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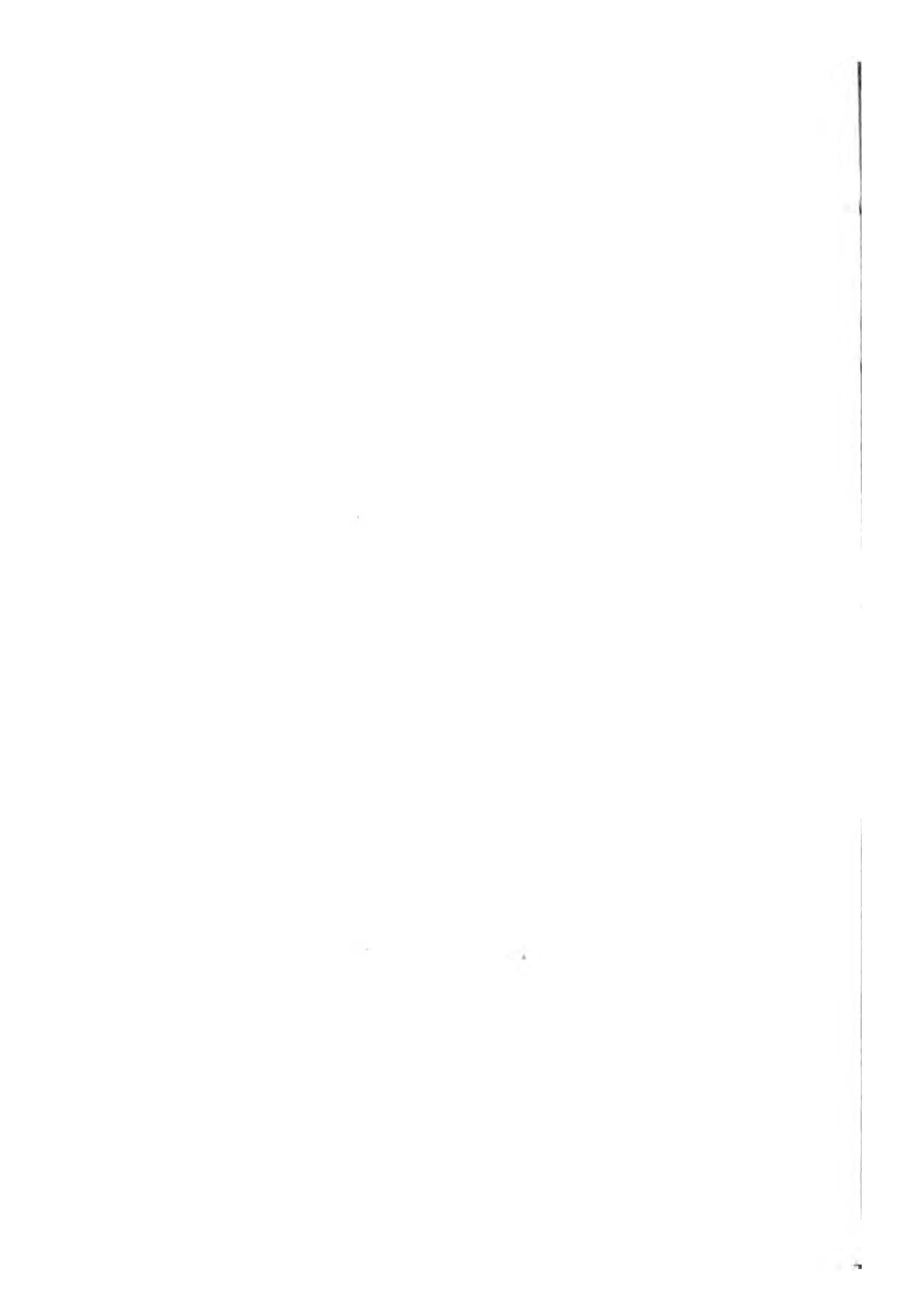
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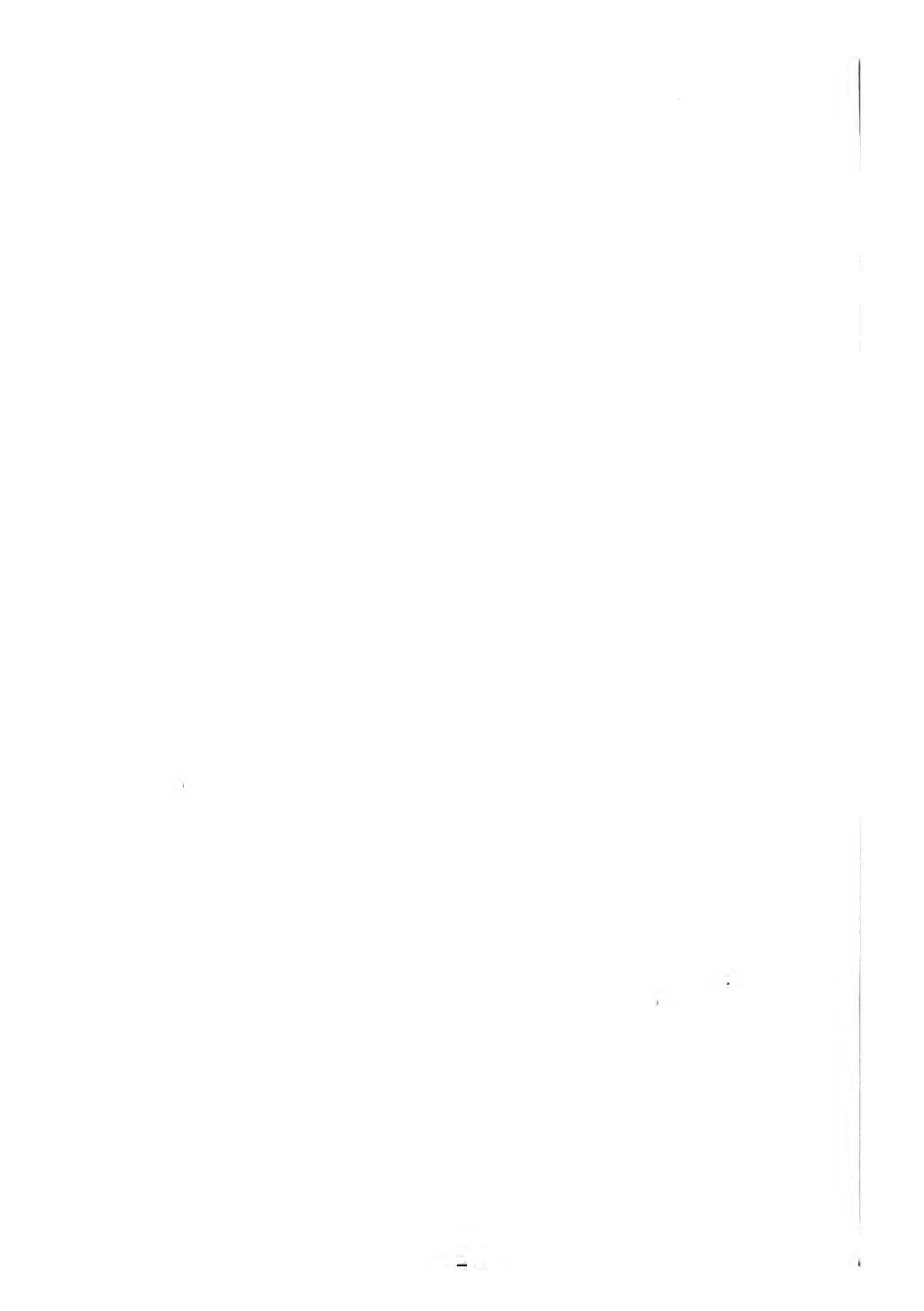






# THE PROBLEMS OF OUR TIME





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(DIE RÄTSEL UNSERER ZEIT)

Four Lectures by  
RUDOLF STEINER  
Berlin, September, 1919

*For Qualified Students only*



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# THE PROBLEMS OF OUR TIME

FOUR LECTURES BY RUDOLF STEINER

## LECTURE I

*Berlin. 12th September, 1919.*

MY DEAR FRIENDS,

Speaking to you here for the first time in these rooms on an Anthroposophical subject, I feel I must express gratitude first of all—gratitude to those friends who, in my unavoidable absence, have devoted themselves to the arrangement of these rooms, which are to be used for our work and discussions. At the present time man's soul is of necessity involved in great and far-reaching events of world and human development. So strong is their demand upon our will and energy if we would understand our

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place as man within world-history, that we cannot as in earlier, more peaceful times, attend with so great care to such outward things of beauty as the arrangement of a place devoted to ideal spiritual aims, so devoted that men can work towards them together, co-operating as in social life. Rightly seen, there is a certain connection between the recent great events throbbing through the world and such a dedication. The vital claims of the historical development of mankind demand that what men have hitherto sought in the form of beauty, artistic adornment for their personal life, should be transferred from that egoistic realm and centred more and more where separateness gives way to social co-operation. It would argue a very poor understanding of the future if we judged it by what appear to-day as aims. The social movements of the present do, of course, wear a "democratic" look, but we need only observe their transitory nature in the right light to make no mistake as to their character. Yet these social movements contain a hint of menace lest the beautiful, which runs through our earthly civilization as artistic

quality, may not find in the future the same comprehension as in the past, when only the better-endowed classes could devote themselves to its culture.

A time of transition may result in some dimming of the appreciation of beauty, but it is essential, if a really social kind of living is to come into being, that whatever occurs in space and time should tend to encourage appreciation of the beautiful : otherwise mankind will sink into mere philistinism. So the simple beauty of these rooms, which our friends have tried to make appropriate to the serious things of life to be fostered here, may be taken as symbolical of the great events throbbing through our time. Out of such feelings I speak, as from you all, to thank our friends most heartily for the work which they have accomplished in this time of stress. It would, further, be wrong to assume that the future will so develop that personality and all that has its origin in the personal and individual will diminish in value by reason of what men call the " objective events." That will not be the case. The three or four centuries ending with the nineteenth have

made it seem justifiable, in the general evolution of mankind, to regard man as a " cog " in the world-machine. The task of the immediate future will be for man to work himself out of this world-mechanism.

We may say without hesitation that the great movement of the present day displays a thoroughly egoistic character. It is true, its aim is Socialism—but its basis is that of anti-social impulses and instincts. No mistake should be made. We see that the real reason in striving for Socialism is that men have become so anti-social in development and constitution of soul. If the social sense were more natural and obvious, fewer socialist " programmes " would be formed ; they have been largely evoked by anti-social feeling and experience. In times like the present, filled with bewilderment, in which the basic cause of social feeling is egoistic and anti-social, the moment comes when an immense impression is made by the sight of a noble, selfless devotion to an ideal, through genuine, unselfish human feeling. It were well if, in these serious times, we did not hold outward festival, but turned our thoughts

to this—how *valuable* it is, amongst the vehement, egoistic strivings of our times, to find the opportunity to create, as has been done here, something for the furtherance of an ideal, spiritual task, even if it be on a small scale. So the highest festival we can hold is to consider subjects connected with the seriousness of the present time, drawing that seriousness into our souls, as well as fostering in our hearts thoughts deeply concerned with human evolution, thoughts of worth and value in the tasks to which these rooms are dedicated.

Looking at our own time critically, yet not captiously, we should be dishonest if we shut our eyes to the many forces of decline prevalent in all spheres of life. If with due earnestness we consider the present day, we cannot forget how frequently what is present in consciousness and finds expression in the spoken word stands far apart from truth and reality. Indeed, any feeling for the gulf yawning between words and the truth is lost in many of our contemporaries and in place of the elementary flow of truth out of the human soul we have the catchword, the “ slogan ” !



