain that the Universal Gnosis will carry out its activities within you. This will result in either a resurrection or a fall, depending on your reaction. Of course, our aim is to connect you in a permanent way with the great aim of the Gnosis.

* The addresses printed in this book were given in 1957, a Jupiter year, that was symbolised by the number 3 ($5+7=12$; $1+2=3$). This means that in this year the activities of the Holy Seven-Spirit seized the world and mankind in an ever more powerful way: unto a resurrection or a fall.

That is why it is good, if you are truly a Tat, to reflect profoundly on all this and observe it steadfastly with the eyes of your heart, for it is in the heart that the great work must begin. It is here that love for the path must awaken and the rose-bud must unfold its petals. All who begin in this way and persevere will undoubtedly be guided on their way to heaven.

If you truly live out of this one beginning, you will immediately merge into the oneness which is God. This is a great mystery, which Hermes wants you to understand. We will discuss it again in the following chapter. We shall first try to give a brief survey of what is involved. To begin with, then, you should allow the significance of the 26th verse to penetrate your consciousness: "The oneness, the one and indivisible, the origin and root of everything is present, as such, in all things".

The oneness of God is the existence, the manifestation of God in His Seven-Spirit. The oneness is omnipresent. There is no place in the whole of space where it cannot be found. Anyone who seeks the prize of the perfect souls will enter and participate in this oneness. This unification with the Logos will be the beginning that has no end. Do you sense that this is a completely new beginning, really to be distinguished from every other beginning? You were born so that you might be able to enter into this beginning, which is eternity itself. That is why you have received your emergency-order corporeality.

As we explained earlier, the natural, emergency-order body is also to be explained from the Seven-Spirit. Once this natural body has been created and the personality is fully grown, having developed along the lines of the great plan, what lives in this natural body must begin, at a given moment, to return to the original oneness of God.

This lies at the foundation of your whole life! You have come here to take the initiative at the appropriate moment and undertake the return to the original beginning. If you do not, if you can no longer offer the oneness a place within you, you will perish through your own weakness. Death will then be the consequence of the bad choice.

The oneness of God is the beginning of everyone and everything. If, as soon as its merciful activity has made you sufficiently mature, you consciously return to the beginning, then it will no longer have any end as far as you are concerned. This beginning without end, the beginning of the thread of Ariadne which you are able to grasp, is the beginning of the classical alchemy of the Rosicrucians. It gives rise to a continual process of transfiguration, a progress from glory to glory, because, as an imperfect creature, you will then have entered into the perfection of absolute Being, of the absolute One. Anyone who thus plunges, as a miserable being, into the oneness of the Seven-Spirit, will be saved. The path to this, as we have shown you, is love and its perfect, total sacrifice.

Anyone who returns to the oneness of God

through these two and all that they comprise will enter eternity and will have overcome death. He who is able to understand, let him understand.

ONENESS (I)

"The oneness, the one and indivisible, the origin and root of everything is present, as such, in all things. There is nothing without origin. The origin, however, as the starting point of everything else, has its origin in itself only. The number one, as the origin, contains all other numbers within itself, without itself being contained by any of them. It brings forth all numbers, without itself being brought forth by any other number.

"All that has been brought forth is imperfect and divisible, and subject to increase and decrease. What is perfect, however, has none of this. Since what can increase derives its increase from the oneness, it succumbs through its own feebleness if it can no longer offer room to the oneness.

"Thus, O Tat, I have drawn for you, as far as is possible, an image of God; if you carefully contemplate it inwardly and steadfastly observe it with the eyes of your heart, you will, believe me, my son, find the way to heaven. Or rather, God's image itself will guide you on this way. Inner directedness to this image causes those who have begun to turn towards it, to be held captive in its power and to be drawn upwards by it, just as a magnet attracts iron."

In the previous chapters we spoke in detail about the seventh book of the *Corpus Hermeticum*.

Nevertheless, a further discussion is needed to enable you to understand fully the message of liberation, the great tidings of salvation of Hermes Trismegistus. We particularly want to draw attention to the last five verses of the seventh book, quoted above because they contain the secret of victory over death.

How do we overcome death? It is a question which undoubtedly evokes great interest in the sincere seeker. For, let us be honest, no one is very fond of that drab spectre with which everyone will ultimately be confronted. It is innate in nature-born human being to fight to the last second, making every effort and applying all possible or even impossible means against what is inescapable. Few are those who welcome death as a friend. The pain and distress, the afflictions of the body must be particularly great before one longs for and welcomes the end with a cheerful smile.

For animal, nature-born man death is a reality, an undeniable, scientific fact, but may we add that for the reborn man death is nothing but an illusion and, in this sense, also a scientific fact. Death is even entirely out of the question for the renewed man; its definition can be deleted from the dictionary.

As you know, there is extensive metaphysical, occult and church literature addressed to the I-man, to the nature-born man of many kinds and classes, with the message: "Don't worry. Death is nothing but a change. Death means being born in different surroundings. You can influence these surroundings now and determine them in advance". This message

is embellished in all possible ways.

Attempts to influence one's experiences after death are based on theological mores or occult exercises, or only on auto-suggestion through which the I is sent into a state of the blissful intoxication of "I am". However, all this is based on mystification, on an extreme fraud. The nature-born man's death is so complete that nothing remains of him; it is the total emptying of the microcosm.

Therefore, at the beginning of this discussion we must give a serious warning. If you accept with your I what we tell you about the hermetic philosophy; if you understand it as being aimed at your I, all of it will become a heavy millstone, a formidable tie. Let us emphasise: we will certainly not take the responsibility for your self-deception. In that case dying will be a much greater horror than it already is. We hope you will now understand in the right way the following discussion, which is based on the dialogue between Hermes and Tat, and presented by a gnostic Spiritual School.

Nature-born man has the same bodily principles as every other animal. Every human being lives and acts like an animal, each one according to his type. An animal feeds on what it can find, disregarding the lives of others. Natural man is no exception in this regard, although in contrast to all other animals, he can think and speak and thus can rule over them.

In a threatening and hostile world, natural man cannot but submit automatically to what is called

"culture". But however civilised he may be, whether he has a title before or after his name, whether he lives his life with a smile or with a tear, with money or without, he remains, as a nature-born man, an animal being.

In this state of being you are called by the Gnosis. Why? Because all of you have the possibility of emerging from your animal condition. This possibility arises from the fact that there is a divine, incorporeal principle in the centre of the microcosm which surrounds you. This principle corresponds with your heart.

If you want to discover this principle, which we call the rose, the proto-atom or Christ-atom, you will have to devote your whole I of nature, with all it is and possesses, in self-surrender, that is, with absolute dedication, deep interest and intense longing, to the centre of your microcosm, the Christatom. Only in this way will the true, immortal soul be born. You will change from a being of nature into a soul being. If you follow the path of the soul being with persistence, seriously accepting all the consequences; if the being of nature provides proof of having merged into the soul being, this soul being will be granted the Spirit-Soul, Pymander, the God-Man principle, the Holy Grail.

The gnostic Spiritual School, the Living Body of the young Gnosis, invites you to walk the threefold path of Grail, Cathar, and Rosycross, from nature-birth to soul birth, from soul birth to soul growth and from there to the birth of the Spirit. The Spiritual School

wishes to help everyone to walk this threefold path and is able to give such assistance. If you so wish, it will accompany you through all the mysteries of the threefold path and will be at your side until you reach the liberating life.

But do you realise that there must also be a fourth mystery? As we have explained, there is firstly a path of nature-birth to soul birth; secondly, a path from soul-birth to soul-maturity; thirdly, a path from soul-maturity to the birth of the Spirit, and in addition to this there must also be a course of development from the birth of the Spirit to its maturity. We have so far not been allowed or able to speak about this fourth course of development. Or rather, we have permitted ourselves to speak about it only in superficial terms. We have spoken of the Mercury consciousness, the awareness of omnipresence, but now we need to enter into the fourth mystery, so that you can obtain a clear picture of the whole so that, for you too, the thirtieth verse of the seventh book may literally become a fact.

"Thus, O Tat, I have drawn for you an image of God, as far as is possible. If you carefully contemplate it inwardly and steadfastly observe it with the eyes of your heart, you will, believe me, my son, find the way to heaven. Or rather, God's image will guide you on this way. Inner directedness to this image causes those who have begun to turn towards it, to be held captive in its power and to be drawn upwards by it, just as a magnet attracts iron."

If you are honest about yourself, you will certainly

raise an objection. You might say for instance: "At the very best I am in the process of soul birth. This means that I have completed the path of the first mystery and am now standing before the gate of the second mystery. Does it make sense to receive at this moment a picture regarding the fourth mystery, which I will not reach for a long time?"

Our counter question would be: "Why then does Hermes show this picture to Tat, who is in your situation?" Well, let us take it for granted that you are a soul-born man. If that should be somewhat too complimentary, let us say that a certain soul-quality is manifesting itself in you and is claiming its rights. This will probably be the case, because why else should you have joined the gnostic Spiritual School to begin your pupilship?

Let us assume that a certain soul quality is dawning within you. Since a radiation of the spirit will only approach the soul, to find resonance within man exclusively on the basis of soul-quality, it is not impossible for the spirit of the fourth mystery to touch you, to a greater or lesser extent, in your purer moments, for example during a Temple Service.

However, perhaps you are not satisfied with this and will object, pointing out that "You said that the spirit of the fourth mystery is a very personal matter for the mature soul; that Pymander can reveal himself only to a mature soul. How can the spirit act within me in any way other than via a messenger who talks to me about the spirit, as a result of which I may experience a weak resonance of the message and at

best receive a faint image of it?"

But for you, pupils of the young Gnosis, the situation is entirely different! The fact is that the spirit exists within the Living Body of the School. Are you not all living cells of the Living Body? At least, you can be living cells in the Living Body through your pupilship.

Well, the young Gnosis not only possesses an organisational apparatus, but this Body of the School also has a soul. The School as a Living Body has attained the mature soul state. The opened Grail now stands in this Body in the light of the Logos. The Pymander of the School reveals himself in the Grail of the Living Body. Because of this wonderful fact of salvation, God's spirit also speaks to you, participants, living cells in the Living Body of the School, and He can manifest himself clearly within you with unimaginable consequences. The spirit of the fourth mystery is opening for you. The magic of this revelation of the Spirit is consciously applied in our consecrated meetings. In this way you receive the intense grace that, although not yet alive according to the spirit, you may nevertheless receive the life of the spirit and be touched by it.

XXVI
ONENESS (II)

We have explained how all who do not yet live according to the spirit, but strive after that state as participants in the Living Body of the young Gnosis, may nevertheless receive the intense grace of the life of the spirit because, in the seventh month of the Jupiter year 1957, the sevenfold Living Body of the School was allowed to greet its Pymander.

Obviously, you will be very conscious of the fact that you are a pupil of the School of the Golden Rosycross, and you will also be well aware of how your pupilship stands in relation to the School. So you will also be able to determine from your own experience and behaviour whether you have sufficiently walked the first path leading from nature-birth to soul birth, so that at least some soul quality may be expected.

On this basis we have endeavoured to show, as far as possible, an image of God. Our aim now is to consider that image. In verse 30 of the seventh book Hermes says: "Thus, O Tat, I have drawn for you, as far as is possible, an image of God; if you carefully contemplate it inwardly and observe it steadfastly with the eyes of your heart, you will, believe me, my son, find the way to heaven. Or rather, God's image itself will guide you on this way. Inner devotion to this image causes those who have begun to turn towards it to be held captive in its power, and to be drawn upwards by it, just as a magnet attracts iron".

Formulated in the simplest terms, the situation is as follows: you have reached a certain state through your conscious pupilship. A projection of the Spirit is conveyed to you. The Spirit-Radiation in the Living Body is increasing in power day by day and it touches you without forcing; it does not overpower you, no, it only reveals itself to you.

If you possess the eyes of the heart, if the centre of your microcosm, the rose, has opened and has come into contact with the heart of your body, you will be able to observe this image as it can and should be observed; you will then never again lose it; you will then be bound to the Spirit magnetically.

Let us discuss this in more detail. Firstly let us consider the your planet on which we have been born as natural beings. This planet is, among other things, an electromagnetic field which possesses seven powers, seven rays which determine and rule our character and imprison us completely. As nature-born beings we are guided by the seven rays of the earth. In fact, our entire existence can be explained from them. Our I-centrality and everything that pertains to it is caused by the appearance of the ever changing image of the seven rays. Every religious, occult or humanistic development is nothing else, and can be nothing else, than a change in the combination of the seven rays, a variation on the same theme.

It is clear that even death does not alter the situation in any way. After death only the residues of the nature-born being remain in the microcosm; they are subjected to the seven rays for as long as they

exist in the reflection sphere. This is also the meaning of the end of verse 24 and verse 25: "The Good has neither form nor shape; it is unchangeably like itself and, therefore, unlike everything else. That is why the incorporeal is invisible to corporeal man. Because of all this, the unchangeable, that which remains like itself, is more excellent than the changeable and the changeable is poor in comparison with the unchangeable." The seven earthly rays are completely attuned to the seven Cosmocrators of the seventh cosmic domain, that is, to dialectics, to imperfection. "There is nothing without origin. The origin, however, as the starting point of everything else, has its origin in itself only."

If your origin is in dialectics, in imperfection - and all that is born on this planet stands in that imperfection - everything can be divided, that is, can propagate, increase and decrease and, in fact, can submit to a certain culture. However, after a rise, the line of development will also lead irrevocably downwards, because what has been created will die. There will never be real growth, absolute evolution in the nature of death.

Growth, evolution, proceeding from power to power and from glory to glory, are possible only in unity with the original Seven-Spirit. That is why you must create a permanent space for the oneness; you must return to the oneness of God. He who is unable to return to this oneness will perish of his own weakness and will remain bound to the essence of death. Anyone who wants to overcome death will

have to return to the oneness of God, because it is only out of this that all the other processes of development can arise.

A magnificent course of development awaits you, a course proceeding from power to power. If you want to make this yours, you will have to start from the beginning, you will have to return to the oneness of God.

All numbers are developed out of the oneness, out of the origin or root of all things. Numbers have an entirely different meaning for the hermetic man than for the man of this world.

The number *one* signifies oneness with the spirit, with the Father, with the absolute, with the Logos, with the original. Every other oneness, every other beginning leads to death.

If one returns to the oneness, to the one and indivisible, one will be placed before the number *two*. It brings he who is connected with the oneness into a new relationship with the primordial substance. The number two is therefore called "the Mother" in the hermetic Gnosis.

The number *three* means the loving connection between the one, the absolute, and the primordial substance; between the Father and the Mother, which implies the conjunction of the two.

The number *four* manifests the fullness of conception. If the entity, which is connected with the Father, is brought into binding with the cosmic root substance, then something is brought into existence.

The fullness of conception is made manifest.

This results in the number *five*, the new consciousness, the Mercury consciousness. That is why Mercury has always been associated with the number five.

Six is the number of justification. The candidate's state of being is justified and brought into harmony with the Logos through the new light-force of the consciousness.

Therefore, the number *seven* is the number of sanctification and in the number *eight* the perfect ascent into heaven; the passage to liberating life, will follow. This is the age-old gate of Saturn, which has always been connected with the number eight.

In the number *nine* the victory of the true God-Man is celebrated. So all the nine numbers are connected with one another in a ninefold process of development.

Let us turn again to the necessity of returning to the original oneness, to the origin and root of all numbers. If you want to enter the processes of the liberating life and return to the oneness, you will have to start at the beginning, not in theory but in practice. You may find all this rather interesting; you may recognise the logic of it and find it very informative, but what will be the use of it if you do not really understand it and act accordingly? What matters is that you *do* it. It is not abstract talk that is needed, but concrete acts.

Belief in God as it is found in this world of opposites is something abstract. There are, in fact, only a few

people in the world who truly deny the existence of a God. In this world of opposites, belief in God is a metaphysical feeling or an intellectual conviction that a Logos exists. But first-hand confrontation with Pymander is concrete.

For you, such a confrontation will primarily involve a meeting with the Pymander of the Living Body of the young Gnosis, as a result of the newly born possibility of doing so. It is obvious that you will eventually meet your own Pymander, but it is also obvious that you have not as yet progressed that far. Even a confrontation with the Pymander of the School would not yet make any sense in your present situation. In fact, this is not at all intended for the time being. If you can see with the eyes of your heart the picture the hermetic book sketches for you, it will become apparent that it is just this picture which will guide you to the aim. It is not intended to connect you with the oneness of the Spirit by means of an event extending far beyond your power; you would not be able to maintain this connection.

However, it is possible, through the revelation of the Living Body, to bring and maintain you in such a state of being that you will be guided to this connection, that a magnetic contact will be made and that, by this magnetic impulse, you will be guided to the aim.

Hermes said of this: "Inner directedness to this image causes those who have begun to turn towards it to be held captive in its power and to be drawn upwards by it, just as a magnet attracts iron". To put

it differently: a sevenfold magnetic attraction emanates from the Living Body of the young Gnosis, a magnetic impulsion which is totally different from that of nature. Those who are able to establish contact with this magnetic power will be led to the goal by means of this new state. In fact, they will no longer need to concern themselves with all the other aspects of the processes of the young Gnosis, which will then develop harmoniously out of the oneness. Now that these new possibilities have come into being for the School, the fundamental issue is to return to the oneness. That is the meaning of the seventh hermetic book.