What is the characteristic of a "catchword"? The lack of connection of the word used with the inner fount of truth. We need only look at the expressions of universal untruth which have been prevalent in the world during the last four, five, or six years, to be convinced that the estrangement of the world from genuine reality has led to the "empty phrase" and, if uncountered, it will become more dominant. Nor is there anything, outside of this growth of "the phrase," which has flourished so much in the present age, as *indulgence* in face of untruth, as a definite *bias towards falsity*. Nowadays we can find plenty of people forbearing enough to make excuses for the "catch-saying," with its absence of truth. These "tolerant" talkers always ask: "How did the person mean this? Had he not the best intentions? Did he not think he was actuated by the best of motives?" And how little there is of the conscientious regard for truth which lays the duty on a speaker to test the ground of his assertion before he makes it! The time must come when it will not be enough to say of a man "he meant well" when he has given

expression to an untruth. Rather when men will feel the deepest responsibility for testing truth, when even in good faith to have said something which does not correspond with facts will not excuse it, when a man will realize that subjective belief in the truth of what he says matters nothing to the objective knowledge of the world. It does matter whether his speech corresponds to facts or not, is true, or is not, in the objective sense. The very seriousness of our times demands that we should learn what phrases and catchwords really are.

Nowadays many people feel, although not altogether consciously, that we may hold any view if it is agreeable to us, a belief easily to be studied in the attitude they adopt towards current events. We have passed through a serious period, but men only judge of it as is agreeable to them, not according to its importance for the general development of humanity. We have seen some of our contemporaries, in the centre of the stage during the happenings of the last four or five years, thrust forwards into the first place in dealing with them. These men—their destiny has overtaken them—but how little are we inclined

to acquire an objective judgment of what has really happened, or to ask by what method of selection, in these critical times, our leading men have been raised to their dominant position to the detriment of mankind! Nothing is so essential to-day as to work our own way through all subjective opinions and reach some sort of objectivity with regard to these things. An idea is prevalent that it is easy to speak the truth. Far from it: truth has many enemies and to speak it brings swift retribution on a man, since it is taken amiss in all sorts of ways.

During the last few months I have often been told that what I have put forward on the subject of the social question is so hard to understand as to be incomprehensible, and I have had to assert over and over again that to grasp this social impulse requires a different frame of mind from that which has predominated in mid-Europe for a long time, coming to a climax within the last four or five years. In these recent years people managed to grasp a good deal which I honestly could not grasp. All sorts of statements, elegantly set forth, have been made and people have

taken them in. They could not have done that if they had possessed a straightforward sense of truth—yet, they did it “to order,” everything “commanded by headquarters” was received. To-day the essential things are not to be so acquired, out of “obedience,” but through man’s own freedom of soul. Men must first regain that quality: the last four or five years have made that plain. In face of the delusions men have grown accustomed to during these last years, it is no pleasant duty to speak the truth now, for truth is so serious a matter and people resent it so deeply.

In time to come our age will be envisaged in a quite peculiar way. Men’s present duties differ from those of the immediate past. Therefore we ought to get some idea how future ages will look at to-day’s events.

Men must learn to turn their eyes, their spiritual gaze, to the great and revolutionary impulses occurring in the earthly path of development. One such change took place in the middle of the fifteenth century A.D. According to Anthroposophical Spiritual Science, it is the beginning of the fifth post-Atlantean epoch, which we know bears an

entirely different character from the earlier Græco-Latin one, which began in the eighth century B.C. The "fable convenue" usually called "history" gives no information regarding the vast difference in the qualities of the human soul in, for instance, the tenth century, and the centuries following the fifteenth. New soul-qualities and attitudes arose in humanity and we can really only understand what has entered its evolution if we turn our spiritual vision to the forces active within it and see, for instance, their effects in the revolution which occurred in the middle of the fifteenth century. Some time has passed since then, and we are now approaching the crisis due to what swept over civilized mankind at that point and has developed up to the present time—this critical moment, when man's full consciousness must be brought to bear upon it.

We have reached a time when man must awake to the consciousness that, as man, he has his position within the Earth's history, and that outside of him are the three natural kingdoms, the animal, plant and mineral. (We shall speak later of how this

awakening is to be achieved.) To speak of this fact expresses only a half-truth from the standpoint of our modern consciousness, the consciousness, that is, of the fifth post-Atlantean epoch. Before that epoch people could still speak of the three kingdoms as outside of themselves, because their view of the kingdoms of nature was essentially different. In earlier times people understood them as being spiritually controlled. Modern man has lost that ; he must regain the consciousness in which he looks at the three kingdoms, knowing that, as he is related downwards to them, so he is related upwards to the three kingdoms of the Angeloi, Archangeloi and Archai. The half-truth becomes a whole truth when so completed, when we can look up to the realm of these three spiritual kingdoms. Our physical body has a relation to the three natural kingdoms, our soul-spiritual to what lives in the three Hierarchies ; and while we change on the one side our relation to the three kingdoms of nature, so also we alter our relation to the three kingdoms of Hierarchies which stand above us. I want to draw your attention to-day to this

important fact in human evolution, for by holding fast to this thought we can best celebrate the inauguration of this Branch.

If we look back to earlier epochs, which culminated in the middle of the fifteenth century, we must say, if we still keep in view the higher Hierarchies: the Beings belonging to the Angels, Archangels and Archai have always occupied themselves with man in so far as he goes through his existence between death and a new birth, but have also been occupied and concerned with him in so far as he goes through his existence here upon earth. In our age, however, this preoccupation with mankind has in a certain sense come to a conclusion. Among the many activities belonging to the beings of these three Hierarchies is this: to work together upon the pattern, or picture, which underlies the physical organization of earthly man. We enter physical existence at birth and grow therein: the pattern or image of humanity is stamped upon us.

In the primal times of human evolution this picture was quite different and it has passed through many changes. We need only call to mind what appears when we look back into

the Atlantean period or even into the Egyptian : men were different even in their outer structure. The pattern of humanity has altered and it was the task of these three Hierarchies to work at it, giving it first the form it had in Lemurian times, then the form for the Atlantean, and lastly that of the post-Atlantean age. The Beings of these higher Hierarchies gradually came to the point where, through transformation of older forms, they brought forth the model which to-day underlies the form of man.

Then is to be observed the peculiar fact, shown by true spiritual observation that, with the actual working out of this human model, the Beings of these three Hierarchies have essentially finished their task in our age. This picture of mankind, in so far as it underlies the physical organization of man, is really *completed*. Let this significant fact work on you—the Beings of the Hierarchy of Angeloi, Archangeloi and Archai have worked for thousands and thousands of years at the accomplishment of a picture as the basis on which man's physical organization has been achieved ; and we live in the age in which



these Beings of the higher Hierarchies say: we have laboured at the human picture, but we have finished; we have set man as physical man into this earthly world, and this part of our task is now completed.

If we survey this fact in spiritual vision, we shall feel with terrifying force that in these times the *interest* of the Beings of these three higher Hierarchies has not only waned—it has vanished as far as the production of the physical picture of man is concerned. Looking back into the Græco-Latin age, we find that they had a lively interest in the bringing-forth of the picture of humanity on Earth. To-day they really have no further interest in it. They feel that they have finished their task and their interest from that point of view has disappeared. Men might see this as a very important fact, piercing deeply into human nature, if they would only take time and trouble to observe even the outer facts of human evolution. In earlier times, as we can see from what has been handed down to us so that we are able to judge of it, certain thoughts rose up in people instinctively. Those in whom this happened we call

“geniuses.” To-day at best we “believe” that such thoughts arise in some men. There is little “genius” on Earth now, for the forces of genius no longer arise from the bodily organization because the Beings of the three higher Hierarchies no longer work on it. They have lost their interest in the bodily formation of man.

It is because modern man is complete, with reference to the formation of his body, that he is in a certain respect so arrogant. There will be no further perfecting of the physical earthly form as man passes through the remainder of our Earth-evolution; the body itself can contribute nothing more to its own perfection. What had arisen in earlier times as instinctive originality and genius in man’s soul had come from the body; at the same time, because it was the work of divine beings, it had an organizing power on the body. Homer’s poems, for instance, possessed an organizing force which formed the Greek body. That which arose, with such concrete force, possessed at the same time a body-building power. What we moderns proudly exhibit as our “laws of nature” are in the main abstractions and have

no formative force at all. We construct abstract thoughts, unable to govern social life, and abstract "laws of nature," because the Beings of the higher Hierarchies no longer work upon us and we have no organizing thoughts arising within us. The being of our soul has become abstract, dwelling in us in such a way that, through the body itself, it is forsaken by the activity of the beings of the three higher Hierarchies.

The important thing now is to seek afresh, from ourselves outwards, the connection with the activity of these Beings. Hitherto they have approached us ; they have worked on us. Now we must work for ourselves on the soul-spiritual that is in us. The result of that work, what we unveil out of the spiritual world through spiritual investigation, will become something in our human soul which will *restore the interest* of the Beings of the three higher Hierarchies. They will be in the thoughts and feelings belonging to us, which we acquire out of the spiritual world. In this way we shall once again link our own being to that of the higher Hierarchies.

So important is what is happening in our

time that we must describe it as “ a change in the attitude of the divine world to the human world.” Till now divine Beings have worked at the perfecting of the physical picture of humanity ; *man* must now begin to work from his own soul-content, in order to find the way back to the higher Hierarchies. The difficulty of our time is that men are so proud of their external picture of a body, which has now reached its completion, and develop thoughts independently of the picture, thoughts having no connection with the spiritual world. Our real task, thus made so much the more difficult, is to seek this connection from out of ourselves, through devotion to spiritual knowledge, sensitiveness to it, and a will obedient to it. We can only acquire a right attitude to our times if we have felt and experienced this great revolution, which, of course, lasts through centuries. Outer observations will not help us to this attitude ; to-day we must have the possibility of achieving it by an inner work on our own being. We have entered the period of the Consciousness Soul, and have passed out of that of the Intellectual Soul —which was the Græco-Latin age. The

Consciousness Soul must develop more and more in such a way that the Beings of the higher Hierarchies no longer work into man, for that would darken man's consciousness—but that he may consciously *raise himself to them*. Man's full clear day-consciousness is established when he works his way upward to the Beings of the higher Hierarchies. Spiritual Science is the beginning of such work, for it has not sprung from any arbitrary choice or caprice, but from the recognition of this revolution in our time.

But man must consciously develop many other things as well. He has always had to live according to *karma*, the great law of destiny ; but he has not always possessed a knowledge of it. How amazing it was when, in Lessing's *Education of the Human Race*, the consciousness of repeated Earth-lives sprang forth from the new spiritual evolution ! We are at the beginning of a time of change in man's relationship to his fellows—that is changed, even as is his relationship to the Beings of the three higher Hierarchies. The way in which human life was nurtured in the past does indeed extend into our own time ;

but we would fail in our duty to the present if we did not emphasize that new relations between human beings must now enter. It was of no moment in earlier times, when the duty was not yet laid upon man to develop consciousness embracing previous Earth-lives, that he should have, in contact with his fellows, no realization that they stood before him as souls which had lived in the spiritual world before birth, and before that in another Earth-life. Now it is of moment—the time is beginning when we may not leave this out of consideration. I will show this in a concrete case.

Among the things we have tried to set up as a part of the life of human society, is a school based on a real new spirit of humanity, the Waldorf School, in the first instance connected with the Waldorf Astoria Cigarette Factory. The opening ceremony took place last Sunday, 7th September, 1919, preceded by a course for teachers which I ventured to hold. The important thing was to establish a pedagogy, an art of teaching and education which would take into account the fact that in a child a soul is growing, which has been

through other earth-lives. Hitherto the teacher, however advanced in educational ideas, has felt no more than that he was dealing with the soul of a child, whose capacities it was his duty to develop ; but he could only, more or less, take note of what could be perceived through the bodily nature. That will not be enough for the teacher of the future. He will need a fine feeling for what is developing in the growing child as a result of earlier earth-lives, and this comprehension will be the great achievement in the education of the future. A social attitude must be created, built up upon a spiritual relation to other men in the consciousness that when a fellow-man stands before us, we have to deal with a soul which has been through a previous incarnation. To hold the theory of repeated earth-lives, based on intellectual philosophy, is not enough. The theory must become so practical that it forms the foundation of something like a real art of teaching and education. That is what first gives theory a living quality. It is natural that there is as yet very little willingness to receive such things and that the spiritual attitude of men

who do realize the need of the times should be looked at askance. Further, it is necessary not merely to converse in terms of some sort of spiritual view of the world, but to establish institutions concretely and in the full light of knowledge, not only to profess some formula but to carry this knowledge right into the lives of men. Then that attitude will make itself evident as the foundation for a new pedagogy ; the old times and the new meet in that phrase.

I have taken the trouble to find out a great deal about what is demanded in education on various sides. To give but one example : the question is often raised whether education should be more " formal " (classical) or " technical." Should teaching be directed to fitting a pupil for this or that calling, so that he may be suited to serve the State or conduct other business ; or should it aim at calling forth in him the common being of man and " developing what is universal in a humanistic sense " ? All the arguments on the question are simply words, words, because fundamentally what is said and what is the inwardly grasped truth have no correspondence at all. Is a man, then, anything but what he grows



into? How is it, for instance, that men who follow certain callings in public life are fitted for them? It is due to the work of bygone generations; the public life of to-day is only the result of what they brought into being. How about the earlier teachers—did they educate “technically” not “formally”? Certainly not the latter. But it is all one and the same thing! Men dispute over things that are not really different. What is really important is this: that in the children of to-day we have the tendencies which will grow in the next generation and the one after that—which means that education is prophetic. “Technical” or “humanist” education are mere words. What matters is that we should educate prophetically, foreseeing the task of the next generation. That does concern the world, urgently.

“So difficult to understand,” people comment on all this! They must take the trouble to understand it, however, otherwise they will more and more fall out of the general evolution of the time—a momentous alternative, indeed! We must become conscious, in the most serious meaning of the word, of two necessities—first,

the discovery of our connection with the activity of the Beings of the higher Hierarchies, and second, the establishment of a new relationship of man to man in the educational sphere. No longer must we contemplate mankind as simply the personalities standing before us, but as souls which have come over from earlier earth-conditions. We must keep that fact in our consciousness, but it is important to find a concrete relationship to the Spirit. Certainly what we know of *karma*, of repeated earth-lives and the constitution of man is a theoretic view of the world and mere theory will not carry us very far. Only when this theoretic view becomes "Life" is it what man needs for the immediate future—truths concerning the relation of man to the higher Hierarchies and about *karma*. A third thing may be added.

From my description in *Knowledge of Higher Worlds* you know that man, when he wishes to look into the spiritual world, must in some way pass through the experience we call "the crossing of the Threshold." It is described there by drawing attention to three forces of soul (or mind) in man, thinking, feeling and

willing, and showing how the three, which in physical life work chaotically into each other, become ordered and self-dependent. This is the result of passing over the Threshold. In many ways the life-course of human evolution corresponds to that of the individual man, but not completely. This, the crossing of the Threshold, which a man must experience consciously if he wants to reach vision in the spiritual worlds, will be experienced *unconsciously* by the whole of humanity in this fifth post-Atlantean epoch. They have no choice, they go through it unconsciously—humanity, not the individual, but humanity in general, and the individual together with the totality of human beings. What does that imply?

What now acts in man unitedly in thinking, feeling and willing, in the future will take on a separable character, and will assert itself in various fields. Man is just at the stage of passing unconsciously through a very significant gateway, easily perceived by the forces of seership. When a man goes through this "crossing of the Threshold," the spheres of thinking, feeling and willing fall apart. This imposes on us the obligation to shape the forms

of external existence so that this revolution in our inner life may be carried through the external life as well. Since thought, feeling, and will, are to be more independent in the life of man, we must provide a basis on which that independence can be built up healthily. What has hitherto interacted chaotically in public life must be divided into three separate fields, those of economic life, political or juridical life, and the cultural or spiritual life. This demand for the "Threefold Order" is connected with the secret of man's development in this age.

Do not imagine that what is to become effective as the Threefold Social Order is a capricious invention. It is born from the most intimate knowledge of human evolution, of what must come to pass if the aim of this evolution is not to be belied. The difficulty of finding an aim of a spiritual kind, of even admitting such aims, is one of the reasons for our having been involved in the terrible world-catastrophe of the last few years. From this chaos we must work our way out ; the course of human evolution itself dictates that. For this reason I think that the necessity for the

Threefold Order will only be thoroughly recognized by those who start from an anthroposophical attitude, from knowledge of what is actually happening in human evolution. As yet there is no disposition to recognize such facts. Men like to attend to the problem immediately before them, to avoid involving themselves in aims of the deeper questions of existence.

This it is which weighs so heavily on the heart of a man who can see into these secrets—humanity is little disposed to heed what is most necessary for it. Yet it is impossible to wish to remain stationary in the forms of ideas already expressed. We may say that all pessimism is wrong; but it does not, therefore, follow that all optimism must be right. But it is right to *appeal to the will*. It is not a question of whether a thing happens this way or that, but that we use our forces of *will* in that direction where lies the true course of human evolution. Over and over again we must impress upon ourselves that the old era is done with and that to reach a proper relation to the present we must close our account with the past. The *new* era will not

allow us to reckon with it otherwise than *spiritually*. We dare not deceive ourselves into thinking it possible to carry over into the new what has been dear to us in the old ; we must begin by turning to active new thoughts in outer life. Two paths stretch before mankind. One leads through the "mechanization" of the spirit ; very mechanical has the spirit become, especially as abstract "Laws of Nature," which man has also carried over as laws governing social life. Mechanization of the spirit and "vegetization" of the soul. The plant-world sleeps ; the human soul, too, tends to sleep. The most important events of the last years have literally been "slept through." And the same thing is true of the important occurrences of to-day.

In Central Europe men have accepted the falsehoods told them from day to day about leading personalities in the world, and the same thing is being carried on now without their noticing it. They study the rate of exchange and find that the mark has fallen to 2·15 centimes, but I have not yet met anyone who sees the connection of the fall in the mark with other obvious events. Three syllables

—I can only hint at them—would give the reason for the fall in the mark ; but men's souls prefer to sleep, to sleep so soundly that in mid-Europe great disappointment has come over what we looked forward to with joyful anticipation. We were to have "double intelligence" in particular elections, because women were to take part in them. Then we had the "National Assembly"; but the intelligence, as compared with the old Reichstag, was *not* double. We have seen the old parties continuing in existence at a time when they should have vanished, root and branch—and men have no inkling of what has happened, for their souls are asleep. Mechanization of the spirit, and souls as much awake as a cabbage [Vegetarisierung der Seelen] !

Look eastward. There we see the active beginning of the "animalization" of bodies. The world of spirit is becoming mechanized in the American mechanical atmosphere, bodies are becoming animalized in the Bolshevism of the East. Criticism out of the emotions, comments on this and that ; but what true life is, men will not grasp.

So humanity has its choice to-day—to go

along the path which leads to mechanization of the spirit, plant-like sleep of the soul, and animalization of the body. *Or* to seek, on the other hand, to discover the way to the *re-awakening of the spirit* through the impulses corresponding to the age of the consciousness soul ; to find the re-awakening of the spirit in the connection between the human soul and the activity of the higher Hierarchies, in the recognition of the fact that the soul comes forth from earlier earth-conditions, in the threefold ordering of social life. These things are all intimately bound up with each other. Those who are united in the movement we know as Anthroposophical Spiritual Science should feel themselves as a centre from which may radiate the force for this new social edifice. Much that comes from other sides for the reorganization of social life may be useful, but it must be worked on, for only *spiritual impulses* can bring genuine social transformation. The best understanding of these conditions should be expected from circles belonging to this Movement.

I have put before you some of the important things which may give you an idea of the



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necessities of our present age. I speak in these new rooms with the wish that in our work here we may always retain the consciousness of these truths, so important for human evolution. The more we carry such a consciousness into our anthroposophic work, the deeper is its consecration. And these rooms will be best consecrated through our feelings and perceptions, drawn forth from such deep sources of reality and truth.

## LECTURE II

*Berlin. 13th September, 1919.*

IN the last lecture the endeavour was made to show how necessary it is for men of the present day to turn the eye of the soul towards spiritual science, to those spheres of existence, of reality, in which *the rule of the spirit* within human evolution is clearly perceptible to anyone who has the faculty of sight in such regions.

As I said, the middle of the fifteenth century brought with it a complete change in the relation of civilized man's soul to the three Hierarchies next above man, the *Angeloi*, *Archangeloi* and *Archai*. Hitherto it has been out of their own interests and impulses that they worked in human evolution. In our times, this connection has come to an end. They have for the moment no interest in continuing to work as before on the evolution of man. They will only enter

into a *new* relationship to us when human beings begin to develop an interest in the spiritual worlds, out of free will and of their own accord. If we would not lose all connection with the spiritual worlds, we must occupy ourselves with them in the near future, for the spiritual beings who have been connected with us so far have of themselves no reason to be further interested in us. We can only arouse their interest anew if out of our own souls we again concern ourselves with the spiritual world, fostering thoughts, sentiments, and impulses of will, into which spiritual forces can flow. The question may and must be asked, *how* can human beings manage so to concern themselves with the spiritual worlds as to maintain their connection with the higher Hierarchies as the Earth evolution proceeds. The answer may deal with things which apparently have little to do with the question ; but we shall see that they do provide the foundation on which we can rebuild onwards into the future our connection with the spiritual world.

The first thing which we must examine is the effect of the various confessions, the

creeds, existing among civilized people. Hitherto they were necessary, to guide the heart and mind to spiritual realms, but in future they will help to detach man from the spiritual world, unless they admit something entirely new into their efforts. Fundamentally speaking, the creeds of the present day are based on the egoism of man, as we shall realize if we put before our souls one question of such great importance that it forms, and always must form, a touchstone for their views, the question of the immortality of the human soul. We can see, from the way in which this question is generally handled by the creeds, that they appeal largely to man's egoistic instincts. Of course there are deeper foundations for their speech, but these we are not discussing to-day: as a rule the creeds speak of the "continued existence of the soul after death"—that is, the continuation of the life of the human soul.

To deal with the subject of immortality from this point of view is comparatively easy, for human egotism asserts itself there emphatically. Man simply cannot bear—apart from all truth about the question—the

thought of utter extinction at death, so that a certain response is always to be found in man's soul when "life after death" is mentioned. The treatment generally given to-day to the idea springs from an egoistic interest in people. They would prefer not to die as souls at physical death. Naturally, the soul's continued existence after death will be assumed in all our future discussions on immortality, but the way in which anthroposophical spiritual science speaks of the continued existence of the soul after death is very far from being accepted by the creeds.