What now remains to be discussed is the way in which the pupil can establish this magnetic contact. We will have to investigate how it can be maintained, and what consequences this contact will have. Finally we will have to come to some mutual agreements for, as we have mentioned already, insight should be followed by action. We must follow the way which we have been allowed to discuss in such great detail, we must go that way for one another and with one another, so that together, as a gnostic group, we shall be victorious over death. This will be one of the first results of the establishment of the magnetic link with the unifying, life-giving spirit: the concrete overcoming of death. This task can be brought to a good end in the living present.

XXVII
SELL ALL YOU POSSESS AND
FOLLOW ME

The considerations which follow are based on the fact that the Living Body possesses a liberating sevenfold magnetic field, clearly to be distinguished from ordinary earthly nature and which has been formed from below upwards. The Spiritual School has passed through the three mysteries we have discussed and the Living Body has now entered the fourth mystery, that of the manifestation of the Spirit.

The School has thus entered its Pentecostal phase. Just as we now form a Brotherhood of the Rosycross and a Brotherhood of the Cathars, so we also wish and are able to vivify and confess a Brotherhood of the Holy Grail, of the manifestation of the Spirit. Our most important task is to find out how we will be able to participate in the contact with, and the fullness of, the Living Body and its sevenfold radiation-field.

If we reflect on this fundamental point, we will quickly discover that many pupils still have to make some corrections with regard to their attitude to life, including some very basic ones. Many pupils are like Tat, which means, "persons seeking the true light". Many possess soul quality and feel they are undoubtedly pupils of the School. They attend conferences and take part in the Temple Services whenever possible. They participate in the work in one

way or another. They also make material sacrifices and comply with the requirements of pupilship. They have done all this since they joined the School. What more can the School demand of them? They are highly blessed people and comparable to the rich young man. Why was Jesus the Lord so seemingly implacable towards the rich young man? Why did he say: "Sell everything you have and follow Me"?

Well, listen carefully: Jesus the Lord invited this man to be a truly living cell in the Living Body of those days. And that was exactly what the rich young man did not want. He wanted to enter the Living Body, but... just as he was! With all his splendid qualities, he made some reservations. We are not told the nature of these reservations but the fact that they existed is enough.

Suppose some of the cells of the Living Body were to have reservations regarding the other cells, or regarding the whole. Don't you feel that such a Body would fall ill and go in a fatal direction? If the cells of an organ in your body were to discontinue their functions, or an essential part of their functions, then you would fall ill, wouldn't you! And if there were no cure, this would certainly result in death.

That is why we say that you, as pupils, are taken up in the Living Body of the Spiritual School, but by no means all of you have been received as truly living cells of that Body. Should we simply accept all of you as living cells, then the School would die, suddenly as it were, because many pupils still make reservations with regard to the School and the Living Body, for

whatever reason. In most cases this does not happen intentionally, consciously, but nevertheless it happens.

We certainly do not want to consider the motives behind such reservations, but in the context of our discussions we state that those who do not profess their pupilship unconditionally cannot possibly be living cells of the Living Body of the young Gnosis. They exclude themselves from it, despite their otherwise so excellent qualities.

Participation in the Living Body of a gnostic Brotherhood requires an absolute: "Lord, here I am", as it has been required in all gnostic communities from grey antiquity up to the present day; that was also the case in the first Christian community; there was no reservation whatsoever. In particular the civilised person of the twentieth century, above all the Westerner, is filled to the brim with reservations. He demands security above all else; security: for what purpose? Many pupils are still wary regarding the School, without perhaps being aware of it. What matters, however, is that we speak with conviction, followed by a demonstrable act: "Lord, here I am". The point is to serve the School and its work as if your own body were at stake. This is definitely meant quite literally. Anyone who joins the Living Body of the School will at once experience the grace of the Seven-Spirit of the Living Body. This is one of the reasons why we had to tell you this: as long as you still have any reservations you will shut yourself off from the grace of the Universal Seven-Spirit.

There are some among us who have all sorts of misgivings with regard to group unity and its realisation. If such pupils were to throw all their reservations overboard and devote themselves to the Living Body in its entirety they would experience that, gradually, all misgivings and confusion would cease to exist. Every truly living cell that is added to the Body will reinforce the vitality of the whole, whereby everything that does not serve the purpose of the group will be expelled.

Gnostic group unity does not simply mean accepting every- thing that takes place among the group of pupils, but it means to dedicate oneself in full surrender to the Living Body and to accept all the consequences. Then, what can be linked in group unity, will be, and the strength of all will become the strength of the one cell in the Body. This means that, should there be two hundred truly living members of the School, their collective capacity would benefit every participant in the group.

Every truly living cell of the Living Body is literally linked with the magnetic field of the School. This is not a doctrine, but a magic key. The magnetic field is a sevenfold radiation, a sevenfold river, and you are standing in the middle of it. This river will lead you, and it cannot be otherwise, to the aim. Anyone who has established links with this river and is travelling with the current, will make every effort to prevent the ship of his life from running aground; by keeping it safely in the middle of the stream, he will certainly reach his destination.

That is what we wanted to tell you. We may talk a lot about the birth of the soul and describe how it should be achieved; how Pymander will be granted as a prize for the race to every reborn soul. However, more is required to reach the great aim, to bring real movement into your life as a pupil and to arrive at concrete results. Talk must be followed by living, sparkling action. Just talking and listening and considering will get you nowhere. What matters is living action, fulfilling action. Then the holy Seven-Spirit of the Living Body will be near you, it will fill your whole being and lead you to the goal.

Therefore, we repeat: to bring real movement into your life, to obtain results in the present, you will have to board the celestial ship, in full self-surrender and without reservations, because the flood of the waters, the forces of dialectics are again leading all that has been created to destruction.

This does not involve anything foolish or fanatical. The gnostic Brotherhoods have always come at turning points in the history of mankind. They called together those who were willing to listen and told them: "The time has come. If you are willing to accept the consequences, salvation has been prepared for you. Connect yourself with it and go with us to the liberating life".

However, you will understand that it is impossible to stand with one foot in the nature of death and the other in the celestial ship, the Living Body. You just cannot do that. That is why we ask you, too, to make up your mind quickly. We ask you to devote yourself, as a living cell, to the Living Body, which will then be your body. We ask you to do everything that must be done to make the united Body of salvation fulfil the task to which it is called by God.

If you are ready to do this, the sun of a new state of life will dawn for you. Everything has been prepared to enable you to experience this dawn.

XXVIII THE SECRET OF THE GNOSTIC MYSTERIES

Now that we are coming to the end of our discussion of the seventh book of Hermes, we encounter certain difficulties. The subject of this book is the return to the oneness of God and the victory over death. As we have mentioned before, this subject encloses great secrets, magical mysteries of an extremely delicate nature.

The difficulty now is to find a way of treating this subject that will prevent any misunderstanding. Of course, it would be easy to avoid this difficulty by using, for example, the abundant literature of the School and extracting from it what is suitable for such a discussion. We could then confine ourselves to a description of the path that now lies before you and its consequences of soul birth, the touch of the Holy Spirit, the formation of the soul body - the golden Wedding Garment - and the related transfiguration processes which will quickly result in conscious existence in the new astral field of the School. This is a conscious existence which can no longer be interrupted by death and which means absolute victory over death.

But you can find this way to victory described elsewhere in our literature. Magnificent as it may be to return to this subject again and to cast light on it from every angle, it is definitely not the aim of our reflections on the seventh book to limit ourselves to a

mere description of it.

Our present task is to convey to you a method, a way of life by which you will be able to accelerate and render dynamic in an extraordinary manner the salvation processes so often discussed in the School. Everything you perhaps see before you on the path, sketched out in perspective, you can place in the living present. We have in fact already told you the mysterious method of reaching the aim when we said that you will have to board the newly completed celestial ship, the newly built Ark, without any reserve and in full self-surrender in order to bring real movement into your life and achieve concrete results in the present.

The problem which now faces you is: "how can I make use of the possibilities and forces contained in the Living Body of the Mystery School?" The solution is: "through absolute self-surrender without any reservation whatsoever

to the Living Body, the new gnostic community, to the new Ecclesia, the new Community of Christ.

If you were to consider this formula to be nothing but a working hypothesis and were to apply it experimentally, you would achieve no result. The requirement is total self-surrender, with everything you are, everything you possess, and every service you can render. Not only with a modicum, not only with a princely share, but with everything. Everything or nothing. Better nothing than merely something.

Up to this moment there are only a few who have done so, and whether *you* will do so is a great question.

You certainly speak about self-surrender to the Gnosis, but for you, a person of the twentieth century, the idea of self-surrender to the Gnosis is much too abstract. You are still able to go in any direction. No, self-surrender to the Living Body of the Mystery School - *that* is the inner requirement that will lead to fulfilment.

That is how the invitation reads; it is an invitation addressed to you. But with respect to your I of nature you still play it safe. However, if you want to accept the invitation to enter into the fullness of the forces available in the Living Body, the requirement of complete self-surrender applies to you.

Up to this moment many pupils are most decidedly not yet willing to meet this requirement, or they cannot yet do so. This is not only because of their I-centrality, but also because of fear and distrust. To sow the seeds of distrust, and because the adversary knows you better than you know yourself, the weapons of slander, revilement and criticism have been handled diligently for as long as the School has been in existence. In this way you are urged to make reservations. People whisper in your ears: "Of everything that has been said, something may well be true. But you can never tell, you can never know". Perhaps you consider the weapon of slander very inferior; you stand above it or outside it but, nevertheless, you make reservations, because of the need to "play it safe".

Do not think that we want to complain; the spectre of slander, revilement and criticism has threatened

the School and its workers since its very inception. It has been and still is daily bread for all workers in the service of the Gnosis. No, we are not complaining. The point is that you should become aware of the psychological conditions under which you live and the ties that, consequently, keep you prisoner.

In this light, you will understand what a precarious undertaking it is for us to speak about unreserved self-surrender to the Living Body of the young Gnosis. Slander may again exploit this and accuse the School and its workers of all kinds of things. You may laugh at the idea of slander, but do you know how it is sometimes used to block and damage the most magnificent work in the service of the Light, sometimes to an alarming extent? Many years have passed now since we stood before the greatest task that has ever been placed on our shoulders. We were to unify and bring into line all the trends in the world regarding the Rosycross; we were to forge them together to form one body to conquer the world for the Gnosis. We were about to succeed. But, nevertheless, do you know how this marvelous plan failed? Through slander, which was applied all over the world. It was the age-old, perfidious method employed by the adversary, to which many have listened, to which many have fallen victim.

The situation has now been sufficiently described; the circumstances have been explained, and now the problems related to this, which loom in the personal lives of everyone, will have to be solved in self-

examination and self-testing. We have conveyed our invitation as soberly as possible and we have placed in the living present all that relates to it. We have told you that you may, if you wish, enter the Ark, the Living Body of the young Gnosis, provided you come in complete self-surrender and in compliance with the conditions. Then all the forces of the Living Body will immediately be yours.

What is the Living Body? You know it as an organised sevenfold apparatus: the youth work; the Rosicrucian Society; the group of the preparatory and professing pupils of the Lectorium Rosicrucianum; the School of Higher Consciousness; the Ecclesia and seventhly you know, at least by name, the Golden Head. You also know of the Spiritual Directorate and many other workers; and you know the literature. You know the various activities of the School and you participate in them. All this has to do with the material manifestation of the Living Body. If you were to remain in the state of

being in which you were born, this visible, material apparatus would be all you could experience.

Is this really all there is for you? Of course not! For, after having become acquainted with the external aspects, you have also, on many occasions, experienced something else, something that is very difficult to define and raises many, many questions. Sometimes you experience it as a wondrous enchantment that emanates from the whole, or as a power that sometimes has an oppressive effect, or as a touch that has made you tremble or that has thrown

others totally offbalance. It is an activity which makes outsiders ask: "by what power do these people do all this?" The quick and dynamic progress of the organisation has made people ask: "what is behind all this?"

But did you ever penetrate to what is behind it? Do not say: "it is the Gnosis" because, in this context, that is nothing but a superficial description. If you know that "there is something behind it", may we then ask whether you have made full use of everything "that lies behind it"? What have you done with all those aspects which stand *behind* it, apart from your contacts with, and your interest in, the material aspect of the Living Body?

Have you done anything with it? Or have you been content with ascertaining, like countless others, that "there is something behind it"? Can one establish a link with "what is behind it" just as surely as one can with the material aspect of the Living Body?

Yes, it is possible, through self-surrender without any reservations. Then you will pass on from believing to beholding. Then what was jubilantly testified in 1 John 1, verses 1-4 will become a reality for you, too: "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and touched with our hands, concerning the word of Life - yes, the full Life has been made manifest. We have seen it and testify of it, and proclaim to you the eternal life which was with the Father and which has been made manifest to us. That which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to

you, so that you, too, may have fellowship with us; and our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. And we are writing these things that your joy may be complete".

This is the image of a reality, and it has the special ability to attract those who look at it and draw them to itself as a magnet grips iron.

The Living Body, the material aspect of which is manifested, can be compared with a nuclear reactor. It is a vacuum where electromagnetic forces come into being. These forces manifest themselves as soon as they are given an opportunity to do so. When the group has acquired the suitability for it, these forces must manifest themselves via the group. They appear on the physical level but do not have the slightest intention of serving it. The electromagnetic radiations concentrated in the Living Body of the Spiritual School have been secreted out of a sphere of life which is not of the nature of death but of the nature of original life. The Seven-Spirit of the original life appears in this vacuum and anyone who connects himself with the Seven-Spirit will at once experience all the values and conditions of the original life.

It is the original oneness, manifested under specific conditions in the corrupted salniter of the nature of death. It is the House *Sancti Spiritus* of which the classical Rosicrucians testified in the *Fama Fraternitatis R. C.* It is the Living Body of which the young Gnosis speaks; the Ark of the days of Noah; the celestial ship spoken of by the ancient Egyptians.

It is out of the question that such a House could

come into being by itself. Certainly, the prerequisites are always present, but the possibilities must be *used*. Such a House always has to be built from scratch, over and over again, and used in accordance with its intention. Only in this way is the original oneness able to manifest itself in the corrupted salniter.

The modern Ark, the modern celestial ship, has been built. The point now is whether you are willing to go on board, because that is the only way in which the grace and the full power of the celestial ship will become yours.

In the same way that all preceding gnostic Brotherhoods built a Vacuum of Shamballa, so the young Gnosis has also carried out this work. It has made such a House *Sancti Spiritus*.

Now let us consider the alchemical process. When a Tat, a nature-born human being, a seeker, entrusts himself to such a Living Body, to such a vacuum, in absolute self-surrender without even the slightest reservation in thinking, willing or acting, then the Seven-Spirit of the new realm will immediately flash through him. It will rush into his serpent-fire like a bolt of lightning. In the two cords of the sympathetic nervous system, miraculous nerve processes will take place. The nerve ethers will be renewed in a fraction of a second. However, if you make reservations regarding the Living Body, as many still do, then crystallisations will appear in the nerve ethers, particularly in the two cords of the sympathetic nervous system. These two cords are closely related to your karma, to your natural birth, to all those earthly

things to which you are bound. If you undertake to entrust yourself in full self-surrender to the Living Body, all the obstacles in these two cords will burn away.

However, if you just play at your pupilship, or if your attitude towards the work of salvation is false, you will spoil the nerve ethers in the sympathetic nervous system. This will result in a living death. Then you will fall down in the forecourt of the gnostic Brotherhood and you may as well be carried away, because you will no longer be of much use as a pupil. *

He who can summon up the strength and insight to enter into unconditional self-surrender will, through the influence of the holy Seven-Spirit, be taken up into the Vacuum of the young Gnosis; as a result he will at once be put out of reach of the seven-spirit of earthly nature. From this moment on he will be "redeemed from the earth", as the Book of Revelation puts it. As an exalted "I am" he will exist in the living

* See Jan van Rijckenborgh's explanation of the story of Ananias and Sapphira, in *The Coming New Man*, Haarlem, Rozekruis Pers, 1957.

present of the Gnosis. Transmutation and transfiguration and everything connected with it will then become of secondary importance. However beautiful they are, they will take place by themselves, according to a plan, in the course of a process.

Thus, although we tell you of a process of transmutation and transfiguration that takes place in

time, we are proclaiming first and foremost an immediate *liberation* that can take place in the living present; not liberation in the distant future, but an entrance into the liberating life at this very moment. This can happen if only you plunge into the Vacuum of Shamballa, which has become for us a Living Body, accepting all the consequences; if, together with all the brothers and sisters, you enter the House *Sancti Spiritus* to view the living body of our Father Brother Christian Rosycross.

That is the secret of the gnostic mysteries. What we have seen and experienced we are proclaiming to you, too. Life has been made manifest in the Living Body of the young Gnosis.

Therefore, go from believing to beholding by fulfilling the law. Then you will find the things that are above, or rather, what is beheld will envelop you with its power and will draw you upwards to itself, just as a magnet attracts iron.

XXIX

THE PENTECOSTAL FEAST OF DIVINE LIBERATION

After our commentary based on the seventh book of Hermes, you will have understood why, during the past years, we have been so active in the School. In a modest way, with due regard to what is possible, the material apparatus of the young Gnosis has been prepared for its task. The Vacuum of Shamballa, the Golden Head of the School, had to be equipped with a smoothly operating medium, with a vehicle for its activities in matter, to manifest itself through it as quickly as possible and on as wide a basis as possible.