But this also is important: that people of our day must hear a very different language about immortality from that to which they are accustomed. One who discusses the question of immortality should not only speak of life after death, but also of that life which is lived *here* in the physical world between birth and death. For as you know, this life is also a "continuation"; it is a continuation of the life passed between our last death and that birth through which we are now in the physical world. That is the view which men must learn to hold—that the life here is a con-

tinuation of the spiritual life before birth. In the growth of a child from day to day, from week to week, from year to year, we must notice forces from the spiritual world arising from its inner being, forces which have come with birth and work so as gradually to form the being of man as time goes by. In a sense we lift the veil of the God in man when we enter into the life of the child to develop it. Social relations must take on something of a religious impulse permeating the whole of life between man and man. For this the important, the essential thing is an attitude which never forgets that physical life is a continuation of a pre-natal life, of spirit and soul.

Many things will follow on this. For one thing we shall recognize that our real humanity lies in the depths of our being, gradually emerging. I have referred to ancient times of human evolution, known from an anthroposophical standpoint as the first and second post-Atlantean epochs. People in those days were as capable of development right into their old age as only the young are nowadays. A child goes through a physical evolution about its seventh year with the change of

teeth ; through another metamorphosis when puberty occurs ; but after that what goes on in his evolution is outwardly less noticeable. In olden times this was not so ; what man went through in soul and spirit expressed itself into much later stages of life. Nowadays old age sets in at seventeen or eighteen, and we are amazed at its evidences. Here is an example : a short time ago, in Stuttgart, at a meeting of the Cultural Committee where present-day education was discussed from the most varied points of view, a young man got up (let us call him " a young man " though he might equally well be called an " old boy " !) who told us we needed instructing about the true ideals of education ! He began by uttering some very high-sounding words, then read out the programme of a modern Educational Society. After much stumbling he finally broke down, and, having no more to say, gathered up the threads with " I must therefore claim to have proved that old age no longer understands its own youth," and went out. I replied that I quite saw we had not understood him, for the simple reason that his speech and behaviour had been those of an

old man ; he had in fact enunciated as principles, like an ancient grey-beard, the last word in abstractions. Old age, nowadays, means the limit up to which a man can develop. Up to a particular age a person can absorb all sorts of things, and is not ashamed to develop himself. But at about twenty years of age he feels shame at the idea of developing farther. Seldom nowadays do we find people with grey hair and wrinkles welcoming with joy the dawn of each year because each year brings new possibilities of development to the organism and new knowledge, unattainable before, is within reach. At the inconsiderable age of thirty men are ashamed to make themselves capable of development, or to learn anything more. The point is that we should actually retain the possibility, all through life, of rejoicing in the coming year, because each year charms forth the divine-spiritual content of our own inner being in ever new forms.

I want to emphasize this point. We should really and truly learn to experience our life as capable of development not only in youth, but through its whole span between birth and



death. For this a new education will be necessary. We elders find that to look back at our own schooldays evokes few pleasant thoughts. We must manage to shape schooldays for the children of to-day so that to remember them will provide an ever new and invigorating source of life. Now this will bring, as you can see, the possibility of opening for mankind real perception of the soul-spiritual within themselves, of experiencing something extending beyond the everyday life which is stirred and stimulated from without.

Other knowledge will be recognized as necessary. There is a secret, intimately connected with the present stage of human evolution, which is not known to-day. In earlier times, before the middle of the fifteenth century, it was not necessary to take much notice of it, but to-day it must be reckoned with. This mystery of life is that man, constituted as he is to-day in body, soul and spirit, every night looks, to a certain extent, at the events of the coming day, but without always carrying that vision over into full day-consciousness. It is his "Angel" who has that clear consciousness. But what is

experienced at night in community with that being whom we call the Angel is a pre-vision of the coming day. This is no subject for human curiosity, but a matter for practical life. Only when the feeling of this fact fills our inner being can we make right decisions and bring right thoughts into the course of daily life. Let us assume that a man has something definite to do, say at noon. This that he has to do has already been arranged by his Angel and himself during the preceding night, though the fact is not necessarily kept in consciousness and human curiosity has no part in it. People should be filled with the conviction that during the day they should realize in a fruitful way what they have arranged at night in co-operation with this Angel being.

Much that has happened of late might draw men's attention with almost shattering force to what I have just said. The last four or five years of agony should have taught men that the consciousness of their association with higher beings through the experiences of the night did not, alas! exist. If the feeling had permeated men that their doings in the day were in harmony with the decisions made with

their Angels in the preceding night, how different events would have been! These things must be spoken of now, to point out how man must learn to regard this life between birth and death as a *continuation* of the life of spirit and soul which was his before birth. It must be made known that man in future should be able to experience throughout his whole life the revelation of the Divine in his own being, and that through all his life in the day this vivid consciousness should persist as: "What I do from morning till evening I have discussed with my Angel, while I slept." Men must turn to feelings which are more concrete with regard to the spiritual world than the modern abstractions of various creeds, which at the same time claim that they appeal to unselfish, not to egoistic human instincts. From such feelings will arise that which will provide the necessary relation to the beings belonging to the Hierarchy of the Angels, who will once more be able to interest themselves on our behalf. Men's attitude to the spiritual world must move in this appointed direction.

Yet again we must observe something. The creeds speak much about "God" and

“ The Divine.” What do they really mean ? Surely something of which a vague consciousness, at least, exists in the soul of man. After all, it is not what name is given to a thing that matters, but what it means to a man’s soul. Men talk of “ God ” and of “ Christ,” but all the time they only mean the “ Angel ”—the Angel to which they turn because they meet a response in their souls. Whatever the creeds may speak of to-day, whether of God or Christ or other divine being, the substance of the thought only relates to the Angel Beings who are connected with man, the Angeloi. Higher it cannot rise, since people are disinclined to seek any wider relation to the spiritual world than an egoistic one. The relation to the Archangeloi, the Hierarchy of the Archangels, must indeed be sought in another way. Men’s interests to-day must be considerably widened. I will show you how that extension must take place, so that from making response only to the Angeloi, they may rise in their feelings to the Archangeloi.

They must realize that they have passed through terrible experiences all over the

civilized world during the last few years. Many have asked about the "causes" of these events, with mutual imputations of "guilt" and "innocence": yet we need only look below the mere surface of things and we shall have little interest in all this talk about "causes" and "war-guilt" or "innocence," simply because we can see that what has come up to the surface in these last four or five years is, like waves of the sea, always there, but brought up from the depths to the surface by the forces below. An upheaval of human forces had been going on; one people after another shared in the enormous folly of those years; one could but say: "Some turmoil of elemental forces is surging upwards into view. The sea of human life has become unquiet—What is it?"

We shall never get things clear if we do not connect this fact of humanity's unrest with the whole period we call "history." We must convince ourselves that the armed struggle of the last few years is only the beginning of events which will take place in quite other spheres, but which have never before existed among us in this particular form. We are not

at the end of a stage of evolution—only superficial observation could lead to that conclusion—we stand at the beginning of the greatest conflicts, the greatest spiritual conflicts of the civilized world, and we must put forth our best efforts to be equal to them. Increasing opposition is threatened in the soul-attitude of East and West in the near future, for East and West have developed in two quite different directions. If we would see into these things, we must set before ourselves certain phenomena in their deepest, most fundamental form as riddles to be solved.

For decades we have heard repeated in socialist circles holding the Marxian theory, that everything man experiences as art, religion, custom, law or science is just "Ideology" (I have discussed this at greater length in the first chapter of *The Threefold Commonwealth*). This means that a view which had been developing amongst the middle classes for the last three or four hundred years, but which they were too timid to admit, has been frankly acknowledged by the socialists of the last half-century. They assert that the

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genuine reality of social life consists in actual happenings; therefore the *real* lies only in the *economic* forces. All conceptions of art, religion, custom, science, law, morality, merely form a kind of vapour rising from true reality, and are mere ideology, with nothing but a semblance of reality. The socialists conclude that it is only necessary to change economic life and all other changes will ensue, since everything else—morality, law, religion and so forth—is only an unreal vapour arising from the events in the economic sphere, which is the “only reality.”

If, however, the world be considered in no restricted sense but as a great whole, we shall defend this word “ideology” which, but for their timid dislike of facts, the middle classes might have been using for three or four hundred years. They did feel that the economic life was the “only reality” and what displayed itself as science, art or religion was like a vapour; all life was based on this, and it was reserved for their pupils to carry their reasoning to its logical conclusion. Socialists are, after all, only extreme pupils of the middle-class world. This is the view

which, forming in the West, reached its climax in the second half of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Other impulses have formed the Eastern view of the world, and an Oriental would say : “ I look at what is going on in the external world : I see what my senses convey to me, what I use as an instrument for transforming the world around, what shines down on me from the stars, and what I myself am as to my bodily nature—what is it all ? It is Maya ! What then is reality, and not illusion ? Only what is experienced in the human soul—that is reality ! ” One who does not translate in terms of a dictionary, but according to the inner meaning, knows that the words “ Maya ” in the East and “ Ideology ” in the West mean one and the same thing. For thousands of years the Oriental has regarded the outer world which affects the senses—including economics—as Maya. The Westerner, on the other hand, sees his reality in what for the Oriental is “ Maya,” and what arises in his soul is for him “ Ideology.” Both views of the world have developed to a certain point. Talk with the leading men in the



socialist parties especially in those places where the first Revolution (known here as the "November" Revolution) has not yet taken place, and it is evident that this revolution altered their ideas somewhat, but not their feelings. You hear the same views as obtained right up to the war, that it is not necessary to contribute anything from *the will* towards transforming, revolutionizing the world, but that all that will happen *of itself*. Something fatalistic has appeared in the West. People are convinced that they need only wait until the means of production are sufficiently developed, and then by a natural metamorphosis all that is concentrated in private capital will pass over into other forms. Thinking of this sort is as sensible as saying: "This room is full of bad air. I cannot breathe. The window could be opened, but I am not going to open it; I am waiting until the air improves of itself."

Fatalism of the West, Fatalism of the East—we know them well. In the East, though not at the very beginning, men fell into complete fatalism, as the philosophy of Maya developed. Every world-philosophy has, in its

inner law, the impulse towards fatalism at some time, but we stand to-day at a point where we must get rid of fatalism. We must pass from mere observation and contemplation to the exertion of will and intention. We must rouse our wills by developing impulses from the truths I have described regarding birth as a continuation of pre-natal life, remaining young notwithstanding white hair and wrinkles, the playing in of the nightly work of the Angel into daily life. Man needs to acquire impulses for his life of will by widening his sphere of interest, by seeing not only what touches his own personal life but what affects the civilized world in manifold forms. Looking at the West, to which we ourselves belong, we see the inner world as ideology, the outer world as reality : in the East, ideology, maya, in the outer world, reality in the inner world alone. In the interaction of human beings at the present time, we have the task of finding the way of escape from that aspect of these philosophies which has already turned to fatalism. We must look for this way, and we shall only find it if we are in earnest about something which annoys people terribly to-day.

There was a remarkable example of this once, when my hearers were greatly vexed by something I said in a lecture in a South German town, though it was a truth necessary for the present time. The context of my lecture necessitated the remark that the leading classes of the present day have a decadent physical brain. Such statements are unpleasant both to utter and to listen to, but it is necessary that people should realize this fact. The very people to whom the present configuration of our times is due have, in achieving it, acquired a decadent physical brain. It is so, and we are in one sense in the same case as were the people of Europe during the great migrations and the spreading of Christianity. The Christian impulse came over from the East, by way of Greece and Rome. Naturally the Greek and Roman world was far more highly developed than the German. The Germans were barbarians. But the brains of the Greeks and Romans were decadent, therefore the surge of Christianity was not absorbed by them in the same way as it was when it reached the Germans. That is a migration of peoples which went horizontally. To-day it

is "vertical." To-day a wave of spiritual life is coming from the spiritual world. Just as Christianity was at first reflected from the Greeks and Romans, so the spiritual world is reflected from the bourgeoisie to-day, and that is decadent. The proletariat are not so yet ; they are still able to understand what is meant by the spiritual world. But the others will need preparation through anthroposophy, through that part of the brain which is not yet physical, that is the etheric brain. We are at present confronted with the fact that the leading classes are not only menaced with a decadent brain, but with entire decadence, if they do not realize that they must grasp the spiritual view of the world by supersensible means.