The foci which meet the minimum requirements include the Main Temple in Haarlem, the Renova Temple at Lage Vuursche, the Ecclesia Temple at "The Rozenhof" in Santpoort and the Noverosa Temple at Doornspijk, all of which are situated in the Netherlands. In Germany, there is the Christian Rosenkreuz Temple at Calw, and the Van Rijckenborgh Temple at Bad Munder, while in Switzerland there is the Catharose de Petri Temple at Caux. All these foci are interconnected by a network of centres and pupils' homes.

Suppose five hundred or a thousand pupils decided to enter into the state described in the previous chapters. They would then participate fully in the magnetic field, in the Seven-Spirit of the magnetic body of the young Gnosis. This host of enlightened

pupils would spread over all parts of the gnostic realm, but the link between all of them in the fiery heart of the Living Body would be maintained. So you can imagine what the physical aspect of the gnostic realm will soon look like.

We ask you to grasp this image firmly, to see it clearly before you, so that you can see what will happen when the whole host of inhabitants of the young gnostic realm return to the oneness by entering the Vacuum of Shamballa, the Golden Head, in total self-surrender and without any reservations. The unknowable Light will then be seen as a flash throughout Europe and the entire world, like an atomic explosion with the brilliancy of a thousand suns. Think of the image we have just mentioned. Wherever you may travel, you will be in living, vibrating contact with the central focus of the Living Body. In this way its intense power will accompany you and make itself known in every part of the gnostic realm. Then the Gnosis will be able - and it cannot be otherwise - to harvest its crops within a very short time.

All this is in *your* hands. Not in the future, but now. The Pentecost of divine liberation will not fall down from the sky. If you intend to wait for that, you will have to wait for a very long time. You yourself will have to accomplish the feast of Pentecost. You will have to fulfil it and you will be able to do so by making use of the opportunity granted to you now. He who is able to understand, let him understand.

XXX
EIGHTH BOOK
HERMES TO HIS SON
TAT: THE INVISIBLE GOD IS THE
MOST MANIFEST

1. HERMES: I will also explain to you in detail, 0 Tat, the meaning of the following, so that your eyes may be opened to the mysteries of God, who is sublime beyond all name. Understand, by inner vision, how He who seems to many to be invisible, will become, for you, what is most manifest.
2. He would not really be if He were not invisible, for all that is visible has been brought into being, has once been made manifest.
3. However, what cannot be perceived exists in all eternity; it has no need to manifest itself. It is eternal and makes all other things manifest.
4. It makes all things manifest without itself being manifested; it brings forth without itself being brought forth; it does not show itself in any perceptible form, but gives perceptible form to all things.
5. Only what has been created has a perceptible appearance. Indeed, birth or genesis is nothing else than entering the range of what is visible.

6. Consequently, the One-without-birth is both without perceptible appearance and invisible; but as He gives form to all things, He becomes visible through and in everything, and especially to those to whom He wishes to manifest Himself.
7. Therefore, my son Tat, above all pray to the Lord, the Father, the One and Only, Who is not the One but the origin of the One, that he may mercifully grant you to behold this God who is so inexpressibly great, even if He has made only a single one of His rays shine over your consciousness.
8. Only the soul consciousness sees what is invisible, because it is itself invisible.
9. If you are able to do so, O Tat, He will become visible for the eyes of your Spirit-Soul, because the Lord shows Himself throughout the whole Universe in bountiful abundance.
10. Are you able to see your soul consciousness and to grasp it with your hands, and can you admiringly observe God's image? If what is within you is invisible to you, how then should God Himself become visible within you by means of your physical eyes?
11. If you wish to see Him, focus your attention on the sun, on the course of the moon, on the regular

movements of the stars.

12. TAT: Who watches over this order? For every order is accurately determined as to its number and place.
13. HERMES: The sun, the greatest of the gods of the firmament, for whom all the heavenly gods reverently make way, as if to their king and overlord; this awe-inspiringly great one, greater than earth and sea, submits to having smaller stars moving above him. Out of reverence for whom, for fear of whom is he doing so, my son?
14. Does not each of these stars describe an equal or similar course in the firmament? Who has assigned to each of them the kind and size of its path?
15. Look at the Great Bear, which rotates about its own axis and crosses the entire firmament in its rotation. Who is it that owns this instrument? Who is it that has confined the sea within its shores? Who is it that has fixed the earth in its foundation?
16. It is, O Tat, the Creator and Lord of the All. No place, nor any number, nor any measure, as an expression of the cosmic order, would be possible without Him who has created it. Every order is the result of a creating activity. Only what is without order and without bounds proves the absence of a creating activity.
17. But even those are not without a Master, my son.

Although the orderless lacks all essence of order, it is nevertheless subject to Him who has not yet imposed His order upon it.

18. Would that it were possible for you to soar into the air as if on wings and there, between heaven and earth, behold the solid body of the earth, the extended movement of the sea, the flowing of the rivers, the free undulations of the air, the fierceness of the fire, the course of the stars, the swiftness of the firmament and the rotation of the Universe around all these.
19. How blessed, my son, is this beholding, when all these things are perceived from within as in a flash: how the motionless is caused to move and how the invisible manifests itself in and through the works which He has created! Thus is the order of Creation, and Creation is the song of praise of the order.
20. If you also wish to perceive God in and through the mortal beings who are on earth and in the deeps, consider then, my son, how man is fashioned in the womb; investigate with care the skill of this genesis and learn who the craftsman is of this fair and godlike image of man.
21. Who has modelled the spherical shape of the eyes? Who has pierced the orifices of the nostrils and ears? Who has opened the mouth? Who has stretched the network of the muscles and nerves and fastened it to

the body? Who has laid the systems of the veins? Who has given the bones their firmness? Who has covered the flesh with skin? Who has separated the fingers? Who has widened the soles of the feet? Who has bored the body's outlet ducts? Who has given the spleen its place? Who has given the heart its pyramidal shape? Who has made the liver broad? Who has made the lungs porous? Who has given the belly its capaciousness? Who has disclosed the most honorable parts, while hiding out of sight those of least honour?

22. See how much skill and how many different crafts have been employed on one matter, how many works of art have been assembled in one single piece; all are exceedingly beautiful, all perfect in measure, all diverse from one another.

23. Who has made all these things? What other Mother, what other Father, than the invisible God, who has wrought all this by His will!

24. No one claims that a statue or a portrait has come into being without a sculptor or a painter. Should then this creation have been brought into existence without a Creator? Oh, what depths of blindness; Oh, what absolute God-forsakenness; Oh, what a nadir of obtuseness.

25. Therefore, O Tat, never deny the Creator the works of His hands. His greatness is expressed better and

stronger by the designation: "Father of all things", than by the name of "God". Him alone does it befit to be Father. Yes, this is in truth His manifesting deed.

26. And if you force me to say something bolder still: it is in His being to fecundate and bring forth all things. As it is impossible for anything to come into being without a Creator, so the Creator would not be the everlasting if He did not eternally create: in heaven, in the air, on earth, in the deeps, in all parts of the Universe, in the entire All, in what is and what is not.

27. There is nothing in the whole of the All that He is not. He is both the things that are and the things that are not. All that is, He has made manifest, and all that is not, He contains within Himself.

28. He, God, is sublime beyond all name; He, the invisible, who is yet the most manifest; He who is beheld by the Spirit-Soul, but who is also perceptible to the eyes; He the bodiless, who has many, nay all bodies. There is nothing that He is not; for all that is, is He. For this reason He has all names, because they are all out of the one Father. For this reason He has no name at all, because He is the Father of the All.

29. Who could praise You too highly, or in keeping with Your worth and value? Where shall I turn my eye for my praise? Upward, downward, inward, outward? There is no way, no place, not a single creature, that is located outside You; all is within You, all is from

You. You give all and You receive nothing, for You possess everything and there is nothing that does not belong to You.

30. When shall I sing Your praise? For it is impossible to grasp Your hour and Your time.

31. And why should I sing Your praise? On account of the things You have created, or on account of what You have not created? On account of the things You have made manifest, or on account of the things You have kept concealed?

32. And with what shall I sing your praise? As if I possessed anything, as if I had anything of my own, or as if I were anyone other than You!

33. For You are whatever I may be; You are whatever I may do; You are whatever I may say. You are everything, there is nothing but You.

34. Even what does not exist is You. You are all that has come into being, and all that has not come into being. You are Spirit when You are beheld by the Spirit-Soul. You are Father when You give form to the All. You are God when You manifest Yourself as the active, universal power. You are The Good, because You have wrought all things.

35. The subtlest part of matter is air. The subtlest part of air is the soul. The subtlest part of the soul is the Spirit. The subtlest part of the Spirit is God.

XXXI
THE CELESTIAL SHIP AND ITS
PASSENGERS

If you have studied the text of the eighth book of Hermes, you will have found that it is intended to convey an unshakable, unassailable and sublime idea of God. Such an idea should be considered an incomparable gift, because it provides a basis for true human contemplation. It is a rock in the storm, a point of reference amid all the afflictions of the sea of life.

Everything can be deduced from the one true idea of God and it will invariably lead the candidate to a successful conclusion. That is why the pupil of the gnostic mysteries needs to be introduced, to be initiated, into this understanding of God. It will also be evident that, for such an initiation to take place, a firm basis needs to be present from which the initiation can be explained. That is why it is said right at the beginning that the one liberating idea of God can be realised only if the candidate can approach it with the eyes of the reborn soul. Rebirth of the soul is the basis for the knowledge of God.

So you will understand that the hermetic idea of God cannot possibly have anything to do with intellectual understanding. Intellectual training is of no use, and we must reject the myth that an intellectually trained person is, in some way or other, a superior being. On the contrary!

If we say that an intellectually trained person can certainly not be considered superior, this does not

mean that one has to distrust an intelligent person. We wish you much intelligence, wisdom and prudence, to find your way safely through this dark and difficult world. But if one considers intellectual development as a means of liberating mankind, and if the mind is trained by the methods of the modern world, then, instead of becoming superior, the brain will be damaged severely and the person will be cut off altogether from the liberating touch of the light. This will result in a great decline with very dangerous consequences for the person concerned, and for the world and mankind.

No, the Spirit-Soul is the basis for the knowledge, the wisdom, which grants liberation. You know from what we have already discussed what the *Corpus Hermeticum* means by the Spirit-Soul. It is the reborn soul which has met its Pymander and has been re-united with it. These words sum up the entire initial process of the development of gnostic consciousness.

The gnostic fullness touches the pupil in the heart sanctuary. As a result, the rose of the heart, the Spirit-Spark atom, opens and the pupil can follow his *via dolorosa*, his path of the rose and cross. It is the journey to the Place of the Skull, the unfolding, via the endura, of various new faculties in the head sanctuary. In this way the new consciousness develops. The soul which is re-united with the Spirit and, as a result, has ennobled the heart and head centres to their high calling, will possess the eyes of the Spirit-Soul.

The term "Spirit-Soul" has to do with a totally new union of the functions of heart and head. This correct,

high and pure soul-process opens completely the still latent brain centres for true thinking and understanding. Thus the eighth book of Hermes operates entirely on the level of the exalted soul-man and awakens the serious pupil, Tat, to this new state of being. No appeal whatsoever is made here to the mentality of nature-born man.

Now you may ask: "If I do not yet possess the high, new state of mind, is there anything the eighth book has to offer me? The bridge across which Hermes can reach me is just my ordinary intellectual faculty".

Our reply would then be: "This depends entirely on you". The words of the Arch-Gnosis are addressed to the pupils of the young Gnosis. The young Gnosis has a Living Body at its disposal, and the legacy of the Predecessors and the structure of lines of force of the outpouring of the Spirit. This is so because the Living Body of the young Gnosis has already been permitted to celebrate the binding between the Spirit and the soul. The privilege of pupilship lies in the fact that nature-born man, in his present state, is permitted to establish direct contact with the Living Body, and that he can do so through absolute self-surrender without any reservations, in true, daily mortification of the I. In this way the pupil becomes a living cell in the Living Body. Then the state is reached which Paul called the "ministry of reconciliation". This is a process of ascension whereby the new state gains power over the pupil and the process of justification is brought about.

It is worth mentioning that many pupils have so far

made too little use of the possibilities provided by the Living Body. Anyone who does not use these possibilities and does not apply the law that activates them will, in fact, remain standing outside.

So the essence of the eighth book can indeed have a liberating effect in you, if only by instilling true devotion to the active pupilship of the young Gnosis. It is not sufficient to show abstract devotion to the Gnosis, because there are millions who show interest in acquiring gnostic consciousness or gnostic philosophy in that way. No, the secret of attainment is to devote oneself directly, in self-surrender, to the manifested Gnosis. And for you, that is the young Gnosis of the Lectorium Rosicrucianum.

If you can accept this idea and approach the Living Body in this way, it will be possible for the essence of the eighth book to be activated in you, even if you have not yet reached the state of the Spirit-Soul being. This stage *has* been reached by the Living Body, and who else should receive this grace than those who entrust themselves completely to the Living Body of the group? We hope that the simplicity of this truth will be enough to bring this home to you.

We would not be taking this opportunity to speak again about the great mystery of salvation if it were not for the fact that man is in such desperate need of a true idea of God. Such confusion has been created over the centuries by dialectical man's idea of God; and to what additional confusion is man most certainly heading!

We would like to quote some verses from Hermes'

oration to Tat: "I will also explain to you in detail, O Tat, the meaning of the following, so that your eyes may be opened to the mysteries of God, who is sublime beyond all name. Understand, by inner vision, how He who seems to be invisible to many will become, for you, what is most manifest. He would not really be if He were not invisible, for all that is visible has been brought into being and has once been made manifest. However, what cannot be perceived exists in all eternity; it has no need to manifest itself. It is eternal and makes all other things manifest. It makes all things manifest without itself being manifested; it brings forth without itself being brought forth; it does not show itself in any perceptible form but gives perceptible form to all things. Only what has been created has a perceptible appearance. Indeed, birth or genesis is nothing else than entering the range of what is visible.

"Consequently, the One-without-birth is both without perceptible appearance and invisible; but as He gives form to all things, He becomes visible through everything and especially to those to whom He wishes to manifest Himself. Therefore, my son Tat, above all, pray to the Lord, the Father, the One and only, who is not the One but the origin of the One, that he may mercifully grant you to behold this God who is so inexpressibly great, even if He has made only a single one of His rays shine over your consciousness. Only the soul consciousness sees what is invisible, because it is itself invisible."

It is only with the soul consciousness, with the eyes of the Spirit-Soul, that one can see revealed what is hidden from all who do not have these eyes. However, in fact nothing is hidden or can be hidden in the All-Manifestation. Mysteries are invisible only because one lacks the eyes to see clearly what has been revealed.

Everything that God wants to manifest of His being through His works is preceptible; if it were really hidden, it would not exist either. You should think over this idea, because it is highly instructive and liberating and it puts an end to many delusions and dangers.

The eternal Logos has made His works manifest in the seven cosmic domains of the vast, everlasting universe, and He is still manifesting Himself in this way. Manifestation means genesis. Everything that is manifested can be known, fathomed, experienced. If the pupil fulfils the law of the development of the Spirit-Soul, he will encompass all that has been manifested in the whole universe; he will no longer encounter any obstacles. If you understand this, you will no longer fall prey to the criminal exploitation of the mysteries that occurs so frequently in this world. It is an exploitation of human imperfection.

When we say this, we fully realise that someone might ask: "Isn't your repeated exhortation to surrender ourselves completely to the Living Body of the young Gnosis without any reservations, also mystery exploitation?" Our answer is: "No, most certainly not, because this self-surrender can be

absolute and lead to the aim only if the decision is made autonomously, in perfect freedom. Any self-surrender which is imposed from outside is immoral".

The core group of the Spiritual School, which has built the Living Body in unity, will not exploit you; the Living Body is an active life-sphere of a group and not of an individual. To use an old metaphor: it is a celestial ship that is undertaking a voyage. If you decide to take a seat in this ship to reach your aim with the group, then it is not the Living Body that will be exploiting you, but precisely the reverse: you will exploit the Living Body! For you will make use of it, you will try to reach your aim with the aid of it. Those who suffer because of the way you use the celestial ship; those who, for your benefit, ensure that the ship keeps going and remains seaworthy and for this purpose make every effort and as a result suffer for your sake, are at least entitled to expect that you behave as worthy passengers.

The most serious grief you may cause the crew of the celestial ship is that what could be revealed to you is not given a chance, a condition which explains the sometimes so strange behaviour that pupils display. To everyone who has joined the young Gnosis as a pupil, it can become evident through first-hand knowledge what the Living Body is doing for him or her, or at least what it could do. If this does not become clear it will be due either to excessive self-maintenance and I-centrality, or to hidden motives with which one has penetrated the School. It is obvious that such a behaviour will reduce the speed

of the ship and add to the pain of the crew. It may become necessary, on rational and moral grounds, to consider whether the passengers concerned can still be maintained, because there is always the danger that such unworthy persons will not only slow down the ship, but also bring wrong influences into it.

XXXII

ETERNITY IN TIME

As we have explained, the seven great cosmic domains which form the all encompassing space, are the seven manifestation fields of the Logos. Everything present in the universal space, all life and motion, are manifested in principle to all who possess the Spirit-Soul. So there are no real mysteries in the seven cosmic domains, because mysteries exist only through lack of understanding, through lack of true knowledge. And those who lack true knowledge do not possess the eyes of the Spirit-Soul.

Nevertheless, as Hermes went on to say, there is much that is hidden and absolutely imperceptible, because, surrounding and enclosing the seven cosmic domains, is God in His mysterious, unknowable state.