The tragedy of the bourgeois system is that it would grasp everything "physically," whereas our task to-day is to grasp things with the etheric brain, to take *spiritual* truths into our being. Modern humanity must steer in this direction, and the West must take the lead. Here we must take into account something very important.

Observe the development of language,

passing from East to West. Take the German language, to-day dreadfully misused. If we look back at the language of Goethe, of Lessing, we can see that not so long ago in the very words, through their peculiar quality, it was possible to express what of spiritual life lay within them. To-day we have dreadfully neglected our language, degraded it into phrases only ; but that it can no longer express spirituality is not due to the language alone. The farther West we go as regards language, the more we find in speech, with its tones and sounds, even with its grammar, a complete rejection of what is really spiritual. From this rejection of the quality of soul and spirit from the Anglo-American idiom follows the mission of the Anglo-American peoples. Their world-mission consists in this : in learning, maybe instinctively, yet still learning (as they listen to other men, in course of acquiring world-dominion), not only to comprehend the sound, but to interpret the gesture of the language, to hear more than the mere physical sound, to hear something which passes from man to man in speech, going beyond the spoken word. That works from etheric body to etheric body.

Here lies the secret of the Western languages, that in them the physical tone loses its significance, while the spiritual gains it. It is part of their task to let the spirit filter into speech, not merely to hear physically, but to hear intuitively more than passes over into the sound. In the West, the spiritual must be sought behind language itself.

If we look at the East, we shall notice an ever-increasing urge among the peoples who, as we have seen, sink themselves into their own inner being, not to be bound by the old forms of conception as to "Karma," "Reincarnation," and so forth, but to look out into the world, and in that outer world to perceive something spiritual, even to establish a sort of Philosophy of Nature.

These are only trivial instances through which we can widen our interests from our own personality and our nationality to take in the whole of humanity, saying to ourselves "Here in the West is Ideology, though quite another Ideology from the Eastern one," and seeing how elemental forces are stirred up within earthly humanity as a result of these antitheses. We learn to take our stand within

the whole civilized world, and when we develop such knowledge of our position within it, at the same time we build in our souls the means of acquiring feelings which lead higher than the sphere of the Angeloi. Our interests will be so much extended that we shall incline to ideas which ascend to the sphere of the Archangeloi, for all that I have been saying about the opposition of Ideology-Maya, etc., works in its primal force in the sphere beyond that of the Angeloi. We can see from this what is really needful for modern humanity. What will the so-called clever people call anyone who speaks of these things—Maya, Ideology and so forth—as having primal forces which function in the sphere of the Archangeloi? Just a fool, quite naturally, since men are so hide-bound by their acquired spiritual outfit that they feel no concern in the wider interests of mankind. That can only be achieved from a spiritual standpoint, by penetrating into everything which works for the great interests of humanity.

I have given you an idea of how to work up into the sphere of the Archangeloi. It is possible to rise still higher, and present-day

humanity must learn that also. Our educated classes have always been taught to look back to Ancient Greece. Young men (and in recent times young women also) have had to go through a certain schooling to absorb Greek culture, and have thus acquired an impulse which was enough to lead them to feel more and more deeply into the Greek world. This has a great significance for our civilization, that in our most important years of development we have learnt what Greece accomplished for the world. The Greeks did otherwise ; it never entered their heads to teach their children the Egyptian tongue : they occupied themselves with immediate reality, for which they possessed a clear sense. We occupy our young people, not with instruction concerning their environment and the impulses of reality, but with those of an olden time. We have no idea what we are really doing. It is not only that we teach our young children (I suppose I should say our " young ladies " and " young gentlemen ") the Greek language : for in a language, in the configuration of its sounds and its grammar, lies also the character of a *whole people*. In absorbing the Greek



language, as is done to-day, man acquires the same soul-attitude in the world as was held in Greece. There all cultural life was such that only a small top-stratum shared in the culture; the rest were slaves. In Greece no occupation was worthy of a free man but science, politics and—even then in a supervisory capacity—agriculture: everything else was a matter for slaves. This is hidden in the language, and when we take Greek culture and language into our own spiritual education, we unite aristocracy with it at the same time. For the Greek it was quite natural to construct his whole social organism in accordance with his intellectual tendency, for in his case that was connected with his blood. There were the ordinary masses: then those people of a higher type, who possessed the higher life of the mind through their blood. This finds expression even in Greek sculpture. Compare the position of nose and ears in the Hermes-type with that of the Zeus- or Athene-type. The Greeks knew perfectly well what they wanted to express when they set the Hermes-type over against the Aryan Zeus-type.

We are permeated with all this more than

we think. When we form our views of the world, we really construct ideas still suited to what in the Greeks came through the blood. Our intellectual, our cultural life is saturated with what we absorb from the Greeks. Hellenism intrudes into our times luciferically. Hellenism, in the period which immediately followed it, was metamorphosed into Romanism. Compared with the Greeks the Romans were dull, prosaic people, but they did develop other aspects of life. They lived out in an abstract fashion what came to the Greeks from the blood. Unlike the Greeks they made even man into an abstraction, a "citizen of the State." A man, in the Roman sense, is not really "man"; he is a citizen of the State—an incomprehensible thing to the Greeks. To be born a human being did not make him a man, but being registered in some kind of State archives. This sometimes appears to-day in grotesque fashion. I once had an old friend, sixty-four years of age; one day he said to me that he had saved such and such a sum—he had always been very poor—and that he wanted to marry the love of his youth. He had become engaged at eighteen, but had

no money to marry, and the couple had vowed to wait until they could. He returned to his birthplace, now that the way was open, but found that the marriage could not take place because his community doubted his existence. Years before, the parsonage, with all the parish registers, had been burned down and there was no one alive who could give evidence as to his identity. My friend assumed that his existence was proved by his presence, but he had no "legal evidence." It is true the marriage did eventually take place, but the difficulties had shown him the much greater importance of a "birth-certificate" than of his own personality.

Men then are "citizens." They are what they are in an abstract connection. This view is essentially Roman, as is everything of this sort which we come across in ordinary life. Our education has been taken in hand by the State, which is already abstract, but will become more so under socialist influence. People are not educated to-day to take their place in the world as free human beings, but to have a professional calling and take their place in that. The State takes young people

in hand, not at once, for then they are too "shapeless," so it leaves them for a time to their parents, then, stretching out its talons, it trains them to be useful to it, taking good care that they are so. It gives them an economic life, gives them everything prescribed, and then pensions them off. It means a great deal when a man can assure himself of a pension as well as an income—something substantial, which binds him to the abstract State and affects the rest of his mental attitude. The Roman attitude has passed into men of other times. Say to a man to-day: "to partake of immortality needs an activity of soul, that thou thyself mayst carry thy soul wide awake through the gates of death"; he will not understand. He has been made wholly unaccustomed to direct his understanding to such a question. Instead of this he is told: "You need only believe in Christ and in what the State does." First he will be looked after by the State, with a pension when he has worked long enough; then the Church goes one bit farther; it offers a pension for his soul after death, so that neither in his lifetime need he do anything for his own soul nor when he

carries it through the gate of death. A man is "registered" nowadays, and the political essence of Rome, already taken into our own being, will increase.

All sorts of dreadful experiences are possible because of this. Helping with the institution of the Waldorf School at Stuttgart, I have had to look at the various School Regulations. Looking back, I must admit that in the 'seventies and 'eighties of last century, the regulations were very small: they included what had to be studied in each class, the aim and the subject matter being given, but in everything else the teacher was left quite free. Nowadays we get an enormous syllabus with "Official," "Ordinance," written on the first page, and specific instructions as to the manner of teaching. So that what should only work on one living personality from out of another, is set down in rules and orders; it has become "official," it is "decreed"! That is the death of mind and spirit, directly traceable from Central Europe to Ancient Rome. This is the second thing we have absorbed—with Romanism, the politico-legal element.

In addition to this, however, there is something which could not be transplanted from the old life into the new—the economic life, which can only be modern. It is possible to chew the cud of Greek knowledge, to allow the Roman political ideas to influence us, but we cannot “eat” what the Greeks and Romans have eaten. Economic life must be modern. We have gradually woven into our economic life the Greek life of intellect and the Roman life of rights, and our task is to disentangle them again. To understand that these three strata brought out of different epochs have, as it were, been joined together and must be separated means to extend one’s interest in *time* (as in the East and West in *space*) down to the present ; that means to make ourselves capable of feelings which can raise us to the Archai ! How few develop an interest for these things, an impartial interest in how the *Zeitgeist* (Time-Spirit) acts by thrusting one period into another. I spoke at Stuttgart on the artificial nature of our classical education. It may have been mere coincidence that a few days after there appeared in the papers great announcements signed by all kinds of Zöpfe

—professors—(I beg their pardon!) to the effect that a classical education should not be undervalued, seeing that it had contributed to the greatness of the German people, so gloriously displayed in the latter days. This, literally, was to be read as the alleged opinion of educationists in April, 1919—after what happened in October, 1918! And to think that this and other things should be possible in our times!

Unless we reach a stage at which we can see things so as to absorb the impulses which work into our physical world out of the spiritual—unless we realize that man, just as he is connected through his bodily organization with the animal, plant, and mineral kingdoms, is also connected in his spiritual organization with the Angeloi, Archangeloi and Archai (Angeloi as the guardians of personal development, Nation Spirits as guardians of development of peoples in space, Spirits of Time as guardians of development throughout the ages)—unless we can understand these things from their spiritual foundations, we can advance no farther. Everything depends on man having courage and force

to-day to look into the spiritual world. We are at the beginning of a hard struggle, in which will be stirred up all the instincts springing from the one half-truth that economic reality is the only reality, that everything belonging to soul and spirit is Ideology ; and from the other half-truth that the only reality is the psychic spiritual, all outside it is Ideology, Maya. These contradictions will let loose in human nature such instincts that the spiritual conflict will blaze for long periods in forms of which people at present have no idea. We must grasp this ; and, further, learn how we are to raise ourselves, in harmony with our time, to a view of the spiritual world as we conceive it. It is this which the times themselves ordain and demand ; to this we must turn our attention.



## LECTURE III

*Berlin. 14th September, 1919.*

I HAVE told you how at the present epoch in the history of human evolution men are confronted with great tests, though for the most part what these tests bring goes on in sub-conscious experience.

Men, as I said, can know, and must know what it means "to pass over the Threshold of the invisible world," when they go through some kind of initiation and enter it consciously ; but something like it—naturally not to-day or to-morrow but in course of a longer period of time—happens with humanity itself, in that it has to experience separation of the hitherto-interwoven forces of thinking, feeling and willing, when they fall apart, just as they become independent in the individual who passes the Threshold of the supersensible world. All this is bound up with significant changes

in the depths of human nature, and it is one of the tasks of our age to make these changes part of our consciousness. The great obstacle to be overcome is the desire for comfort in man to-day, the unwillingness to know what is going on in humanity, the continued living in illusions and, in fact, dreaming about life.