So God exists in a manifested state and in an unknowable state in which He is forever invisible. Manifestation in the seven domains of manifestation is brought forth from the eternally invisible. Philosophically speaking it is not necessary to know the invisible aspect of God, apart from the fact that it is impossible. He who is invisible, He who is unknowable, carries out His plan in His domains of manifestation; He manifests Himself in them.

So one could say that there is a real mystery after all, the mystery of the great, unfathomable deity. Hermes' answer to this is as follows: "What cannot be perceived makes all things manifest without itself

being manifested; it brings forth without itself being brought forth; it does not show itself in any perceptible form, but gives perceptible form to all things".

Thus the imperceptible deity can be known in and through His creation. So there is no mystery here either, because everything the deity is, however imperceptible, is made manifest by Him: "The One-without-birth is both without perceptible appearance and invisible; but as He gives form to all things, He becomes visible through everything and especially to those to whom He wishes to manifest Himself".

So we discover with wordless joy that basically there are no obstacles between God and man. If we remove the fundamental impediments we will traverse what is manifested until we reach the unmanifested; that is, we will pass from time into eternity. Time is manifestation, eternity is the unmanifested, from which all that is manifested comes forth. Eternity is the core essence, the core power, the high summit of creation. Therefore, in the Spirit, time and eternity are inseparable. They determine each other, they intermingle. In time we discover the continuous progress of manifestation, which takes place in ever increasing magnificence. In time, eternity constitutes the great matrix, the supporting foundation, the fulfiller. So we may rightly speak of "eternity in time".

Those who can understand and experience this will immediately enter into a great tranquillity, a deep peace, the peace of Bethlehem. They will find

oneness with God and liberation from all death, because the essence, the ultimate essence of change, is eternity.

How small, how simple the world of opposites and the life of nature-born man are in comparison with this. Man's life is like a ripple on the water's surface, an incidental deformation of reality, the cry of an animal in a vast silence. Anyone who stops at this or buries himself in it is really stupid, isn't he? Anyone who takes the ripple in the water for its essence and cannot see its immense surface is, in fact, abnormal, isn't he? It is obvious that such a person will have come to fear death, the end of a ripple; death which comes to tear sunken man away from his abnormality, his delusion. Delusion has dreadful, crystallising properties, so the breaking out of delusion cannot possibly take place harmoniously. Such transformation, such breaking away from crystallisation implies being broken to pieces. That is why dialectical man has learned to fear death. For nature-born man, time means growing older, losing one's vitality, getting continually nearer to death, digging one's own grave. That is why he tries to delay, to extend, to escape from time, his time. What doesn't man do to delay death? It is a sad race against downfall.

However, for the new man - and certainly you are called to become a new man - time means hastening towards glorification, proceeding in harmony from strength to strength, from change to change, sailing on the river of eternity. If you understand this you

will welcome with approval the seventh and eighth verses of the eighth book: "Therefore, my son Tat, above all, pray to the Lord, the Father, the One and Only, who is not the One but the origin of the One, that He may mercifully grant you to behold this God who is so inexpressibly great, even if He has made only a single one of His rays shine over your consciousness. Only the soul consciousness sees what is invisible, because it is itself invisible".

Do you realise, as a participant of the group, of the Living Body, that if only you wish it, it is granted to you to fulfil the great, holy law and to experience eternity in time, and time as an eternal progress? To do so, you need to learn how to pray.

True prayer is the raising of the soul into the seven rays of the Seven-Spirit, into the seven streams of eternity which encompass all time, and which penetrate and govern it.

The reborn soul is related to the seven streams of eternity and will, on account of its very nature, seek to celebrate this interconnection from hour to hour. For the reborn soul, which is one with the deity, praying means living out of, through and in the Spirit. To say a prayer means to invoke an outpouring of power, so that the intended manifestation will take place.

A simple example may serve to clarify this. Your homes are connected to the electric mains. You turn a switch and the light shines or your electric heater becomes warm. The reborn soul is connected with the Father and His seven radiations. Prayer is the deed,

the call, to live and work out of this power and realise this in actual fact. Therefore, the words in John 14 apply here: "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in me will also do the works that I do. Whatever you ask in my name, I will do it, that the Father may be glorified in the Son".

This refers to the essence of gnostic magic, which involves great dangers if the intended forces are invoked in an unholy way. In this connection it should be mentioned that, for example, the frequent prayers of the priests of nature-born mankind cause the lawful course of events in the nature of death to unfold at ever greater speed, due to the strong link with the natural aeons brought about by such prayers.

The reborn soul, however, is reconnected with the Father and thus receives everything it needs for the microcosmic system to which it belongs. For this soul, life is one continuous prayer in which the soul is nourished with everything it might require. So it is logical that, whenever useful or necessary, the reborn soul may act in a magical way by causing an outpouring of the forces which it has received and has at its disposal. This can be for the Spiritual School, for the Gnosis or for any child of God in the School.

The Spirit-Soul is therefore laden with a great responsibility. It must be very intelligent in order to ascertain whether the power of the Seven-Spirit should be mantramistically applied. The words of John 20, spoken by Jesus the Lord to the gnostically initiated, should be considered in this context: "If you

forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained".

There are many situations in which the ennobled worker may not make use of the holy power of the Spirit. If he nevertheless does so, he will indeed be practising the holy law: the sins will be forgiven; or in other words, the ties between the karma in the auric being and the sacral plexus will be broken. However, as the necessary lesson has not yet been learned, the same sins will be committed again and the person concerned will be affected in a most adverse way. In addition, the priestly worker who has unjustifiably intervened will receive much of the not yet worked-off karma of the other person in his own system and in this way will lose his link with the field of the Spirit. Neither of the two parties will have benefited from such an incorrect intervention. On the contrary, there will only be a more profound distress.

The priestly worker can also intervene by means of gnostic magic, with the power of the Spirit, in a neutralising or punishing sense. There are many cases where such intervention is absolutely necessary. If the priestly worker omits doing so for humanitarian or personal reasons he allows, firstly, the evil to continue, secondly, the sins of the perpetrators to be aggravated, thirdly, the Living Body of the School to be damaged, and fourthly, severe deceptions of all the members of the group, the result being that, fifthly, the worker is punished as the essential cause of all this trouble. The work of a gnostic Spiritual School could head towards its hour

of death through such an impiously conducted
priesthood.

XXXIII

HERMES' SONG OF PRAISE

"Who could praise You too highly or in keeping with your worth and value? Where shall I turn my eye for my praise? Upward, downward, inward, outward? There is no way, no place, not a single creature that is outside You; everything is within You, everything is from You. You give all and You receive nothing, for You possess everything and there is nothing that does not belong to You.

"When shall I sing your praises? For it is impossible to grasp your hour and time. And why should I sing your praises? On account of the things You have created, or on account of what You have not created? On account of the things You have made manifest, or on account of the things You have kept concealed? And with what shall I sing your praises? As if I possessed anything, as if I had anything of my own or as if I were anyone other than You!

"For You are whatever I may be; You are whatever I may do; You are whatever I may say. You are everything, there is nothing but You.

"Even what does not exist is You. You are everything that has come into being, and all that has not come into being. You are Spirit when You are beheld by the Spirit-Soul; You are Father when You give form to the All; You are God when You manifest yourself as the active, universal power. You are The Good because You have created all things.

"The subtlest part of matter is air. The subtlest part of air is the soul. The subtlest part of the soul is the Spirit. The subtlest part of the Spirit is God." This song of praise, with which the eighth book of Hermes ends, is so unique, so remarkable and differs so much from ordinary hymns that it would be good to consider it further. It fits perfectly within the sphere of the subject dealt with in the eighth book and its essence is that feeling of inability to sing the praise of the Father of the All in a really satisfactory and justified way.

In the previous chapter, we saw that God is both transcendent and immanent, which means that His radiation fills all cosmic domains, and that He manifests Himself in everything and everyone, while at the same time He is outside the All- Manifestation in what cannot be known. So He is both known and unknown, time and eternity. It is clear that, on the basis of this reality, those who succeed in fathoming the Gnosis will reflect on the deity in an entirely different way, in adoration, praise and gratitude.

The religious man of nature forms an idea of a deity, which is endowed with majesty to a greater or lesser extent. Depending on whether he is primitive or somewhat more cultivated, he turns to a god he imagines to be somewhere; in most cases above himself.

Do you see the difficulty? If one wants to contemplate something such as God in adoration, praise and gratitude, one needs a focus of concentration. Anyone who knows this kind of

contemplation from experience will know how he looks involuntarily for such a focus, turning, for instance, to a temple.

But where should the gnostic, who has received some insight into the nature of things, turn? If he tries to contemplate God the Father he cannot find any focus at all, unless he chooses some aspect, some insignificant detail, of God's manifestation. That is why Hermes said: "Where shall I turn my eye for my praise? Upward, downward, inward, outward?" For what is transcendent and at the same time immanent, can never be defined in dialectical terms: not in terms of time, or of eternity, or of distance, or of direction. It cannot be defined in any way whatsoever.

This song of praise also asks, "Why should I sing your praises? And with what?"

Does the I exist independently? Is the microcosm autonomous? Does the microcosm, seen from a higher plane, possess anything of its own? Aren't the microcosm, the personality and the soul nothing but insignificant parts, inconceivably small aspects of God's manifestation? So God is everything that I am and everything that I will ever be able to be.

So we are submerged in the ocean of God's manifestation, in a state far exceeding praise, gratitude and adoration, for isn't God's manifestation, the ocean of everlasting fullness, immeasurability itself? The subtlest part of manifested matter is the atmosphere, the air. The atmosphere, in its finest subtlety, is pure astral substance. The soul is composed of this substance, the immortal soul we

cherish. The sphere of the soul is likewise differentiated in degrees of refinement, the highest of which merges into the vibrations of the Seven- Spirit. Out of these is born Pymander, who fuses with the soul to form the Spirit-Soul. And doesn't the Seven-Spirit ultimately have its origin in the eternal, unknowable deity? Although we speak here of Hermes' song of praise, it is not really a song of praise at all. There is nothing but deep bewilderment, an immersion in the ocean of God's manifestation, being filled with speechless awe and nameless joy that it is given to us to know this manifestation, aided by the eyes of the Spirit-Soul, just as God knows Himself.

XXXIV
**THE WISDOM OF THE WORLD AND THE
WISDOM OF GOD**

We would like to begin by drawing your attention to the last part of the seventh verse: "Pray to the Lord (...) that He may mercifully grant you to behold this God who is so inexpressibly great, even if He has made only a single one of His rays shine over your consciousness".

Many translators of the *Corpus Hermeticum*, who do not understand the Gnosis sufficiently, make the mistake of translating the text as follows: "May it mercifully be granted to you that one single ray of God shines over your consciousness". This may be correct to a certain extent, but it misunderstands Hermes' true intention. In the beginning, every candidate of the gnostic mysteries is illumined by only one of the seven times seven rays of the Seven-Spirit. There are seven rays, each subdivided into seven aspects, and every main ray acts in co-operation with the six others, so that every radiation is a fullness in itself.

When dialectical mankind has entered the liberating life, it will be characterised by seven races which will co-operate in absolute harmony. Each race will clearly demonstrate by its behaviour to which one of the main types of rays it belongs. When the seven races understand each other completely, they will be able to radiate, through co-operation,

God's entire fullness. The group which is united in the Living Body, will also clearly show the seven human types in the not so distant future. It will demonstrate their possibilities and the way in which they work together. This will find even better expression in the future when the seven bodies of the seven different gnostic Brotherhoods meet.

When a soul-being is united with the Spirit, with his Pymander for the first time, one of the six sub-rays of the ray of his type will initially become active within him. This is what Hermes is referring to in the seventh verse: even if only one of the six sub-rays of your type is active within you, make use of this opportunity to understand the nature of God. The influence of the Seven-Spirit which is gradually becoming active affects your head sanctuary and in particular the thinking faculty. The thinking faculty, the soul consciousness, looks into the invisible because it, too, is unmanifested. For thinking precedes manifestation.

If the organism of the brain still functions entirely out of the blood received at birth, as is the case with a very young child, it is not capable of any thought. Thinking only becomes possible when, on the basis of the type, radiations are enabled to affect the brain from outside.

The head sanctuary contains seven cerebral cavities. In man, one of these seven cavities is always much more active than the others. An astral influence is involved here, which liberates reflecting or thought ether. We all live in a certain astral field.

The influences of this field, which affect the head sanctuary, are initially converted into thought ether, which in turn activates the brain.

However, the thought ether of ordinary nature cannot enable the brain to perceive the invisible, that which has not been manifested. Nature-born man cannot conceive of what has not been manifested and drawn directly into the sphere of ordinary sensory perception. At best he can search for it. So the thinking of your nature-born state is not free. As a nature-born human being you cannot think freely and independently.

As far as his thinking is concerned, then, dialectical man is entirely restricted to sources within his own sphere. You will understand that this implies something very negative, something very dangerous and limited. If your thinking depends on sources which have been introduced into your sphere of conception, such as text-books, courses and conferences written and given by people who themselves have acquired their information from courses and text-books, it is not at all certain that what is conveyed to you will be correct; the contents may be very hypothetical or even entirely wrong. However, no one will notice, at least not in the beginning, because these authors and teachers are considered to be authorities in their fields, and as such it is they who feed your thinking; and your lives are given a certain direction by means of this thinking. So, the thinking of nature-born man is not self-determined, but is determined by external

influences; he is, to put it as Hermes would have done, trained like an intelligent animal, because his thought ether is imperfect and restricted. So man falls victim to his educators; it is the tragedy of every new generation. A generation is brought up and trained, and at a given moment it founders, just as all the preceding generations did.

That is why there is so much distress and misery for every generation. That is why the civilised world is always at some experimental stage or other, until once again a life system has come to a deadlock and with much blood and tears man endeavours to change the situation. That is why the eighth verse states that only the liberated reason, the soul-consciousness, can see into the unmanifested. He who possesses the eyes of the Spirit-Soul will be able to reveal the unmanifested.

By means of the liberated thinking one will be linked with God's universe in its entirety, and be able to see everything to which the attention is directed. As soon as Pymander has been born and the preceding development of soul-birth has been accomplished, the mind will be able to see into the unmanifested. Then the mysterious Golden Wonder-Flower, the eye of the soul, will have opened in the head sanctuary and the soul-born one will be able to see into the open space. Then the candidate will have gained contact with the new astral field, from which a new thought ether can emanate.

Now you will understand why we draw your

attention again and again to the Living Body of the young Gnosis. We do so because the new astral force is concentrated in the Living Body. The new, pure astral sphere manifests itself by means of the Living Body of the Spiritual School.

That is why we would so very much like you to surrender yourself fully to the Living Body, not for our sake, but for your sake. This will enable you to receive the grace of the pure astral force, which will release the new thought ether into your head sanctuary. Then the first ray of the Spirit will touch the brain organism to renew, change and unlock many points in the head sanctuary which, at the moment, are still latent. A contact will then have been established with the Spirit field, with the unmanifested Deity, and also with the All-manifestation of the seven cosmic domains, the manifested Deity.

It is only in this way that the new, independent and pure thinking, for which so many have sought, will be born, without authorities and without worldly sources. Only in this manner can all falsification be thwarted. Then one can truly become a servant of God, because then, in the Gnosis, one will have become master of oneself.

In this connection, we would also like to mention that reason should not be confused with memory. Suppose we were to give you a perfect translation of all the books of Hermes, with a complete, detailed commentary and that you, having received this gift,

also had a tremendous memory. The memory of dialectical man can be developed by training - a training that in most cases spans several generations and is handed down from parent to child - just as a stomach can be expanded by eating large quantities of food. There are people who have contracted a distortion of the stomach by eating too much. Consequently, they need much more food to fill their stomachs than other people, without their organisms deriving any profit from it.

Now suppose that you, with your tremendous memory, had received the complete translation of Hermes. Then you would quote from this hermetic treasure stored in the bag of your memory, whenever you wished or whenever you were asked. In the eyes of the world you would appear to be a hermetic genius, and a superficial person might perhaps take you to be a hermetic initiate.

The modern system of education seeks to make the bag of memory as big as possible. All teachers make this their aim and the parents co-operate. If a child does not learn its lessons, there is usually trouble. Do you see the mistake? With such a crammed memory you would in fact know nothing, nothing at all. In reality, you would be completely deceiving yourself and everyone else. Every time you dipped into your memory bag your brain organism would react in a robot fashion.

We are trying to draw your attention to one of the greatest mystifications of today's civilisation, that memory training and memory filling mean the

acquisition of wisdom. Well, you may certainly become a professor, but a professor is by no means a sage. As one who is looking for liberating wisdom, you will have to free yourself from the mystification that memory training could make you into an independent, free thinker, a philosopher by the grace of God.

Moreover, what is considered to be "wisdom" is worse than stupidity, because it destroys the extremely delicate brain organism. A person who gives himself to that wisdom is imprisoned by delusion and a high degree of crystallisation, whereas ignorance, in the sense of freedom from the memory cult and its consequences will, in the long run, induce man to seek. For the sake of your body, your physical organism, it is better to be stupid than wise in the eyes of the world. Children who escape from the much esteemed cult of the intellect, be it because of social conditions or because of the fact that they cannot get on in the treadmills of habituation, are pre-eminently blessed by providence, for they escape a dance of death.

When we say this, we certainly do not mean to advocate stupidity and we certainly do not advise you to keep your children away from school. However, seen from the point of view of pupilship - don't be worried if your child cannot learn and don't be over-enthusiastic if your child is getting on very well at school.

We very much hope that you will be able to understand something of the great gnostic mystery

of salvation: the possibility of freeing yourself from all authority and entering the divine wisdom, the Gnosis, itself. Discover that in this development there are no more limitations. By means of the new thinking the candidate gains contact with whatever object he desires. The object is pulled into and revealed in the open space behind the frontal bone, the town of nephrite, in which it can be seen and analysed and its activity investigated. The candidate is then connected with it and, if it is useful or necessary, he will be able to speak about it to secure understanding and give advice.

In those who are gnostically enlightened, memory is assigned its original task, in line with the originally intended purpose. Therefore, we repeat: do not ruin your children, do not force them. If it is still possible for them, give them the opportunity to approach the original purpose of memory. For those who are gnostically enlightened, memory is nothing but a vehicle of reproduction. If information about something is required, memory will direct itself to it unconditionally, establish contact with it and enlighten the mind.

Finally we wish to draw your attention to another point within the scope of this investigation. Many people who have not yet found the path to soul birth and, consequently, have not yet put into effect their self-authority, sometimes find themselves in a desperate and even dangerous state of seeking. Such persons might be guided in the right direction if a

certain aid were not withheld from them. Whenever a person truly seeks, he will be touched by the elementary light of the Gnosis, which is always seeking what is lost. In this state of being, in which millions of people are placed repeatedly, one is open for gnostic language and testimonies from the past. However, one does not get much out of testimonies from the past, unless they can take shape in the present.

What is the use of a preceding Brotherhood if it does not appear in the present in a young, gnostic Brotherhood? Only if the seeker is confronted with a Gnosis in the present, will a living testimony develop for him and will he be able to find clear guidance for his life.

Also, you probably know how the testimony and the remains of the gnostic past have been systematically destroyed to the greatest extent possible, and violated, stolen or kept hidden over the centuries. Therefore, you will realise all the more how necessary it is that you prepare yourself for the true freedom of which we have spoken. As a result of this state of freedom and the possession of the eyes of the soul you, as priestly beings, will become a living testimony in the gnostic realm; you will be able to be a consolation and a blessing for seeking, suffering and misguided mankind.

What is necessary in the first place is not literature, however useful it may be. What is necessary in the first place is not an organisation harmonised to the finest detail, however important

that may be and however much we strive for it. What is necessary in the first place is that you should possess the eyes of the soul and the enlightened, renewed thinking. And in this respect, nothing stands in your way, nothing at all!

What we need in the young Gnosis is priestly human beings. And you can only bring into effect this gnostic, priestly office by absolute self-surrender to the rose of roses, to the great, holy Work, through a perfect endura, by *doing* what you profess, and not only talking about it.

XXXV

THE KEY TO PURIFICATION

The eighth book of Hermes is a profound jubilation over all that can be beheld by the soul when soul-consciousness has been achieved. There are many things in the nature of death that cannot be accounted for by the nature of death itself, but which give us images of God's wondrous manifestation. All these things can be seen as soon as the soul-consciousness, the eyes of the Spirit-Soul, have been acquired. What is essentially God's manifestation in dialectical nature is surrounded and imprisoned by petrification and so operates wholly or partially in the wrong way. However, the essence of God speaks in the whole of manifested nature, even down to the spheres of hell.

The holy language of all times testifies of this, but people of this world have for the most part not understood it. They thought and continue to think that nature, as perceived by the dialectical consciousness and sensory perception gives full expression to God's intention, even in the conflict of antitheses, in the terrible ferocity and bestiality to be found in nature. Earthly man believes that this is *the* nature, God's intention., and that it should therefore be imitated.

It is not only the religious man who desecrates God in this way, but also the man of science. Just think of the biologist, who investigates life as it appears in nature and is carried away in his enthusiasm for it. But the holy language and the Universal Doctrine always

indicate that true activities can be seen only with the eyes of the Spirit-Soul, the eyes of the soul-consciousness. Only then can one distinguish what is essential and discover its inherent meaning, and then it will also be possible to determine how and to what extent this counter-nature has caused degeneration.

So it becomes clear how desirable and even necessary it is to possess the eyes of the soul and to be able to distinguish between what is essential and what is not. We therefore repeat the warning with respect to the eighth book of Hermes: this book can be understood only on the level of the soul-born man.

We must now strip gnostic development of its mystic guise and realise that there can be no real culture of mankind before the soul has been born and has met its Pymander. Only then will man have turned back and climbed to the beginning of what is truly human. Only then will it have become possible to walk the path of evolution. Only after the birth of the soul will it be possible for the personality in the microcosm, which is freed through transfiguration from all crystallisation and death, to enter God's absolute eternity. Soul consciousness is a necessity if one wants real cultural development and wants to continue on the path without any detours. If you remember our discussion about the state of infancy of the dialectical intellect and the uselessness and even the dangers associated with dialectical memory, you will certainly accept the need of possessing such a faultlessly operating new sensory organ.

A gnostic group like that of the young Gnosis might be asked: "Why are the eyes of the soul not yet open in many of you? Why has this guide to life not yet been born in you?"

We have already pointed out that, after soul-birth and self-surrender to the Living Body, death will be overcome, and we would now like to state that many pupils have entered soul-birth, that many of them have quite a lot of soul-quality, and that self-surrender to the Living Body, without any reservations, will make them experience eternity in time.

However, this state of being is not yet the desired one. To be a child of God - with the emphasis in this case on the word "child" - is not the final aim. This state of childhood can change into adulthood only by the opening of the eyes of the soul, the soul-consciousness. The question is: "Why, in spite of such great potential, have many pupils nevertheless not as yet been able to welcome the new dawn?"

The reason is that until now they have paid insufficient attention to the great conflict which occurs in the average person between the cerebrum, the upper part of the brain, and the cerebellum, the lower, dorsally projecting part of the brain. In other words, there is not sufficient order, or no order at all, between the psychological and the physiological processes in the body. Or in yet other words: there is a permanent struggle in them between the psyche and the soma, between the soul and the body.

The ordinary person of this nature does not experience this conflict, because his psyche - his

animal soul - and his body are perfectly one. In the system of the average pupil of a gnostic Spiritual School there is no such unity; on the contrary. In the pupil there is a conflict between the psyche on the one hand and the body on the other. Such a conflict increases continually because of his soul renewal.

If you have dwelt for some time in the Living Body of the young Gnosis, if for some months or years you have been orientated with us towards the grace of the Gnosis, it is certain that the new soul fluid has been secreted within you, or at least that it occurs in your blood. From that moment on, a steadily increasing conflict develops between your soul condition and your body.

You will have to be very much aware of this in future, because what is healthy, normal, and a matter of course for your growing new psyche, for your growing new soul condition, is absolutely abnormal for your physical condition, your body, which is nature-born and moved by natural forces. In other words, your physical being will oppose the new soul characteristics; the growing soul will not be allowed any space; it cannot unfold. And so, in fact, you lead two lives, a soul life and a physical one; a life of the soul when we gather in the Temples or immerse ourselves in the literature of the School or talk about the School and its work, and a natural life of the body.

Do you see that in this way these two lives block each other and, therefore, harm each other? Isn't it obvious that such a situation will provoke physical complaints? The body will not be able to be one with

the soul before it enters the phases of transfiguration. What is natural, what is of the body will have to yield to the soul.

May we draw your attention further to the fact that self-surrender, to which we repeatedly refer, also has a health aspect? For if you really practise self-surrender, it will greatly promote your health. Without it, as you should now clearly understand, you will have one trouble after another.

Therefore, you will have to make your choice, an honest and positive choice. "You cannot serve two masters", the Sermon on the Mount states. Either you decide to follow the path of the soul with all its consequences, or you declare that you are in the service of the body, as it is born out of nature. It is either one or the other, a compromise is impossible.

The path of the soul is, of course, the path of eternity; the path of the body is the path of finiteness. Theoretically, the choice is not difficult and all of you will spontaneously choose the path of the soul. In practice, however, the situation is somewhat different. For the great conflict between the renewing soul and the nature-born body often results in such enormous tensions that theory is immediately swept aside by practice and will even be entirely forgotten if the tensions lead to a crisis. This situation is undoubtedly known to you.

All physical distress, all physical needs and turbulences have their focal point in the cerebellum, the small brain. The cerebellum is in direct contact with the heart, the liver, the serpent-fire and the

sympathetic nervous system, with the sacral plexus and the karma, with what has been accumulated in the auric being over the ages. The cerebellum controls the whole physical system via the spinal cord. To keep our physical system sufficiently under control, the endocrine system also plays an active part. For example, the pineal gland and the pituitary gland have a predominant influence in physical life. So the cerebellum governs the entire physical system, including the cerebrum, and consequently, also the centres of willing and thinking.

Let us now turn our attention again to the formation of the soul. In this process the consciousness, the senses, the serpent-fire, the sympathetic nervous system, the spinal cord, the heart, the liver, the sacral plexus, the auric being and the endocrine system have to fulfil an enormous task, not to mention the blood, the nerve and the other fluids. We will clearly understand that the pupil's growing psyche and his physical being will initially clash with each other in various ways. You cannot easily avoid such a conflict.

So now let us get to the core of the matter. Let us assume that you have an inner conflict, and that this in turn accounts for conflicts with others. You are perhaps at loggerheads with dozens of people. The reason is to be found in yourself, in the great and intense conflict between your psyche and your physical being. In many respects the head sanctuary is the point of encounter, the battlefield, where great pressure is continually brought to bear on the spinal

cord.

Some pupils then complain of intense pain in the back of the neck, accompanied by pain radiating to both shoulders. If they see a doctor about it, they are given massages or pain-killers, or even injections, because the diagnosis is formation of cartilage, calcareous deposits between the various cervical vertebrae.

This may be so, because by the age of three months the process of calcification has already begun. The formation of cartilage or calcification is a basic fact when we grow older. But if you, as a serious pupil, suffer from pain in the spinal cord, the reason is the conflict between the growing new soul, which is claiming its rights to an ever increasing extent, and your physical condition. You will have to find a solution for this conflict and you should not try, as many do, to compromise between your nature and the life of the soul. That is impossible. If you go on seeking such a compromise, you had much better leave the Spiritual School. If you continue to cling to the conflict situation, it will be impossible for the eyes of the soul to open. You will live two lives which are continually at variance with each other and which prematurely destroy the body.

The pupil who realises this and sees the tragedy of such a situation sometimes tries to suppress the urges of his physical being and to fight against nature, which he would like to imprison in self-constraint. This is an expression of panic, anxiety and the doubt that is connected with it. Such efforts invariably lead to

greater conflict, because what you suppress continues to exist and leads to still greater tension, and the delayed explosion will still happen.

We would not mention these difficulties if there did not exist a way to avoid the struggle between body and psyche, without violating nature and living unnaturally. In this connection the universal Gnosis speaks of the unfolding of the soul by means of purification. All who apply this method of living, will be able to make the soul grow, to awaken the eyes of the soul and so neutralise the greatest danger which exists for soul development.

The important thing is whether the pupil is a true seeker of the light or not; whether there is within him the great overpowering longing for a new state of life, because such a desire is decisive in this respect. If this enormous longing for the life of liberation exists in him, it will be a physical condition, a state of the man of this nature. The natural soul will then, as it were, groan for redemption.

This condition and the ability to maintain it, even once the soul has already been born, is the key to purification. If natural man hungers so intensely for redemption, the focal points of physical life, which are concentrated in the cerebellum, will also urge in that direction as a physical need.

That is why it is necessary for the pupil to gain control of the functions of the cerebellum, for him no longer to allow himself to be lived, no longer to allow nature to rule over him. He must be able to take nature into his own hands and gain control of the focal points

of the cerebellum, of physical life. If he succeeds, the cerebellum will no longer be able to cause conflict with the organs and functions of the cerebrum, where, for example, the contemplation of things that are of the Spirit takes place.

In this connection, we refer you to one of the Beatitudes: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God". The process must begin with the purification of the heart. That is the key to the control of the functions of the cerebellum. When, by the purity of your heart, you have taken control, the two serpents of the Mercury ladder, Pingala and Ida, will bear witness of the harmony achieved. In this way your body will retain its health to the extent possible.

Look at those who have just found the Spiritual School, who have been seeking for years and years and who have experienced in all reality what it means to have come up against a brick wall, to have become stuck in this world. When they stand before the gnostic revelation they jump, as it were, with a shout of joy into the midst of the work of the School. Then take a close look at how this benefits their health, how an unprecedented harmony develops in their bodies. For after a long period of searching and having at last found, the heart opens in profound gratitude and recognition, and embraces the Gnosis. At the same time, through this intense yearning and the purification of the heart (which, of course, is not as yet consciously controlled) the functions of the cerebellum spontaneously come under control. The harmony of such a person, who was formerly seeking

and sighing but now has found his God, floods through his entire organism and is of great benefit to his health. Many who have entered the School in such a state testify of this, saying: "I don't know what has happened to me, but I feel as if a heavy burden, which pressed me down for years, has fallen from me".

On the basis of such true longing for liberating life and light, the self-surrender of one's entire nature will no longer constitute a problem. It is then simply a question of making this condition a permanent one. If you follow this course, your entire nature will be absorbed in this overpowering urge for liberation, out of sheer inner need. Then no physical organ will be able to cause any conflict.

This, in brief, is the key to the purification of your entire natural system, as a result of which the soul will be born in you and be able to complete its journey to the dawn of resurrection. That is why one of the Beatitudes says: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God". They will be confronted with their Pymander.

With the eyes of the Spirit-Soul, as free Spirit-Souls, they will enter the fullness of the manifestation of God. They will see God. They will know God. They will understand God. They will be united with the whole synthesis of the eighth book of Hermes Trismegistus.

XXXVI
NINTH BOOK
THAT NONE OF WHAT
TRULY EXISTS CAN BE LOST, BUT
THAT MAN MISTAKES
TRANSFORMATION FOR
ANNIHILATION AND DEATH

1. HERMES: With regard to the soul and the body let us now discuss, my son, in what way the soul is immortal and of what nature is the force that holds the body together and causes it to disintegrate.
2. Death has nothing to do with these things. Death, or mortality, is only a concept derived from the word immortality, whether as an invention or because man has dropped the first syllable and begun to speak of mortality.
3. Death is annihilation, but nothing that exists in the world is annihilated. Since the world is the second god, an immortal being, it is impossible for even a single part of it to perish. Everything in the world constitutes part of the world, and above all man, the being equipped with reason.
4. Before and above everything is God: the Eternal One, the uncreated one, the creator of all things.

The second one, the world, has been created by Him in His image; is maintained and nourished by Him and is endowed with immortality since, as an immortal being which has proceeded from the eternal Father, it possesses everlasting life.

5. To live in eternity should be clearly distinguished from what eternally is, for the Eternal One has not proceeded from any other being, and even if He had been brought into being, He would have been brought into being by Himself. But He has never been brought into being, but brings Himself forth in eternal genesis. So the Universe has everlasting life out of the Eternal One, but the Father is eternal of Himself; so the world is everlasting and divine through the Father.
6. He formed the body of the world out of all the matter which He had destined for this purpose. He gave it a spherical shape, determined the qualities that were to adorn it and endowed it, since the matter was divine, with eternal materiality.
7. After the Father had radiated the qualities of the species into the sphere, He locked them up in it, as in a cave, because He desired to adorn His creation with all characteristics.
8. He surrounded the whole body of the world with

immortality so that, if matter sought to break away from the body's cohesive force, it would not return to the chaos peculiar to it.

9. When matter had not yet been formed into a body, my son, it was in a state of chaos. It even now gives evidence of this, to a certain extent, by its ability to increase and decrease, an ability which men call death.
10. This disorder, this return to chaos, only occurs in earthly creatures. The bodies of heavenly beings maintain the order assigned to them in the beginning by the Father. This order is indestructibly preserved for the return of each of them to the state of perfection.
11. The return of earthly bodies to their former condition consists in the disintegration of the force of cohesion, which turns them back into bodies which cannot be disintegrated, or in other words, into immortal bodies. So there is indeed a falling away of the consciousness of the senses, but no annihilation of the bodies.
12. The third living being is man, who has been created in the image of the world and, in accordance with the Father's will, is above the other earthly animals in that he possesses reason. He is not only closely connected with the second God but also approaches, in his inner

contemplation, the essence of the first God. With his senses, he perceives the second God as a body, while his insight causes him to recognise the first God as bodiless and as Spirit, as The Good.

13.TAT: Is this living being then not subject to annihilation?

14.HERMES: Rejoice, my son, and understand what God is, what the world is, what an immortal being is, and what a being is that is subject to disintegration. Realise that the world, born of God, is in God; that man, born of the world, is in the world; and that God, the Origin of the All, contains and preserves all things in Himself.

XXXVII
THE REBIRTH OF THE SOUL

We would now like to consider the ninth book of Hermes in which it is explained that none of what truly exists can be lost and that, with respect to what is essential, death is a chimera and can be assigned to the realm of fable.

Let us first turn to the problem of the soul and the body and discuss the metabolic processes of the body, the circulation of atoms and forces. We will take as our basis the hermetic axiom that fundamentally and in principle the soul is immortal, and that the state of the soul determines the nature and inherent disposition of the body, its metabolic rate and all related phenomena. There is no death in the relationship between soul and body, in the ideal, faultless cooperation between soul and body. Hermes says that death is a fiction. The concept of death and what is thought to be connected with it is an error.