We shall get the best understanding of my subject to-day by calling to mind some of the facts of supersensible life which have long been known to us. Let us recollect how the human ego and astral body leave the physical and etheric bodies as we fall asleep and return to them as we awake. That is a general description, a sort of sketch of the process. We can say in a general way that on waking man returns to his physical and etheric bodies, but then this return takes place in varying degrees. For instance, it can never be said of a little child that the ego and the astral body plunge fully into the physical and etheric bodies and become completely one with them as to activity. There is always something in his astral and ego which does not so unite. Yes, and if we look back into earlier times of human development, to the important dividing

line which occurs in the middle of the fifteenth century, we must admit that, until that definite point, in human life as a whole there existed no complete immersion of the ego and astral body during the conscious waking hours.

The really important feature of our post-Atlantean age is that soul and spirit—the ego and astral body—have only recently been able to plunge entirely into the physical and etheric, and even so, not until after the 27th or 28th year. Conditions will change again with time. This is a significant mystery in the evolution of mankind. What is the meaning of this complete immersion in the physical body? It signifies that by means of it we are able to develop thoughts and unfold ideas of the scientific, materialistic type prevalent since the days of Galileo and Copernicus. For these ideas and this scientific view of the world the physical body is the right instrument. The identification had not been achieved in earlier centuries, therefore there was no scientific thinking which is wholly bound up with the physical body. With this fact is connected everything else I have mentioned

about the activity men must unfold in their spiritual-scientific attitude in order to regain the interest of the Beings of the three higher Hierarchies standing nearest to mankind. We owe it to them that we have the power to plunge completely into the physical body and therewith learn of the dead mineral external world through natural science.

It is man's duty to-day to become aware of these things. At our present stage of culture, without such a consciousness men live in a kind of sleep. That is why events happening around them do not penetrate into their drowsy minds. We simply must let these concrete facts work upon our souls in order to acquire a consciousness of what forces are dominant and active in our particular phase of evolution. In the extended span of time which we may call "the present," much must be made new—above all, the aims of education. I have already spoken of this from our own point of view. We must educate people from childhood onwards so that they can rightly enter into an age marked by this complete plunging into the physical body, educate them to be able to take the complete plunge.

Wherein will consist the success of our efforts towards a renewal of educational methods? In giving man, who is entering a new stage of development, preparation for the experience it brings. Anyone observing life to-day will know that at the present time there are a remarkable number of "broken" natures to be met with, natures unfitted to cope with life. Why are they not equal to it? Because, they cannot look back, as I have described, to the experiences of their education. Certain forces can only be developed in childhood. Once developed, they remain throughout life; we have them, and can cope with it. If we have them not, we lack that power. It is in this sense that we must understand the feeling of responsibility we ought to foster with regard to education.

Further, we must fully realize that the Christ-Impulse entered into humanity in the fourth post-Atlantean epoch, which began in the eighth century B.C. and lasted until the fifteenth century A.D. When about a third of this period had elapsed, there entered into human evolution what gives meaning to the whole Earth-development—the Christ-

Impulse, the Mystery of Golgotha. Man was then in process of developing the Rational or Mind soul, Gemüt-Seele, in which human thought and experience were more instinctive than they are to-day: this development was superseded in the fifteenth century by that of the Consciousness or Spiritual Soul, the period in which we live. The way in which the Event of Golgotha appeared as an impulse in world-history and human evolution was suited, in the first instance, to the instinctive conditions of the fourth post-Atlantean epoch, and was thus understood by the men of that time. It was natural for this instinctive understanding to believe that in the personality of Jesus of Nazareth the Christ Being lived, He Who had descended from cosmic heights in order to unite Himself with that body for earthly activity. Through feeling, everyone could realize that a great, important and super-sensible occurrence had, in the Event of Golgotha, entered human life. With the passage of time the capacities of the Rational Soul became less and less. The understanding of the Event of Golgotha which existed in the

first Christian centuries could not last : it was bound to vanish with the altered soul-constitution of civilized man. In consequence, with the uprising of the Consciousness Soul, the Event of Golgotha itself came to be regarded more materially. We see that the evolution of civilized mankind in the course of the last four or five hundred years so proceeded that the understanding of what really happened on Golgotha—the indwelling of the Christ in Jesus of Nazareth—became fainter and fainter. This great Mystery, perceived instinctively through the first centuries, was less and less understood, more and more materialistically regarded, until in our times it has become possible to take as a sign of progress that men no longer desire to know anything of the supersensible, cosmic Christ, but talk of Jesus of Nazareth simply as a man, an extraordinary man perhaps, but constituted exactly like other men.

Here, too, we stand at a turning-point. A new understanding of Christ must arise. It can only come if sought by the means provided by Spiritual Science, so sought that supersensible means may discover what can only be

accomplished within the supersensible and reveal itself in the sensible. The new understanding of Christ must arise from such depths in human nature that, confronted with these depths, differences of creeds, hitherto dominant amongst civilized mankind, will be as wreaths of vapour. These differences lie in a part of the soul more on the surface than that which to-day, out of the depths of Spiritual Science, must lead to a new understanding of Christ Jesus. Nor will understanding be complete, really satisfying the needs of man's soul to-day, unless it can bridge the differences among men imposed on humanity by the various creeds. Something there is as a hope from this new Christ-Impulse, something we must all long for if we are serious and worthy in our wishes for humanity, something which is actually being sought in other spheres though very unintelligently.

Nowadays men talk of the so-called "League of Nations" and hope for something from it. It is remarkable how they long to understand reality by means of abstractions. Whence is to come the impulse, working



through the peoples, which can evoke a unity such as this " League of Nations " is supposed to represent ? Look at everything which has been produced in the way of spiritual impulses towards its establishment—nothing but a few abstractions. Yet men sleep through such things—how soundly, we may see from a fact like the following :

Woodrow Wilson, discoverer or at least rediscoverer of the League, announced at a time when America was not taking part in world-events as she does now, that the League could only be properly established if as a result of the catastrophe of the war there were no " victors " and no " vanquished." That was an essential condition. Taken as earnest, that makes it impossible to take seriously what is said about the League now ; the two cannot be reconciled, but that is not noticed. Here is a thing which militates against a healthy development of mankind ; men are willing to accept the most impossible contradictions if only an interval of time separates them. It is as though present-day man in no way partakes with his soul in what is really happening.

The League is a nonentity, for what has to be established in humanity must well up from the depths of man's being to the surface. New comprehension of the Christ-Impulse alone can develop what is needed to-day in the whole civilized world, from human impulses suited to the times, on a basis which will not rest on the differences between peoples. The civilized nations, torn asunder by hatred and misunderstanding, can only be united by the Christ-Impulse, as presented by Spiritual Science. This fact must sink deeply, deeply as a conviction into the soul. All else, which does not lead in this direction, is only hindering the evolution of mankind. The needs of human evolution must be dealt with from its depths, not by any trivial speech. The Earth acquired its own meaning in relation to that evolution through the Event of Golgotha, and now the time has come when this meaning must be grasped in a different way. Until men realize the duty of this understanding there will be no remedy for the wounds of our times. What is designed can no longer be brought to fruition by nations side by side, but by nations as one. It is impossible to establish a League of

Nations by outside political arrangement. These things must come from within, arising from the deepest impulse, the Christ-Impulse in man.

Anthroposophical Spiritual Science has the duty of pointing out what each man, merely as a personal individual being, can awaken in himself—but which simply must be awakened. Directly we touch on these things, the seriousness of our times strikes us with full force. It is tragic to see how little it is felt, how men avoid approaching the great knowledge or recognition that must be definitely incorporated in human consciousness. The epoch through which we have passed has led us away from that inner urge which could bring us to the knowledge necessary to-day. Suppose you asked a natural scientist of the day, what the evolution of the Earth would be if man had taken no part in it. Thinking logically on the basis of his hypotheses and opinions, he could but reply that even if man were absent, the Earth would develop without him, bring forth its minerals, plants and animals : things would go on more or less as they do now, except that man would

not be there, and no cities or houses would be built. Therefore, from the standpoint of natural science, we should have to say that the Earth would have developed without man, just as it has done with him.

Yet this is a complete error. If you put together the various things to be found in our twenty years of lecturing, you will feel what I am saying as a self-evident fact, but attention must be drawn to it. The physical body of man is permeated during his existence between birth and death by the soul ; and in this present epoch it is so interwoven in a particular way : the ego and astral body plunge completely into the physical. Again, when either by cremation or burial, we give over the corpse of the physical body to the earth, it means to present-day science no more than that the body has consisted of various substances which at death are added to the earth and go their way according to the various principles established by organic and, more especially, by inorganic chemistry. But that is all pure nonsense. It is emphatically not without significance, that from birth to death this human body is inhabited by a human soul-

spirit being. We give the corpse over to the earth in a form and condition which it has only acquired from this fact—the indwelling from birth to death of a being, man's soul and spirit, which before birth (or conception) lived in the spiritual world. The Earth in its evolution would long ago have fallen into decay and desolation if it had not received as a ferment—whether through burial or fire—the human bodies which have been the dwellings of souls, though now deserted by them. In olden days when bread was baked (nowadays the thing is more artificial) a little of the dough was kept back, to be added as yeast at the next baking : that was a necessary part of the process. In the same way the Earth would not be able to develop unless it received human bodies (not the animal body !) as a sort of ferment. By their means the Earth, which would otherwise long ago have turned to dust, is enabled to bring to completion what lies within its evolution. Man does have a share, and especially just now, in the whole evolution of the Earth, and even what we relinquish to the Earth at our death is important for it.

The other thing which happens to man,

especially at this epoch of his evolution, is that when he passes a certain age of maturity, 27 to 28, he is in his waking life, as regards his physical body, in a relationship which works in a particular way on the spiritual, super-earthly world. This is a remarkable polarity in man's evolution. If he passes through the gate of death and leaves his body behind him, he releases something from the body which serves the Earth as a ferment in its development, whereas if he lives through the period from 28 to 35 on Earth, he gives the spiritual world something which it needs. (Things are somewhat modified in the case of people who die before 28—to consider this to-day would take us too far.) What we give to the spiritual world is the most important thing that we come upon again when in the spiritual world we live our life backwards. We really do give something to the super-earthly world, just as we relinquish our body to the earthly world at death.

This is one of the secrets bound up with evolution, and nowadays it is essential that men should absorb them into their consciousness. These are certainly not sensational bits

of knowledge—much more than that. To take them seriously and experience them in the soul with full import brings an unusual earnestness of outlook on life, a deepened seriousness which is necessary to-day. The external understanding of what is included in our idea of the Threefold Commonwealth can and must be given to the outer, exoteric world, but the real, fundamental understanding which will lead to conscious co-operation in social evolution must begin with the seriousness based on the view of life gained through anthroposophical spiritual science. Otherwise we do not understand things deeply enough. All that is connected with the Threefold Commonwealth must be proclaimed in the external world. In our movement we should awaken the needful enthusiasm and fire, so that the necessary understanding may be given to others through the personal conviction of those who can attain the right comprehension from the standpoint of spiritual science. The ordinary superficial knowledge possessed by people in the external world, of the kind which leads, for instance, to the belief that the Earth could evolve even if man were

not concerned in it, cannot produce the necessary understanding for our time. So it is that as we pass through our cities our heart bleeds when we realize the complete lack of contact with what is really going on in the evolution of humanity.

The immediate culmination, led up to by all these facts, was what we called the World War, that whirlpool into which were poured all the results of the superficial views which had begun to gather force. To-day it is man's duty to reach the triple deepening of which I spoke in the last lecture, concerning the beings of the three Hierarchies next above us. We must learn to see that we live and move among such a complex of facts. Humanity, and we as part of it, must go through the epoch in which the ego and astral body plunge their deepest into the physical and etheric bodies and are exposed to the strongest temptations, which have their origin in the fact that as human beings we are so closely united with the physical. There are two forms in which this temptation can arise; one I would call the "Western," the other the "Eastern." We carry the Western form with peculiar strength



in our own nature, but we see it more and more definitely the further West we turn our gaze. It lies in the fact that, as we plunge more and more deeply into the physical body, we come into inner connection with the earth forces with which it is associated. Our physical body is connected with these forces, and is only released from them when we consciously overcome the force of gravity and all the kindred forces which bind it to the Earth. People do not really know how, through their organization, they overcome the forces which are active in them. I once mentioned an illustration of this in the human brain, which is so heavy that if it exerted its full weight it would crush the blood-vessels immediately below it : there is, however, a remarkable arrangement in the human organization whereby the brain floats in the cerebral fluid. Now according to the principle of Archimedes, a body floating in water loses as much weight as that of the water it displaces ; therefore the pressure on the blood-vessels is reduced, because the brain floats in the brain water and the weight of the brain is overcome. Thus we overcome much.

The same thing may be noticed in other

parts of the body. Forces which are but little noticed show, even in the physical frame, what a cosmic wonder exists in the organization of man. We are necessarily connected with the forces of the earth, but we must not come into immediate contact with them. The temptation to make too close a connection with these forces is to be found in the Western world, in all the Western attitude towards life. This temptation is an Ahrimanic one. We can only combat it by gradually so deepening our knowledge as to become able to survey humanity's historical development and understand the Event of Golgotha as a real fact in the centre of it—just as we comprehend the position of Cæsar Augustus or Socrates in history. For the Western world the only safeguard against this temptation and its consequences is to take the Christ into its scientific, exact view of things, that He should penetrate the entire Western view of the world. The Eastern view is exactly the opposite. The Oriental remains, in a sense, at the level of childhood, not allowing his astral body and ego to plunge down into the physical and etheric bodies although at the present

epoch it is fore-ordained that humanity should do so. The Oriental shuns this immersion. It is interesting to see the most important features of the day from this point of view. A number of Rabindranath Tagore's beautiful speeches have been translated. Read them and you will find in them an atmosphere quite different from anything spoken by a Westerner. An entirely different spirit speaks. Just as the perspective in an Eastern drawing or painting differs from a Western one, so the entire soul-mood of Rabindranath Tagore differs from that of a European or an American. This is due to the fact that even the educated Easterner of to-day, if rooted in Eastern culture, shuns the connection with the physical body. In this case the temptation is Luciferic—not to make proper use of the physical body, but to leave it unused. While the American strives to use the body to excess, the Oriental strives to make as little use of it as possible.

In this sense we must come to understand race-psychology. In the same sense, too, we ought for decades to have perceived the relation between the Eastern and Western

peoples of Europe if the World War was to be avoided. It was not for nothing, but of purpose, that in 1910 I lectured in Christiania on the Folk-spirits. If you read those lectures you will find many indications of what has happened in the catastrophe of the last five years. The great thing in all these things is to prepare, earnestly and fully, not to shun reality, but to comprehend it in such a way that men can take their place in the development of the world, not selfishly subsisting alone, or bounded by their own immediate interests. We cannot fulfil our task to-day unless we develop the good will to take part in the whole development of humanity—at least in our consciousness. None of this is intended as a criticism of the past, for I have often said that such criticism is useless from the point of view of spiritual science. What matters is that we should act and think differently in the future from the past and be prepared to transfer into the future what we have gained from spiritual knowledge.

I have shown you during these few days how man should regard his entire life between birth and death. At birth we take over the forces

of the supersensible world from our supersensible existence into the physical sense-world. These forces continue their effect—a fact which is very hard for men of to-day to understand. How do they work? They work in all that man develops as *spiritual* life in this world. There would be no possibility of poets being born among us, of philosophy or science, or of impulses towards the education of men—in fact, no possibility of developing any spiritual life at all, if we did not carry with us through birth those impulses which come from our pre-natal life. All that belongs to our spiritual life is of pre-natal origin. On the other hand, what we ourselves develop within the economic life, through our will-impulses, brotherliness, love for humanity, thought and work for others, rather than for ourselves, what in a sense we do “on our own” because we are part of the economic life, all that provides the most important impulses for what we carry over into the spiritual world. Just as we carry with us out of that world the forces which above all build our spiritual life here, so we take the forces developed in the economic life by human love and brotherliness back into

the spiritual world at death. There they accompany us and are our most important impulses. Looking at what emerges in a child's life from year to year, we see the inheritance of what is given from the spiritual world to enable man to unfold all that is spiritual on earth; and looking, in the economic life, at the results of our will to work for others, there presents itself the fruit we carry through the gate of death into the spiritual world. To the view of one who can see the spiritual world, these are the two opposite poles of development. In my book *Theosophy*, in the account of the soul-land and spirit-land, you will find this expressed in ideas which spring entirely from a living view of these conditions. We build up our own spiritual life with forces derived before birth or conception; the economic life we develop so that we can convey the forces belonging to it into the spiritual world; but the State, what constitutes the sphere of "rights" is the opposite of the impulses existing between death and a new birth; what is developed here on earth and belongs to the earth only is the life of politics, law, the State.

That has no relation to the spiritual world.

We simplify matters by interpreting things of this kind as we find convenient. There are plenty of people who apply to the present day (perhaps with the idea of showing a little monarchical tendency in these republican times) the Biblical saying, "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's and unto God the things that are God's"—but it is a misapplication. The saying cannot be understood apart from the circumstances belonging to it. In those days the Roman Cæsar was held to be "God" and demanded divine honours. Caligula enacted such worship for the statues of the Greek Gods which he transported to Rome, beheaded, and adorned with his own head in exchange, as he deemed fit and proper. (The Zeus statue alone escaped this fate.) Even at the time when Jesus of Nazareth spoke them, these words meant "render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and reserve something for the God Whom you must seek in another being than Cæsar." In many passages of the Gospels it is necessary in our time that they are correctly

interpreted, and not as they usually are ; so that we may be able thereby to struggle nearer to the conception of reality needed by our times.

During these few days it has been my task to show you, from various points of view, that the problem confronting mankind to-day is how to conduct this struggle, how to reach this view of reality, which can only be attained by grasping spiritual reality as something concrete, as concrete as sense-reality. Nothing does so much harm in the present day as shutting our eyes to reality. Men have gone on long enough with the policy of ignoring the truth, shutting their eyes to it. Anthroposophical spiritual science aims in seriousness at opening eyes to reality. To-day they are all but closed. Man's defective sense of reality is witnessed by the amazing things that are given out. I am obliged to draw attention to such things because they throw light on our times. A number of people, closely associated with the events which have brought such misery over Mid-Europe (misery not at its end, but only just beginning) have only disclosed their real countenances when the awful events of



the summer, and particularly the autumn, of 1918, occurred. It was then that many men showed themselves in their true colours. They had arrived at remarkable positions, remarkable because so very different from their earlier ones. I have known people who look with a sort of pity at personalities bearing such responsibility and yet never ask whether millions in the world are not worse off, in body and soul, than these responsible men who now hold a position so different from their former one. In these things it is important to have our eyes open and to have a sense of reality in our knowledge of the present. It is perverse fantasy to cling to our own pet ideas because they please us, without listening to the voice of truth. It is not pleasant to speak the truth about these things, but when we see with bitterness of soul how these things have developed, how perverted fantasy appears where one hoped for practical help for life ; how this fantasy asserted itself with shattering force while those who faced reality were called Utopian idealists, we are compelled to speak. No pity should prevent us, now that things are clear and we have their own confessions, from

speaking our mind about such fanatics, in this tormented Central Europe, who have never deigned to see reality as it is but wish to mould it according to their own comfortable ideas. In this sphere, also, reality must be seen in the true light, for it is no small reckoning we have to make. All the miserable endeavours to justify themselves before the world are the strongest accusations against them. There will be no healing, no peace, until the necessity for earnestness is realized and for a serious recognition of reality. I did not come here to say these things from any desire to be clever: rather, as being associated with a serious spiritual movement, I feel it a duty—a necessity—to speak. We have seen (but could not talk of what we saw, for our lips were sealed) that men of absolute incompetence were called to positions of authority—standing like shadows beside the great truths destined to stream through mankind. I know many people still feel offended when told the truth, but this shutting of the eyes to facts must have an end; it is only by looking honestly at these things that the force can arise which is needed for human progress.

We need such a force. We must grasp something essentially different from the mental outfit of the men to whom we owe our present position. We must have the courage to lay hold of something new.

It is with a view to preparing this new outlook, even in outer reality, that I have spoken here and in other gatherings of the Anthroposophical Movement, not to give a kind of superior Sunday-evening sermon, but to emphasize the gravity of the times. He alone is an Anthroposophist, in the real sense of the word, who is gripped by the central purpose of his time and *wills the truth*, rejecting the lies which have entangled us so terribly in the conditions of to-day. I could wish that the few words in which I have given an outline of what is necessary might penetrate your hearts—it is not your minds only that I would reach, for it is from hearts that must arise the deep understanding so necessary for the times. We have to discover the impulse which will set humanity upright again, and to do that we must first of all learn how thoroughly we are ensnared by mere phrases and by untruth in all directions. From the spirit the truth will

come. Wisdom lies in truth and truth alone—that should be graven deeply into our souls.

I have said a little about what is characteristic of our epoch of evolution from a spiritual standpoint. I have laid these matters before you because I believe that through them the most essential need of the present can be brought near to the human heart—the mood of soul from which that earnestness comes which is necessary in order to live in the service of humanity to-day. My aim this time has been to arouse such earnestness.



## LECTURE IV

THE MAIN FEATURES OF THE SOCIAL QUESTION  
AND THE THREEFOLD ORDER OF THE SOCIAL  
ORGANISM

*Open Lecture by Rudolf Steiner*



## LECTURE IV

*Berlin. 15th September, 1919.*

It is beyond doubt that the War and all its terrible accompaniments have given the social question a new aspect for men to-day. True, this change is not recognized by a sufficient number of people in the way one could wish ; but it is there and will become more and more significant.

The members of the classes hitherto accustomed to lead and rule will find themselves compelled by force of circumstances, in dealing with the social question, to abandon limited ideas and measures which deal with it piecemeal. They will be forced to turn their thoughts and direct their will to the social problem as the most important in the life of mankind, both to-day and in the immediate future. While they will only understand their times by adopting a wholly new conception of



their problem in all their thinking, feeling and willing, on the other hand it will be necessary for the masses, the proletariat, to achieve an essentially different attitude to it.

For more than fifty years the mass of the people have been acquiring social and socialist ideas. Unless we have gone through the last ten years with our eyes shut we must have noticed what changes have come about inside the ranks of the proletariat with regard to the social question. We saw what form it took at the moment of the outbreak of the appalling catastrophe we know as the World War. Then came the end of that fearful disaster. The proletariat found itself in a new position, no longer confined by a social order dominated, at least in Central and Eastern Europe, by the old ruling powers. It was itself called upon, to a considerable extent, to set its hand to building a new form of social organization. And just in face of this fact, wholly new in history, we experienced something extraordinarily tragic.

The ideas to which for years the proletariat had devoted itself with its heart's blood proved inadequate when realization became possible,

and at this point occurred a great historical opposition, even a conflict. The facts of world-history taking place about us might have become the great instructors of mankind. They showed that the hitherto ruling classes had, during the last three or four hundred years, developed no ideas which can, or could, be any guide for all that was forcing its way out in the economic and other social facts of human experience. The remarkable thing was that those who had power to act in the world of affairs had arrived at the state of letting them take their own course. Their thoughts and ideas had become so restricted that they could not stretch them to include the facts, which had grown above their heads, out of reach. This had been evident for some time, especially in the economic life, in which protection and similar ideas had been superseded by competition for a free market as the only motive for regulation; in which ideas were active, not moulding the economic life solely with regard to production, distribution and consumption of goods, but unfailingly leading to continual crises owing to the hazard of the "free market." He who will is able to see that

since the social impetus of these ungovernable facts had spread over the great imperial states, the affairs of these states had acquired their movement, susceptible to control neither by thought nor by any efforts towards adjustment.