When reading this, we are inclined to rub our eyes in disbelief, because such a hermetic conclusion obviously contradicts the reality we know and experience and which we have observed around us so often. It also seems to contradict much of what we have read in the Holy Language and established in gnostic philosophy. Don't we speak, for instance, of the nature of death and of dialectics, which means rising, shining and fading? And don't we know the words: "The wages of sin is death"? So isn't death a well-known

phenomenon in what happens around us?

You will have to understand clearly what Hermes intends to say. He is not speaking to man in general but to his son Tat, a seeker who has been initiated to a certain extent, who has discovered the essence, the truth of the soul, who has traced the miracle of the soul and who understands the true meaning of life.

When finally, full of astonishment, Tat tries at the end of Hermes' discourse to summarise his teacher's explanation in the question: "Is this living being then not subject to annihilation?", Hermes exclaims with great emphasis: "Rejoice, my son, and understand what God is".

The ninth book is one of forceful argument against the idea of death and it is rather difficult for Hermes to imagine that a serious seeker who has been introduced to gnostic teachings, can continue to approach the problem from the wrong side, from the outside.

If you want to unveil this mystery for yourself, you will have to take the point of view of the soul and look at the various problems from there. Anyone who does so will understand the words of the Bible: "The soul that sins shall die".

The soul that sins, lives and acts against the fundamental divine laws. Such a soul causes a disturbance in the metabolic processes of the body and in its own sphere of action. Or, in the terminology of hermetic philosophy: such a soul causes a disturbance in the process of dissolution - that is, in the process of transfiguration. Such a disturbance has nothing at all

to do with death. It is only an incident which restores the continuation of the process of eternity.

Anyone who wants to gain adequate understanding of this will have to come to terms with two totally incorrect conceptions of death, namely the theological conception and that of historical materialism.

The theological conception expounds, with various modulations, that the phenomenon usually called death is a change and that the process of life will be continued in heaven or in the land on yonder side. This opinion is shared by countless groups, with many variations on the same theme.

Historical materialism states that death is the absolute end, the definite and complete discontinuance of human existence.

If one is able to abandon these two attitudes, the truth of gnostic philosophy will become clear. Hermes intended to say that death is the total discontinuance of the crystallised or diseased, wrongly living personality. What remains is a microcosm, liberated from this personality, containing a flaming, living nucleus: the rose, the true soul. The incident in the process of dissolution, as a consequence of which the soul is freed again from its petrified garment is, after all, a great blessing. It allows the soul to continue the course of eternity, provided it begins where the incident was caused.

For this purpose, the emptied microcosm must seek revivification by means of a new personality and try, living on the basis of divine laws and forces, to enter transfiguration. This is a harmonious metabolic

process without incident which takes place by itself, a change of the garment of the soul, continuing from power to power and from glory to glory. It is an ideally proceeding dialectics of the seventh aspect, of the mantle of the soul, while the soul itself, linked with its Pymander, exists autonomously in the sixth aspect of the divine manifestation.

From a philosophical point of view, death is nonsense. Death, as Hermes rightly said, is "annihilation, but nothing that exists in the world is annihilated". In the world, manifested by the four elements of air, earth, fire and water, that which has assumed shape but cannot be used is again dissolved and returned to its origin, while the soul is freed from a highly undesirable crystallisation. Therefore, there is no such thing as annihilation.

There have always been those who had to contend with a troublesome or grievous life, and therefore said: "Let us lend the liberation of the soul a helping hand by committing suicide. If the petrified mantle around the soul proves to serve no useful purpose at all, let us put an end to it". This is a very serious misunderstanding, because a self-murderer cannot himself break down his crystallised personality. For, even if he destroys his physical body, the other three vehicles of the personality, the etheric, astral and mental vehicles, will continue to exist until the vibration of the original image has entirely died away. The boundless distress of the self-murderer during this period is beyond any description. Moreover, we should understand that the one key to the life of liberation lies exactly in the birth

of nature. If one does not seize liberation in this nature, if one does not force open the doors of the mysteries now, one will have to try again, as a microcosm, the next time.

The way of liberation leads through birth in this nature to the birth of the soul. In the beginning, when the soul still existed in the world of the living soul, it was the Spirit which expressed itself in the body via the soul. Now the way back must be walked; nature-born man must again awaken the soul to life, must become its obedient servant and strive for the restoration of the binding with the Spirit, with Pymander, under the guidance of the soul. Anyone who does not go this way will have, as a microcosm, to begin again via the earthly birth process.

May we just ask you: "Do you actually know what soul-birth really means?" Our literature talks about virtually nothing else, but its full import may still have eluded many of you.

Who or what are we as nature-born beings? We are nothing but bodies! Or, in the terminology of Hermes, we are only animal beings. So the reality of birth of the true Rosicrucian cannot simply be applied to us without due consideration. The signature of the true Rosicrucian is expressed in the words: "*Ex Deo nascimur*", "We are born of God".

Are we, as beings of this world, also born of God? No, we are born of nature, of the earthly process of preservation and consequently we possess a body which cannot be compared in any respect with the

body born of God. We, as nature-born beings of the present human race, possess nothing but an emergency-order body, laden with the burden of sin, the karma of our parents, of our ancestors and of ourselves.

So if the vital principle, the soul, serves the emergency-order body, as is the case for the majority of present-day mankind; if the fire principle of our state of life devotes itself to the lower nature, it is obvious what will happen: the soul will bring about a new incident in the process of dissolution. For then man, or the soul, is trying to make insoluble what can and must be soluble.

What does Hermes actually mean by the process of dissolution? He means an ideally operating metabolic process in which exhausted forces and substances are continually and harmoniously replaced by new ones. As a result, the mantle of the soul, which exists immortally in an everlasting, radiant youth and is always subject to a process of transfiguration, proceeds from glory to glory. However, if the vital principle devotes itself to nature, it causes an incident in the process of dissolution. Then the metabolic process is disturbed and crystallisation develops more quickly than the process of replacement.

However, if the soul does not sin but begins to understand and serve the one aim of its existence, it receives the signature of the true Rosicrucian; then it is born of God. It will then surround itself with a mantle, a vehicle which meets the requirements of the principle of harmonious dissolution, and that which is

born of nature will be used by the soul as a servant in the house, as a basis. If someone does not have lodgings, he will be happy to receive a shack or a ruin to begin with. He will be able to change quite a lot in this dilapidated house and furnish it according to his taste. The nature-born body is likewise able to form a working basis for the soul, a servant in the house who will help the soul to realise higher possibilities by which, ultimately, the indissoluble will be annihilated. Then the soul of the one who has been born out of the divine nature will proceed to higher good.

So once the soul has been born and has clothed itself with the first aspects of the new vehicle, one needs not be afraid of another submersion in dialectics when the time comes for the earthly body to die. If the new soul has begun to develop, one will proceed from strength to strength.

In essence, soul rebirth means the reconstruction of the original vehicle of the soul, which results in victory over birth in this nature. So pupils of the young Gnosis should first devote themselves to the rebirth of the soul. However, the crowning of this rebirth must be brought about by the soul itself. After the rebirth *of* the soul comes a rebirth *by* the soul. We would like to discuss this in the following chapter.

XXXVIII

REBIRTH BY THE SOUL

We will now turn our attention, as we said, to the rebirth that must be carried out by the soul; not the rebirth *of* the soul, but rebirth *by* the soul. You should take careful note of this, for the rebirth of the soul is only the beginning, and it has already been achieved by most of the pupils of the Spiritual School. However, it must now be followed by a redirection of the soul towards its aim.

Anyone who joins the Spiritual School with a pure interest joins it as a seeker. Such a one has had little peace in his ordinary state of life and by joining the School he proves that he is looking for rebirth of the soul. Indeed, his entry into the School proves that he has already entered such a phase. But as soon as the soul has been re-animated, it must be directed towards the one goal, the true aim of life. That is why the School speaks of rebirth *by* the soul.

This is a process in which the soul takes the initiative and becomes the guiding principle in one's life, thereby breaking through to the aim. It is this process to which we want to draw your attention, in order to make you enter the process of dissolution which is without incident, or in other words, transfiguration, the ideal process of metabolism - in short, eternity. That is why you hear the cry of distress of the beginning: "Save your soul!" For what would you gain if you possessed all the treasures in

the world but suffered damage to your soul?

The source of life, the place where the nucleus of life dwells, is the centre of the microcosm, which roughly coincides with the heart. In a manner of speaking, the seat of life is located in the heart. The consciousness of the heart therefore differs entirely from the consciousness you possess in other parts of the body. The consciousness in the head, for instance, is completely different from the consciousness in the heart.

In prenatal life, during the formation of the embryo, there is one little spot in the heart where life first begins to manifest itself. It is the place where the soul approaches and touches the being which is coming into existence. At this minute spot in the heart life makes itself known for the first time. When a person dies, it is this same place in the heart where life holds out the longest.

Everything that churns in your head, all those thoughts causing their storms, all the intellectual knowledge and other values you have collected, everything you assume and consider, day in, day out, only represents animal life, the life present in every atom of your body. The synthesis of these atoms causes the animal consciousness, which has nothing to do with the life present in your heart.

The problem is whether this life really lives, whether it is indeed active, whether the microcosmic centre can now really unfold itself and live in the highest sense of the word. That is the

problem, and not only a psychological one, but also a physical one.

The heart is the most important organ of the body, and its construction is truly miraculous. The constitution of the present-day human body proves that we can indeed speak of an emergency-order body. The cell structure and the cell production of the heart sanctuary differ greatly from those of other parts of the body; the entire organisation of the heart is designed to co-operate with the soul.

When a child has just been born, its little body is still a subordinate factor. What really lives is the soul in the heart. The other phenomena of life are the result of the fact that one ray of the soul is making the tiny body breathe. In this way, the material body becomes the first garment of the soul. The heart corresponds with the soul, with the nucleus of the microcosm, and thus, via the heart, the soul manifests itself in the tiny, newly born body.

The soul, the rose, is sevenfold; it has seven petals. Accordingly, the human heart is also sevenfold. The Universal Doctrine speaks of the seven chambers of the heart, three higher ones and four lower ones. So one can compare the heart sanctuary with the magic carpet of construction and speak of a triangle and a square.

In the head sanctuary there are also seven chambers. These are the seven cerebral cavities or the seven candelabra. They will be able to begin their work and be ignited in the Gnosis, in the light of the Spirit, only if the seven chambers of the heart

unfold in harmony with the seven petals of the rose. The sternum, the breastbone, acts as an intermediary. The word "sternum" denotes something that radiates; the sternum, the breastbone is a radiation factor in the cooperation between the rose - or the soul - and the heart.

If the seven petals of the soul could manifest themselves in the sevenfold heart, the seven lights in the head sanctuary would begin to burn. Seven rays of the Seven-Spirit would manifest themselves in the head sanctuary, which is destined to become the seat of the Spirit. The seven aspects of the Spirit would then be able to manifest themselves in the head in co-operation with the soul, and thus both would be manifested in the body. Spirit, soul and body would again become a magnificent unity.

However, the reality is quite different. The seven branched candelabrum certainly does not stand before God in the natural head sanctuary; there is no question of an indwelling, sevenfold Pymander. The fact that present-day man lives proves that he is an ensouled creature. But by no means can all the seven rays of the soul manifest themselves in the heart sanctuary. At least three of the petals of the rose remain closed, namely those of the three higher chambers of the heart. They do not operate positively in the human being of this nature. Only some of the four lower chambers of the heart are active and that only to a limited extent. The consequence is that the sevenfold soul-power cannot manifest itself in the body; the Seven-Spirit

cannot manifest itself in the head sanctuary and thus the seven candelabra do not burn.

The seven brain cavities emit a fluorescence, but it is an aeonian astral fire. Consequently, life is purely animal.

Just imagine: a child is born as the product of a mother and a father. Its soul resides within its body, but cannot fully manifest itself in the sevenfold heart. The child begins to grow and beside the physical body there appears the etheric double; as the child grows older, the astral body appears and finally also the flame of the mentality. But the flame of the mentality, the astral vehicle and the etheric double are not at all attuned to the soul, but to the karmic possibilities of this nature-born human being. That is why he is as he is and why the world is so miserable.

What we want to explain is that the mentality does not correspond at all to the true soul, far from it. What one thinks has nothing to do with the soul. Something of the soul may perhaps, now and then, be able to make itself felt in the head sanctuary, but such weak expressions of the soul will mainly be repressed.

So you can well understand that the consciousness of the human soul is totally disorganised and that as a result, the true functions of the body are also disturbed. The growing body of the child and the other vehicles that develop out of it are entirely attuned to this disturbed soul.

Can you now understand how it is that one's

karma can manifest itself to the full as one grows older, and why it is that the influence of the parents and that of all earthbound ancestors makes itself felt in the growing child? As there is too little soul-power, the soul which is of God cannot manifest itself. The consequence is always, without exception, a disturbance in the process of dissolution, in the process of metabolism. The manifestation of the soul is incomplete: the soul sins. That is why growing older leads to crystallisation, which results in death, the disintegration of the form. The logic and inevitability of this process should now be absolutely clear.

Your entire life is thus determined by the state of your soul. The state of your ego, your character and your type, all are products of your soul-state. If your soul is smothered and imprisoned from birth on; if, as a result, the seven chambers of the heart cannot open and only a minute spark of the four lower heart chambers can shine, your soul-state may rightly be said to be in the state it was at your birth. In fact, most people remain in such a state throughout their whole life; they invariably act and live precisely as they have done from their youth on. They grow older and become independent, they find their place in society, but as far as their character, their essential nature is concerned, they are still the same little animals they were when they lay in the cradle.

If you have gained a clear picture of all this, you

may ask: "If my state of birth, the state of my consciousness, determines the state of my soul, why should I strive after the liberating life? Why should I be in this School? Am I not a hopeless case? The soul cannot manifest itself in my body, can it? I am growing older, I am turning grey, I see death approaching. So let me eat, drink and be merry. I can no longer change anyway. Let me make the best of it and wait for the end".

Should you react like this you would suffer from what the Bible calls the hardening of the heart. Let us assume that in your case the three higher petals of the rose are still closed and that only one or two of the other four are open, so with you one must speak of a negativity of the soul, where nothing but animal life exists; you breathe, you live, and that is all. But is it not so that you experience at the same time that your heart accuses you? That your conscience disturbs you and that in an emotional turmoil you say: "What a sordid mess I'm in. What am I doing here? From early in the morning till late at night I just drag myself on, but what for? What is the meaning of my existence?"

Why do you have such thoughts and feelings? Because your heart is accusing you, you are "suffering pain in your ego". Sometimes you have to wade through the bitter grief of utter misery, because you experience the horror of God-forsakenness; you live a burdensome life. One moment you feel guilty, the next you are full of opposition; one minute you are full of despair, the

next full of grim determination, facing life as if with clenched fists. The intellect is unable to cope with the situation and the will proves powerless at the most fatal moments.

Perhaps you know of this from your own bitter experience. Has your conscience or your heart ever accused you? Do you know the unlimited pain which you forget only when you are asleep? Are you familiar with this experience, which haunts you from youth to old age?

Well, if you do, be grateful beyond words. Thank God for this grace, because it proves that your heart is not yet hardened. Be very grateful indeed if you still have this pain; the voice of the soul can still speak to you. The soul, the central point of the microcosm, groans and cries for help, for redemption, day in and day out, as it were.

The radiation of the Sevenfold Spirit breaks through the sternum into the heart and, via the heart, touches all the other organs of your consciousness. In this way, the voice of the conscience, the lamenting heart, the voice of the soul, speaks.

The structure of the heart, which has been so wonderfully made, ensures that the voice of the soul, of the rose, will sound to the very last breath. Unless you harden your heart, unless you allow your heart to grow "fat" as the psalmist put it, you will always hear that voice. This is also what gives rise to the torment of remorse and the gnawing of the conscience. "All this comes from the heart", as Mrs.

Blavatsky once stated.

If you can still hear the sevenfold voice of the soul, you will also be able to hear what moves this voice. It is the Gnosis, which wants to save you. Over the centuries, millions have listened to this voice which speaks in order to convert the hearts of men. Those who listened to this voice took it to heart, as the Bible testifies: "And she kept all these things in her heart", and "the Spirit of the Lord has sent me to heal the broken-hearted".

As long as the heart is not yet hardened, you can take to heart the forces of salvation; you can convert your heart and preserve in it the essence of sanctification, provided you join the ranks of the broken-hearted.

XXXIX

THE HOLY MOTHER EARTH

We would now like to consider the third verse of the ninth book of Hermes Trismegistus:

"Death is annihilation, but nothing that exists in the world is annihilated. Since the world is the second god, an immortal being, it is impossible for even a single part of it to perish. Everything in the world constitutes part of the world, and above all man, the being equipped with reason."

What is possible, however, is an incident in the process of dissolution, in the unceasing process of metabolism. But this only involves the garment of the soul which is formed and maintained by the materials and forces of the world, in particular by the four elements of air, earth, fire and water. If a form, which has come into being out of the four elements, disintegrates, all its constituents return to their source, to the planetary aspects from which they were formed.

The world, our planet, our Mother Earth, is called here the second god, and as such is immortal. But what does this mean?

The perfect man is a tri-unity: Spirit, soul and body. If the soul is really able to unfold in a sevenfold way, if the sevenfold rose can open its petals in all their beauty so that the sevenfold heart opens its chambers for the rose, for the seven flames of Isis -

the seven powers of the holy Earth - then the soul thus prepared will bring about rebirth.

As soon as the soul can convey its sevenfold faculty to the sevenfold human heart, a sevenfold process develops in the person concerned. The soul then goes the way of the cross from Bethlehem, the heart, to the hill of Golgotha, the head sanctuary. The seven brain cavities are then filled with the universal prana of the Seven-Spirit.

In this way the seven-branched candelabrum which stands before God is ignited. Filled with the universal prana of the Logos, it has a very particular influence on the candidate, who then receives the indwelling Spirit, the sevenfold Pymander. Spirit, soul and body have become a tri-unity.

The Pymander of this tri-unity emanates from the first God, the Universal Spirit, the Logos. The soul and body, however, emanate from the second god, the world; from the sevenfold holy planet, Mother Isis, the divine Earth.

In the Universal Doctrine the pupil is always warned that the earth he knows should not be confused with the original earth. The absolute planet, just like the absolute man, is a Sevenfold Spirit and a sevenfold soul and possesses a sevenfold body. One should certainly not take the single part of this sevenfold body of the original Earth currently being misused by present-day imperfect and childish mankind, to be the complete expression of the Earth Spirit. When you have a sore finger, you cannot say that your whole body is ill.

The human soul, the rose of the heart, is sevenfold, perfect and eternal, created out of the soul of the second god, out of the holy, original Earth, out of Mother Isis. That is why verse 3 reads: "Everything in the world constitutes part of the world, and above all man, the being equipped with reason.

So we, who have come into an existence so totally one with the earth, who receive every atom, every cell from the planetary system, understand that the absolute Earth is the Deity representing the Logos.

"Before and above everything is God: the eternal one, the uncreated one, the creator of all things. The second one, the world, has been created by Him in His image; is maintained and nourished by Him and is endowed with immortality since, as an immortal being which has proceeded from the eternal Father, it possesses everlasting life."

So for the absolute man, the absolute is to be found within the absolute Earth. The candidate who might have been expecting to be transferred to another part of the seventh cosmic domain, in which things might be better than here, is brought back by the hermetic philosophy to the planetary status out of which he was born and by which he is maintained.

The absolute is to be found - and indeed must be found - within the fields of the universal, holy Earth. This is the vocation of the soul. As far as the Spirit is concerned we come from the Father, just as the Earth Spirit comes from the Father; as far as soul and body are concerned, we are maintained out of

the Earth soul and the Earth body. So the vocation of the Earth Spirit is our vocation too.

The Earth Spirit's vocation is to impel the various life waves within its womb to the state of absoluteness. Just as the Father does not forsake the works of His hands, so the soul of the Earth will not forsake the works of the task assigned to it. This means that we are indeed welded together with all the other kingdoms of nature to a far-reaching extent. We belong, body and soul, to holy Mother Earth.

One might wonder whether this hermetic conclusion might not lead to a feeling of separation, so that one might speak of mankind of the earth as opposed to mankind of other planets. But remember that the absolute Earth in turn is part of the sevenfold solar body and that the sevenfold solar body in turn merges into a higher system and so on. Consequently, there is no question of separation.

If we awaken to our highest vocation, to the threefold and highest state of human existence, then all the creatures which are included in the plan of the Logos will manifest themselves as a perfect unity. That is why, in various philosophical texts such as those of the classical Rosicrucians, Christ is called the planetary Spirit of the Earth. This is confirmed in the Bible.

If you study the Bible from this angle, you should bear in mind that the translators did not know what to do with the word "world". They interpreted it in the sense of a "sinful, dialectical world", as in the

expressions: "worldly pleasures", or "being of the world", in which the word is used in a disapproving sense. We also read in the Gospel of John that Jesus the Lord emphatically said: "My Kingdom is not of this world". But here he was referring to the world of degeneration and not to the holy, absolute Earth.

Therefore, the planetary Spirit of the Earth, the Christ in all His glory, came into the world of degeneration to sit in judgement, because the Spirit of the Earth cannot forsake the works of its hands. That is why the holy power of the Earth will keep on turning to what is fallen and degenerated. This explains the words of Jesus the Lord: "I have overcome the world".

That is why it is certain that one aspect of the absolute World - the garment of matter in which sin takes place - will perish in the process of change: "the world passes away, and the lust of it". What will remain, what will ultimately ascend into eternity is the Heaven and the Earth John saw on Patmos: "I saw a new Heaven and a new Earth, and all the old had passed away". The new Heaven-Earth is not another planet, but the holy Earth which opened to the sublime vision of John, the man who has found his Pymander.

So the words of the first letter of John appear to be quite correct: "... We saw it, and testify to it, and proclaim to you the eternal life which is with the Father and has been made manifest to us".

In the Universal Doctrine the planetary spirits are

always called the great sons of God. Therefore, Hermes rightly spoke of the second god. We also hear of great builders and Plato spoke of the divine dynasties. In addition, the Bible makes reference to archangels. Just as, with respect to mankind, there are lower kingdoms of nature, so there are also life waves which go far beyond mankind. Some of these are the archangels or divine dynasties. Indeed, Christ is also called the Archangel, the high, divine leader of this planet.

We are discussing this matter quite openly, having refrained from doing so for years, because we are aware of great dangers connected with all this. Beside the archangels there are also various other classes of entities who in many respects may be called higher than mankind, entities who have reached a higher level of development and who are equipped with more knowledge, but who nevertheless deviate in their activities from the plan of the Logos. In this connection think of the spirits of the aeons and the hierarchy of the aeons mentioned in the gnostic Gospel of the Pistis Sophia; of all the powers which afflicted the Pistis Sophia. If we do not keep our minds strictly aimed at soul-rebirth; if we do not, by means of this rebirth, enter the process of genesis of the absolute man, we will certainly be misled by the aeons and their subordinates in the reflection sphere.

So the following words apply to every candidate on the path: "Be faithful, but do not put your trust in anyone. Test every spirit to see whether it is of God".

But you will not be able to do so unless you yourself-possess Pymander and so walk the path to the end.

We hope that, after this discussion, you will be able to understand more of the ninth book of Hermes.

XL
NOTHING CAN SEPARATE US FROM
THE LOVE WHICH IS IN JESUS OUR
LORD

"To live in eternity should be clearly distinguished from what eternally *is*. The Eternal One has not proceeded from any other being. Even if He had been brought into being, He would have been brought into being by Himself. But He has never been brought into being, but brings Himself forth in eternal genesis. So the universe is everlasting life out of the Eternal One, but the Father is eternal of Himself; so the world is everlasting and divine through the Father.

"He formed the body of the world out of all the matter which He had destined for this purpose; He gave it a spherical shape, determined the qualities that were to adorn it and endowed it, since the matter was divine, with eternal materiality.

"After the Father had radiated the qualities of the species into the sphere, He locked them up in it, as in a cave, because He desired to adorn His creation with all characteristics."

The fifth, sixth and seventh verses of the ninth book should certainly not be read as some sort of holy legend. They refer quite literally to the fulfilment of the great divine science. To understand this it would perhaps be best to look at an example within our reach. Just as a magnet attracts iron filings by means

of the lines of force surrounding it, so our thoughts, which are similarly highly magnetic, attract atoms of the primordial substance. As a result of the interplay and character of our thoughts, a spherical space around us is continually filled with countless rotating atoms. These are held fast by our thoughts, but as soon as our thoughts take a fundamentally different course, the configuration of these atomic orbits is disturbed and changed accordingly; certain groups of atoms are even pushed out of the sphere. So, what happens almost daily on a large scale in the dialectical universe, also takes place within us on a small scale.

However, let us now consider what happens when the stream of thoughts remains perfectly uniform and when, accordingly, a certain fixed atomic order is created within the human system. The continuation of the magnetic power of these thoughts then causes the atoms to spiral inwards. So besides the outward spiral course there is also an inward spiral, and it is this on which we would now like to focus our attention.

From the point of view of the microcosm we may refer, not only to an expanding universe, but also to a contracting one. The inward spirals become steadily smaller and their paths become steadily shorter until finally the atoms throw themselves into the fire of the astral body. The quality of the astral fire corresponds to our thoughts. A continuous equilibrium exists between the mental and astral bodies. In the astral fire, on the basis of

the thoughts, atoms of the primordial substance are split and opened, so that the seven forces of the atom are released.

These forces correspond to the quality of the astral and mental bodies. Once released, they are converted into ethers and introduced into the physical system, where they affect all the organs of the body.

If you have understood this process, which we have tried to explain as simply as possible, you will realise that all the phenomena of life and of your physical condition are to be explained from it, and that it accounts for all the disturbances in the process of dissolution, in the process of metabolism.

If your thoughts are pure and full of love; if you refuse to think angrily, maliciously or critically; if you attune the mental body and therefore also the astral state to the rebirth of the soul, you will enter into the practice of the Sermon on the Mount, which says: "Do not resist evil. But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you and pray for those who persecute you".

If you thus enter the childship of the father, guided by the positive radiation of the Seven-Spirit, the process of atomic metabolism in you will demonstrate great harmony. In this way you will enter the process of dissolution, of metabolism. The course of unfoldment of the microcosmic system will then be without incident. The microcosm will lose its disorderly character because, as Hermes

said, disorder - the return to chaos and its consequences - only manifests itself in earthly creatures, in entities who belong to the stratum of instability which is full of incidents.

That is why verse 10 states that, "The bodies of heavenly beings maintain the order assigned to them in the beginning by the Father. This order is indestructibly preserved for the return of each of them to the state of perfection".

We have the process of immortality in our own hands. Nothing can separate us from the Love which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord. Always, under all circumstances, we can be victorious, if only we adhere to the basic law of the gnostic mysteries. This basic law is not difficult to apply. Let no one ever persuade you that the path of the Gnosis is difficult or complicated. Nothing could be further from the truth! On the basis of the hermetic philosophy, let us now consider how a world is formed. By means of His Logos, the divine Spirit of the Father projects a plan into the boundless ocean of the primordial substance. This divine thought is strongly magnetic and so forms a concentration, a sphere of primordial substance in which the atoms are transposed in accordance with the various configurations and forces involved in the plan.

Every atom in space contains all the divine faculties and the seven forces of the absolute life, which correspond with the seven aspects of the Seven-Spirit. What we call radioactivity is only a tiny spark of one of the seven forces of the atom. If man

splits the atom and liberates the forces contained in it, even for so-called "peaceful" ends, he will become the victim of the other atomic forces which he has liberated at the same time but which he is not going to use. The forces released will accumulate in the atmosphere and cause a mighty fire, resulting for the nth time in the annihilation of the dialectical field of life.

But let us keep to the point. The result of the projection of the Logos into the primordial substance is absolute divine life. In this way and no other, the second god was brought forth out of the Logos. If this mystery seems to you to be improbable, please consider the following.

In all times there are those who have been sent out by the Gnosis, those who have been ignited in the love of God and who, with great inner compassion, go out to those who are still imprisoned in the disorder of their mental and astral activities because they have not yet achieved the twofold rebirth of the soul but still lie submerged in the pool of suffering and grief.

These workers always begin with a plan and an intense mental activity. Then they begin to put their plan into practice, knowing that it will never again be possible for them to be freed from it, because of the law of mental and astral forces and its consequences. This is the law that the creator cannot forsake the works of his hands. In this respect, too, the holy law applies: as above, so below.

When such a plan has been drawn up within the

sphere of a gnostic Body and has been built up out of the mental forces of the Light of the World, of the Universal Chain which is directly linked with the planetary Logos, it is easy to imagine what will happen. The projected plan will create a mental conception in the life-field of those who still live in disorder, as a result of which atoms will be attracted, just as iron filings are attracted by a magnet.

This leads to the formation of a very special sphere in the nature of death, a sphere which consists of atoms, but which is invisible and not yet brought to life. Then the workers go out to those who are seeking and sighing, and say to them: "Blessed are those who yearn for the Spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven". They lead all who are truly seeking into the specially prepared sphere, which is essentially of a mental nature. Then they wrap the forces of the sphere like a cloak around the seekers and, by means of gnostic magic, they attune the seekers' thoughts and longing to the mental field with the aid of lectures, rituals and prayers.

If the seekers now really approach and enter the mental sphere, if they truly open their hearts, the mental and astral processes of which we have spoken, with all their consequences of dissolution and transfiguration, will begin in their lives, in their microcosms. This is the process that takes place in a bonafide Spiritual School.

The creators of the mysteries are absolutely bound

to their creations. That is why Jesus the Lord said to his disciples: "Where I am, you will be also". If you understand these words, you will realise what mighty possibilities there are in a group like that of the Spiritual School. A few, as emissaries, began the work. Gradually, many have joined it, with their entire mental and astral being; they have opened their hearts for the School.

So the process of initiation through which the pupils pass is no longer carried out and guided by a few, but by the whole group, which is growing more and more powerful, and has at its disposal not only the mental sphere, but also a complete Living Body, a breathing creation; not only an organisation, but a living reality. This reality extends over the whole world and is established in the heart of the new gnostic Realm as a divine grace for innumerable people.

XLI THE RESTORATION OF PERFECT EQUILIBRIUM

The philosophy of the Egyptian Arch Gnosis can be approached and understood with liberating results only on the basis of the reborn soul. True seekers, those in whom new soul powers are growing, will have experienced this with great inner joy.

However, such persons may still have two important questions, which it would be worthwhile to answer. "Is our life-field, that was said to constitute part of the holy Earth, a creation of Lucifer, or is it an emergency order created by the Elohim?", and "Are we, nature-born human beings, created by Lucifer or are we an emergency-order creation of the Elohim?"

Our answer is as follows: our life-field is and will always be a part of the absolute Earth, and it is therefore, together with the other strata of the earth, a creation of the Elohim, the Sons of God, and it has been made in accordance with the plan of the Logos. As such, creation is to be called perfect, and this includes the creation of our life-field.

The legends say that Lucifer disturbed this plan, so that many souls could not be liberated from dialectics, from the interplay of the twin forces of nature. This had a number of consequences, including the development of various disharmonious processes in our life-field.

The microcosm and the soul it contains emanate from the Elohim, but the personality is entirely nature-born. All sorts of things are possible with this personality. As we said before, the heart alone is under the direct influence of the rose, the soul, even prior to birth, in an attempt to make the heart as open as possible for co-operation with the soul. Only when man gives the heart a central place in his life, in cooperation with the soul, is it possible to speak of an emergency-order body.

Now let us consider the figure of Lucifer. This figure, also known as Satan, is always linked with the concept of heat or fire. A mighty fire is raging throughout the entire dialectical universe. Think of the sun, of the explosions on suns and in solar systems and other celestial bodies. There is thus a mighty fire burning in our stratum, to which the Universal Doctrine refers as "Satan".

So, from a cosmic point of view, Satan is not a fallen angel or archangel who opposes God's plan. Nothing could be further from the truth. The order of the Universe is unassailable, as the Spiritual Testament of the ancient Rosicrucians testifies: *Dei Gloria Intacta* - the glory of God, of His creation and his creatures, is unassailable.

Cold also occurs in the same universe, alongside the mighty fire of Satan. Modern investigators speak of tremendously high temperatures existing alongside unimaginably intense cold. The element of fire is always centrifugally directed, while cold is centripetally directed; it shrinks. Fire gives rise to the

expanding universe, while cold gives rise to the shrinking universe. Cold causes petrification, crystallisation.

So in our life-field we can distinguish the twin forces of heat or fire - the centrifugal, breaking apart, bursting force; and cold - the centripetal, crystallising, densifying force. When these twin forces are not in equilibrium, the result will always be grief, misery, pain and confusion. And that is exactly what happens in this life-field and in our lives as nature-born human beings. We do not yet have anything like an equilibrium between fire and cold, between the centrifugal and the centripetal. All our difficulties are due to this lack of balance.

Sometimes we know in advance that our activities will give rise to a mighty astral fire. (In the Universal Doctrine, Lucifer is always associated with astral fire.) We then ignite this fire through a certain mentality, causing an explosive, centrifugal effect. But this in turn is a reaction, which gives rise to dreadful grief. We say to ourselves or to others that this grief makes our heart shrink. That is cold. Do not understand the word "cold" literally, but rather figuratively. Cold is always that which causes shrinking and crystallisation.

He who learns to control fire, who does not indulge in what is explosive, will also gain control over the opposite force. Equilibrium between the centrifugal and the centripetal, between heat and cold, the twin forces of nature, results in true harmony and transfiguration - the ideal metabolism. If you live as

suggested in our previous discussions, the classical sin of Lucifer will be eradicated. That is the secret of gnostic magic.

Finally, we would like to draw your attention once again to the 9th book of Hermes. We have seen how a bonafide Spiritual School manifests itself as a Living Body in harmony with the great cosmic laws, maintaining a perfect equilibrium between the centrifugal and centripetal forces. If a gnostic community keeps on doing this and remains on the right basis of the true divine cosmic order, it need never be afraid that such a Living Body might perish or be annihilated. All the Living Bodies of the preceding Brotherhoods still exist in all their beauty and glory. That is why verse 10 states - and it applies to both the individual and the group - that "the bodies of heavenly beings maintain the order assigned to them in the beginning by the Father. This order is indestructibly preserved for the return of each of them to the state of perfection". Through equilibrium, the metabolism remains harmonious and the group Body remains eternally young.

In this life-field one can always see numerous communities and orders which, however well they may have begun, eventually give evidence of crystallisation, which unavoidably leads to the breaking up of the group. So on the one hand we see the forces of petrification and implosion, while on the other hand there is an explosion, a bursting asunder. The cause of such a downfall always lies in the fact

that the group concerned ceased to adhere to the laws of the divine order and as a result, the essential was simply unable to keep its grounds. If the group had kept these fundamental laws, nothing of the essential would have been able to pass away. When work is undertaken in the Gnosis, the question is never whether or not such work will succeed because, if the inner laws are adhered to, the work will always be successful. Therefore, whenever the School of the young Gnosis is faced with a necessary task, it does not first ask whether it will turn out well, but invariably resolves that "it must be, so we will begin!"

In this connection we would like to point out that, just like the preceding Brotherhoods, the School of the young Gnosis will always keep to the gnostic signature of the work, without the slightest deviation to the left or to the right. The application of this golden rule is simple, but rigorous, and if a pupil experiences this rigour, he should not think that the School is simply carrying out an article of the law, without any love, merely following certain external rules or dogmas. The aim is precisely to ensure that great Love in the life and activities of the School. If the group follows the golden rules of the Gnosis, it will be absolutely impossible for any adversary to damage the work. No evil will ever befall you, either individually or as a part of the group, if the path of the rebirth of the soul and rebirth by the soul is steadfastly walked. He who goes the way of the soul, will also control the fire and the cold; he will control

in perfect equilibrium the twin forces of the dialectical earth. Then the temptation of Lucifer, the devil or Satan, will not be able to harm him in any way. He will be able to celebrate the crowning of the path with an absolute victory.

GLOSSARY

Aeons:

a. Monstrous formations of unholy natural forces which, over the ages, have been brought into existence by the life of fallen mankind, whose thinking, willing and desiring are entirely turned away from God. The aeons are differentiated into twelve main groups. As creations of mankind that fall completely outside its control, they hold it imprisoned in their grip and form the irresistible powers of self-maintenance which compel it to continue in its self-made, unholy ways, causing man's link with the ever-turning wheel of dialectics to be perpetuated.

b. The word "aeons" also refers to the hierarchical group that rules the order of time and space, also called the dialectical hierarchy or "the prince of this world". This is a group of entities arising from among fallen mankind. They possess the greatest metaphysical power and have made themselves one with the natureaeons mentioned under a. From this luciferic supremacy of the fallen dialectical world, this group misuses all the powers of nature and mankind and drives them to continue in unholy activities for its own evil purposes. At a cost of terrible suffering for mankind these entities have freed themselves from the wheel of dialectics, a freedom which requires unlimited self-maintenance and which they can keep only by maintaining and increasing the suffering of the world. (See in this connection *The Coming New Man* part I, chapter X, and *Unmasking*, by J. van Rijckenborgh, Rozekruis Pers, Haarlem, The Netherlands). It should be mentioned here that all the thinking, willing, feeling and desiring activities of fallen man, even the so-called good activities, call aeons into existence: unholy natural forces that dominate man and keep him imprisoned in the nature of death.

Arch-Gnosis of Hermes: This term refers to the fact that all real gnostic activity in the present period of mankind emanates

from the original fount of the Egyptian Gnosis; that all gnostic redemptive work is rooted in the original knowledge; that the deliverance of man is possible only through the resurrection of the hermetic or Mercury-man, the real divine man, who Jives out of a consciousness enlightened in God. The term is thus also a reference to the original basis for all redemptive work of which the Gospel testifies with the words: "Out of Egypt I have called My Son".

Astral field, new: see New gnostic realm.

Auric being: This is the auric firmament, the entire system of sense centres and power foci in which man's karma is embedded. Our earthly, mortal being is a projection of this firmament, which determines its possibilities, limitations and character. The auric being is the embodiment of the entire burden of sin of the fallen microcosm. It is the old (microcosmic) heaven which must pass away and be replaced by a new heaven. This transformation comes about as the result of a total reversal of life, with the aid of the Gnosis, and it leads to the formation of a new earth, the resurrection of the true man in whom spirit, soul and body once more form an imperishable unity in accordance with the divine plan.

Bethlehem, the Cave of: The highest initiation temple of the ancient Cathar Brotherhood in the South of France.

Brotherhood, Universal: The divine hierarchy of the Immoveable Kingdom. It forms the universal body of the Lord, and is also known by many other names, such as: the invisible church of Christ, the Universal Gnostic Chain, the Christ-Hierarchy, and the Gnosis. In its activity on behalf of fallen mankind it appears, among other things, as the Triunity of the Light, the Brotherhood of Shamballa, and the Mystery School of the Christ-Hierophants or Hierophantic Spiritual School, and it also takes shape in the young gnostic Brotherhood.

Carpet: "To stand on the carpet" - a masonic reference to the inner attitude of the pupil, who in earnestness, devotion and perseverance endeavours to actualise the fivefold Universal Gnosis in himself.

Celestial ship: A gnostic Living Body, the Ark referred to in the book of Genesis. It is a Body that is built in co-operation with the forces of the Universal Gnostic Chain, in the service of the harvest that must be gathered in at the end of a Cosmic Day and carried safely into the new life-field.

Chain, Universal Gnostic: see Universal Brotherhood.

Christ atom: see Rose of the heart.

Christ, inner: see the Other One.

Cosmocrators: see Rectors.

Counter-nature: Our dialectical field of existence in which fallen mankind, severed from God, from the Spirit, indulges in self-will. This life, which is separated from the divine Cosmic Order, has caused the development of the wickedness that characterises all aspects of our existence; the wickedness that we try to overcome with the same self-will. However, owing to its nature, this undivine and thus counter-natural development can be destroyed only by what the Bible calls "reconciliation with God"; or, put in a different way, by the restoration of the link with the Spirit via the path of transmutation and transfiguration; through the return to voluntary obedience to the Universal Cosmic Order.

Demiurge: Spirit-being emanating from God the Father; the Demiurge is the creator of the World from the primordial substance, which was not created by him but by God the Father. He is one with the Word, with the World-Soul.

Demon: In a literal sense this means "natural force". When man links himself in voluntary obedience to these forces in fulfilment of the will of the Father, they will manifest themselves as mighty helpers for those who walk the path to divinity. In the opposite case man will experience them as hostile - as the avenging Demon, the forces of fate. They then

correspond to the karmic results, which determine human fate on the path of experience. The natural aeons, which were called into being by the blind natural life of fallen man, are also referred to as demons; in this case in an unfavourable sense.

Dialectics: Our present field of life, in which everything is manifested in pairs of opposites. Day and night, light and darkness, joy and sorrow, youth and age, good and evil, life and death are inseparably bound to each other, they follow each other unavoidably and bring each other into existence. Through the operation of this fundamental law, everything in our life- field is subject to continual alteration and dissolution, to rising, shining and fading, and our field of existence is a territory of finiteness, pain, sorrow, destruction, sickness and death. Viewed from a higher perspective, the law of dialectics is also the law of divine grace which, through its continual breaking up and renewal, prevents the ultimate crystallisation of man. It always grants a new possibility of manifestation and, through this, the possibility to recognise the purpose of life and walk the path of return.

Emergency order personality: As a result of the immense cosmic drama which is known as the Fall, a part of the human life wave became tangled in the web of mindless nature and identified itself with it, as it had not been able to maintain itself in the original human life-field through the loss of the link with the Spirit. To allow fallen mankind to liberate itself it was isolated in a closed part of the Cosmic Septenary and made subject to the law of dialectics, the law of continuous birth and death. Through the repeated experience of sorrow it could then become conscious of its high origin and of the lost Sonship. It would become possible to break the fetters of flesh and blood so that, consequently, the link with the Father, with the Spirit could be restored and the return to the original domains of life ensured. That is why in the philosophy of the Rosycross our domain of life is called an emergency order. The body in which man manifests himself is called an emergency order body. The pupil is taught, with the indispensable help of the light of the Gnosis, to replace this emergency order body

with an exalted immortal vehicle. This process of transfiguration is the evangelical rebirth from water and Spirit; it is the total transmutation of what is unholy and mortal into the holy and immortal through the original water, the pure original substance, through the power of the renewed link with the Spirit.

Endura: The path of I-demolition, of the last death, through self-surrender of the I to the Other One, the immortal man, the Christ within us. It is the path of John, "who makes straight the paths for his Lord". It is to put into practice the words: "He - the heavenly Other One - must grow and I must diminish, I must perish so that the heavenly Other One may live in me." The path of the Endura is the way which has existed throughout all times and by which fallen man ascends, by means of the purifying fire of a total reversal of his life, to his true, immortal being and returns to the Father. Man's path through dialectics is a life of dying. The endura is a voluntary dying in order to be able to live: "He who is willing to lose his life for My sake, will find It".

Fixing the Rose to the Cross: A phase on the path of the pupil in which he causes his material personality to die daily, guided by clear insight and a true longing for salvation, so that the true God-man, the Pymandric man, will be able to arise.

Foci: Spiritual working-places of the present-day mystery school, the Lectorium Rosicrucianum, in which the Light-forces of the Gnosis manifest themselves.

Gnosis:

a. The breath of God; God, the Logos, the source of all things, manifesting Himself in and as Spirit, love, light, power and wisdom.

b. The Universal Brotherhood as bearer and manifestation of the radiation-field of Christ.

c. The living knowledge which is of and with God. This knowledge becomes the share of those who, through soul-rebirth, have entered the light-birth of God, the Pymandric state of consciousness.

Gnosis, fivefold universal: A term summarising the five

phases of development through which the only path to Life manifests itself in the pupil as: 1. liberating insight; 2. yearning for salvation; 3. self-surrender; 4. a new attitude to life and 5. resurrection in the new life-field.

Golden Head: An aspect of the inner degrees of the Living Body of the sevenfold Mystery School; a reference to the field of resurrection, the new life-field.

Golden Wonder-Flower: The light-birth of God in the head sanctuary in the open space behind the frontal bone. Through this birth the seven brain cavities are filled with the light of the Gnosis and the candidate is enabled to see, with the new consciousness, the new life-field.

Group unity: The true unity of all those taken up in the Living Body of the young gnostic Brotherhood. This unity, made essential by the nature of the Spiritual School, is not an external manifestation of solidarity, but the inward unity of a new soul-life growing in the Gnosis, demonstrating itself in a new attitude to life which is in accordance with the spirit of the Beatitudes.

Head sanctuary and heart sanctuary: The head and heart of man are intended to serve as consecrated "working-places" for God's activity in those who have restored their link with the Spirit or Pymander. After a fundamental and structural purification on the path of the endura, the head and heart are ready to fulfil this sublime destiny. They thus become a glorious unity once more, a true sanctuary, in the service of God and His intervention on behalf of the world and mankind. If the pupil becomes conscious of his destiny, this awareness will act as a continual impulse and exhortation for him to purify his thoughts, will, feelings and actions of everything that could obstruct the fulfilment of this vocation.

Heart sanctuary: see Head sanctuary.

Home Sancti Spiritus: The resurrection field, the new life field. See also Golden Head.

Isis: see Spirit-Soul.

Lipika: see Auric being.

Living Body: see Celestial ship.

Material sphere/reflection sphere: The dialectical nature-order possesses two halves: a material sphere and a reflection sphere. The material sphere is the region in which we live during our lives. The reflection sphere is the region in which, among other things, the process between the death of the old personality and the vivifying of the new personality takes place. This sphere embraces the spheres of hell and purgatory (the sphere of purification) and what in natural religion and occultism is wrongly called "heaven", or "eternal life". These heavenly spheres and the existences in them are just as subject to finiteness and transitoriness as existence in the material sphere. The reflection sphere is the temporary abode of the dead, which does not imply that the deceased personality will be raised up to new life. There is no survival of the fourfold personality; only the deepest essence of the consciousness, the spiritual flash or dialectical spark, is temporarily re-accepted into the auric being and forms the basis for the consciousness of a new personality, which is developed by the auric being in co-operation with the forces at work within the mother.

Microcosm: Man as *minutus mundus*, a miniature world, a spherical life-system in which one can distinguish, from the centre outwards, the personality, the manifestation-field, the auric being and a sevenfold magnetic spirit-field. The true man is a microcosm. What is known in this world as "man" is only the damaged personality of a degenerated microcosm. The present consciousness is only a personality-consciousness, which is only aware of the field of existence to which it belongs.

Nature of death: Our present field of existence is governed by the law of continuous change and demolition. From the first moment, everything that comes into being is on its way to decay and destruction. So everything we call "life" is in fact only a sham existence and a part of the great delusion. The sorrow of demolition, which we experience so profoundly, is intended to make us realise as quickly as possible that the nature of Life, the original Adamitic life-field, which the Bible calls the Kingdom of Heaven, is man's destined life-field, and not the world of dialectics, the nature of death.

Osiris: see Spirit-Soul.

Other One: A term referring to the true, immortal man, who is of God and who is "perfect as the Father is perfect". The revivifying of this only-begotten Son, the Christ-being within us, is the one purpose of our presence in dialectics. It is thus also the purpose of all true gnostic Rosicrucians.

Pistis Sophia:

a. A gnostic gospel from the second century, ascribed to Valentinus. This gospel has been preserved undefiled and describes every detail of the path of liberation in Christ, the path of transmutation and transfiguration, with impressive purity.

b. A reference to the true pupil who perseveres until he reaches attainment.

Primordial atom: see Rose of the heart.

Pymander: The vivifying Spirit which manifests itself to the reborn soul-man. This manifestation occurs in a twofold way: firstly as the radiation of the microcosm's sevenfold nucleus which enters the head sanctuary, and secondly, when the sanctification (made possible by the sacrifice of the mortal soul) is completed through the resurrection of the heavenly man, the inner Christ being, out of the grave of nature. This development is Christo-centric: after his crucifixion Christ descends to the centre of the earth to arise from his grave after having completed his work of salvation.

Realm, new gnostic: The gnostic astral field, formed out of the pure astral substance of the beginning, built up by the young gnostic Brotherhood in co-operation with the Universal Gnostic Chain, of which it forms the youngest link. Through its activity in two worlds (in the resurrection field of the sixth cosmic domain as well as in our field of existence - the seventh cosmic domain) for the duration of the harvest period, it enables those seeking liberation to enter the resurrection field via the Living Body of the young Gnosis. The Living Body forms the temporary bridge between both cosmic domains. The new gnostic kingdom vivifies all the powers that the pupil needs to cross over this "bridge to life".

Rectors or Cosmocrators: Seven mighty natural beings who are closely linked with the origin of creation. They maintain the fundamental cosmic laws and their spheres of activity (See *The Egyptian Arch-Gnosis*, I: First book, Pymander.)

Reflection sphere: see Material Sphere.

Respiration field: The force-field immediately surrounding the personality, within which the life of the personality is made possible. This field connects the auric being and the personality. One of its functions is to attract and repel materials and forces for the maintenance of the personality, and as such it is completely one with the personality.

Rose of the heart: A mystical term for the Spirit-Spark atom (also called the primordial atom or Christ atom), which roughly coincides with the top of the right heart ventricle, the mathematical centre of the microcosm. It is a rudimentary remnant of the original, divine life. The rose of the heart (or the golden seed of Jesus, or the wonderful jewel in the lotus) is the embryo of a new microcosm, the divine seed, that is preserved in fallen man as a promise of grace until the moment when he remembers his origin and is filled with longing for his Father's House. This creates the possibility for the light of the Gnosis to wake the slumbering rose bud. Then, if the pupil reacts positively and remains steadfast, the process of regeneration intended by the divine plan of salvation can begin.

Salniter, corrupted: Jacob Boehme's term for all the corrupt and polluted matter of this world.

Serpent fire system: The cerebrospinal system, the seat of the soul fire or consciousness fire, localised in the spinal column.

Spirit-Soul: The path of the endura, the path of pupilship of a gnostic Spiritual School, has as its aim to awaken the true, immortal soul from its latent condition. As soon as this soul arises from its sleep of death, its link with the universal spirit, with God, is restored. This restored connection between spirit and soul, between God and man is demonstrated in the glorious resurrection of the Other One, the return of the true man to the House of the Father. The soul that is able to celebrate this link, the union with what the Egyptian Arch-

Gnosis calls "Pymander", is the Spirit-Soul. It is the union of Osiris (spirit) with Isis (soul), of Christ with Jesus, of the Father with the Son, the alchemical wedding of Christian Rosycross, the marriage of the heavenly bridegroom with his heavenly bride. The presence of the Spirit-Soul necessitates a heart sanctuary completely emptied and purified of every nature-born influence and activity, and vibrating in harmony with the Spirit-Spark atom. Only in such a purified heart can the meeting with God, the Pymandric consciousness, take place. The Spirit-Soul is the nuclear radiation of the Monad which comes to ensoulment within the heart of material man.

Spirit-Spark atom: see Rose of the heart.

Spiritual School: Mystery school of the Christ-Hierophants (see Universal Brotherhood).

Sympathetic nervous system: That part of the nervous system which in dialectical man is not controlled by the will, but functions automatically; more especially the two nerve-cords to the left and right of the cerebrospinal column. These two cords join each other at the top of the spinal column at the pineal gland.

Universal Doctrine: Not a "doctrine" in the ordinary sense of the word, and not something that can be found in books. In its deepest essence, the Universal Doctrine is the living reality of God, from which the ennobled consciousness, the hermetic or pymandric consciousness, learns to read and understand the arch-wisdom of the creator.

Upper Room: a: The head sanctuary of the microcosm; b: the Golden Head of the gnostic Living Body.

Wheel of birth and death: The ever-repeating process of the birth, life and death of a personality, followed by the re-animation of the microcosm with a new personality, in accordance with the law of dialectics