Man should consider such things to-day, should be able to keep before his spiritual eye to-day's necessity of looking more deeply into human activities and of grasping such a thing as the " Social Question " with more intensity of purpose than is customary. It is, after all, obvious that ideas have become inadequate for the developing facts, yet men will not see it. Three or four hundred years of routine in business and public affairs have accustomed them to account it practical life and to regard anyone who sees a little further and can judge of things through longer vision, as Utopian or unpractical. I give you an illustration of this ; for to-day, when the destiny of the individual is so closely bound up with the destiny of mankind, only examples drawn from personal experience and honestly meant can be sufficient illustration of the impulse and motives to be found in public life—therefore I

may be pardoned if I give you one of my own. It is not intended in a personal sense. In the spring of 1914, in a series of lectures I gave in Vienna on spiritual-scientific subjects, I was forced, months before the outbreak of the so-called World War, in the presence of a small audience (a bigger one might have laughed me to scorn) to sum up what seemed to me the view we ought to hold about the social development of the present conditions. I then said that for anyone looking with open eyes at what was going on in the public life of the civilized world, it appeared as infected by a social tumour, a malignant social illness or cancer ; and this illness within our economic and social life must express itself in a terrific disaster.

Now how was one regarded who, in the early spring of 1914, spoke of an imminent catastrophe, from his observation of events going on under the surface? He was "an unpractical idealist," not to say a fool. What I was then obliged to say was a great contrast to what at that time, and indeed even later, the so-called practical men were giving out—those men who were not practical at all, only revolutionists

who scorned anyone who tried to comprehend the history of the time from some knowledge of its underlying idea. What did these "practical" men say? One such person, a Foreign Minister of one of the Central European States, announced to the enlightened representatives of the people that the general relaxation of tension in the political situation was making pleasing progress, so that they could be assured of peaceful conditions in Europe in the near future. He added that the relations with St. Petersburg were the most friendly possible. Thanks to the Government's efforts the Russian Cabinet took no heed of the publications of the Press, and our relations with St. Petersburg would continue friendly, as before. Negotiations with England were expected to be concluded in the near future on such a basis as to produce the best possible relationships. What a difference between "practical outlook" and "gloomy theory"!

Many more examples might be given to illustrate the view of, or rather the insight into, the facts at the beginning of the period which held such terrible things for humanity. It

is very instructive to let the facts speak : these practical men spoke of peace and the next months brought a peace in which the civilized world occupied itself for several years in killing, at a low estimate, ten to twelve million men and crippling three times as many. I am not saying this to re-new a sensation : it must be mentioned because we can see by this how inadequate men's thoughts have become, that they are no longer far-reaching enough to master facts. We shall only see these events in the right light when we recognize in facts the strongest indication that for the healing of our social conditions what we need is not a small change in this or that arrangement, but a vast alteration in thinking and learning : not a trivial but a tremendous settling up with the old which is too foul and decayed to be allowed to mingle with what the future may bring.

We might say the same thing about the life of rights or the economic life in detail as about the wider institutions of mankind. Everywhere men's words betray that their thoughts are inadequate to master facts. We may say that the former leading and dominant class has

the practical experience but lacks the effective ideas necessary to the practice of life. Opposed to these circles stands the great mass of the proletariat which has educated itself in a rigorous school of Marxian thought for half a century. It is not enough to-day merely to look round on the proletariat to find out how they are thinking. It is comparatively extraordinarily easy to refute logically what the masses and their leaders think about economic institutions. That does not much matter : what does matter is the historical fact that in their heart and soul lies a sort of precipitate, formed out of the intensely active thoughts which have been converted into a "proletarian theory." This theory, which might, after the break-down of the old order have proved itself much more effective than it has in actual practice, shows a peculiarity which is quite comprehensible. For as a result of the way in which the social evolution of mankind has moved under the influence of the capitalist order and modern technical science during the last three to four hundred years—especially during the nineteenth century—the masses have been more and more closely confined within the

economic system, so confined that each man was restricted to one small, limited piece of work. This strictly limited piece of work was fundamentally all he saw of the reality of the increasingly extending economic life.

What wonder that the workman experienced, in the effect on body and soul, that under the influence of technical science and private capital, developed by the new life of economics, he could not see the mainsprings which moved it. He might be the " worker " in this life, but his social position prevented him from looking rightly into its ordering, into the way in which it was controlled. It is quite comprehensible that as a result of such facts something grew up of which the fruits are before us ; certain subconscious impulses and demands of the masses became a far-reaching socialist theory, really fundamentally alien to economic and other social facts, since the proletariat could gain no insight into the actual driving forces behind the facts and simply had to accept the one-sided ideas derived from Marx. So we find that in the course of years, various things have eaten into the feelings of the masses which may in reality be



ever so deeply justified but which, all the same, miss the facts. I should like to give as an example the enormous effect of one slogan, amongst others poured out over the proletariat by its leaders. "In future no production for the sake of producing—production only for consumption." Certainly a remark to the purpose, with the merit (rare in slogans) of being absolutely true ; but becoming an unreal abstraction, elusive, when carried to its logical conclusion with practical sense and real insight into economic conditions. The chief thing in practice is "how things are made"—there is no meaning in the clamour "produce only for consumption" from a practical point of view. It calls up in the soul the idea of how beautiful the economic life could be if profit were ignored and consumption only were of consequence ! But there is no indication whatever in this phrase as to how the structure of the economic life could be arranged so as to give effect to what is expressed in these words. Many other catchwords (of which we shall touch on some) have the same defect. They often have their origin in deep truths yet, when adopted as party slogans of the pro-

letariat, have become abstractions, just Utopian pointers to an indefinite future. If we would be honest with the proletariat, we must say that this unfortunate proletariat which is raising its just claims lives as in a cloud of views which are theory, it is true, but remote from the facts of life, because they have no contact with the facts and are placed in an isolation from whence they can survey only a single corner of life.

That is the conflict to which I would draw your attention—on the one side the attitude of the ruling classes who have power over the facts, but no idea how to use it to control them; on the other, the proletariat with its acquired, abstract ideas which have no correspondence with the facts.

If we try to describe the genesis of all this in a few words, taking note of active forces and impulses, more essentially important than anything that has occurred hitherto in the course of human history, we can only rightly estimate expressions like “ the lack of ideas in the practice of our leaders ” and “ the unpractical theory of the proletariat ” if we have a feeling of the torrent pouring in the present-

day development of humanity with such vigour and mutually destructive force. The existence of such a contrast between the attitude of soul of the dominant classes and that of the proletariat leads, and has led, to a deep cleavage between the thinking, feeling, willing and actions of the former and all the longings, wishes and impulses of the latter. We do not even understand adequately what is the demand of our age, of which we hear the first faint tone from the proletariat. We may understand the form of the words when they mention the theory of surplus-value, *i.e.*, the theory that we should produce only for consumption, or that of transformation of private ownership into common property ; but what are they in reality as expression of their wishes and ideas ? Can they be regarded merely as a subject for logical criticism by the leaders of the well-to-do ? It is hard to find a more naïve response than that of a director of some company who hears the "surplus value" theory from his work-people and answers that the surplus, made up of banknotes, etc., is so small that, divided among them, there would be no share for each worth having. I repeat,

it is hopelessly naïve to deal in this way with the theory of "surplus value." The "calculation" of the directors is obvious and incontrovertible, but that is not the real point. To try to refute what are the actual words of the proletarian theory is just like having a thermometer in a room to indicate the temperature and applying a flame to the tube because it registers too low a temperature to please us. By this temporary expedient of tampering with the thermometer we do not occupy ourselves with the root-cause of the trouble. To take proletarian theory to-day and try to refute it is simple-minded, for such theories are nothing really but—to use a classroom-word—"indices" of something lying much deeper. Just as a thermometer indicates the temperature of a room, but does not produce it, so proletarian theories are a sort of instrument by which we can recognize the forces active in the social question from this aspect, now and in the immediate future. In this we are much too easy-going. The question has been regarded as purely economic because it first meets us in the economic sphere, based on the demands of the proletariat, hitherto

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entangled in economic life during the epoch of private capitalism and technical science : we have not seen lying behind the theories all that is betokened by them concerning capital, labour and goods. The workman experiences the whole sphere of human life in the economic field ; therefore the social question appears to him entirely in an economic perspective.

Anybody who has the opportunity to acquire wider views is bound to see how clearly three spheres of life are to be distinguished, in which three fundamental aspects of the social question present themselves. To have learnt through his life's destiny not only to think *about* the masses or have feelings concerning them, but to think and feel *with* them, will have taught him to observe what is seething in the soul-depths of their best members, even in the phrases which run through all socialist theories as their keywords. What are these ?

First we have the phrase "surplus value," of which I have already spoken. Association as man to man with the proletariat is enough to show how deeply this phrase has sunk into their hearts. It is this sinking-in that matters,

not the verification of any theory. Anyone who, like myself, has worked in Berlin at the Workers' School founded by Wilhelm Liebknecht, while decisive events were taking place within the social movements of the new era, will know more about this question than I have touched upon, through practical life, than perhaps some captain of industry does, especially if the latter should be—how shall I phrase it inoffensively—a revolution-profiteer, a superficial chatterer about revolution, even as we had war-profiteers. “Surplus value” was generally taken to mean something of this sort: the proletariat works productively and produces goods of some kind: the capitalist puts them on the market and gives the worker just sufficient wage to keep him alive, in order that he may continue to produce. Anything over and above this is “surplus value.” As Walter Rathenau says—although in social questions he falls into great errors—it is true that this surplus value, divided, would not improve the condition of the masses at all; but through processes of calculation which float in space we do not arrive at the facts; we must deal with this surplus value correctly as to

its social significance. Can it have as little, real existence as Rathenau, for instance, "accurately" reckons? In that case there would be in Berlin no theatres, no high schools, no public school, nothing of what we call cultural life, the life dealing with the human spirit; since that, for the most part, is really contained in the "surplus value." It does not really matter how this value is forced to the surface as "goods" or "cash in circulation": it is in this catchword itself that we find expressed the whole relation of our modern cultural life to the wide masses of the people who cannot directly participate in it.

Anyone who has taught for years amongst the workers and has taken the trouble to teach directly out of our common human feelings, speaking as man to man, will know what a spiritual education must be like if it is to be universally human and, further, how the form of education will differ from our present one, which has grown up during the last three or four hundred years under the influence of an economic order based on private capital and technical organization. If I may once again speak personally, to illustrate the general fact

—I was well aware when I spoke to the workers, in lecturing or teaching, that in their souls kindred strings were sounding and that they were receiving a knowledge which they could absorb. But a time came when the proletariat had to follow the fashion and share in “education”—that education which was, from a spiritual point of view, the outcome of the dominant culture. They had to be taken to the museums and shown what had developed out of the experience of the ruling middle classes. Then if men were honest they must have known (if not, they invented all sorts of phrases about “popular education” and the like) that there was no bridge between the spiritual culture and education of the ruling classes and the spiritual needs and longings of the proletariat. Art, science, religion can only be understood if they issue from circles with which one has some common social ground, so that one can share their social feelings and attitude: not where there is an abyss between those who are supposed to enjoy culture, and those who *can* actually enjoy it. Here there was a vast cultural lie, and nowadays no benevolent mask must be



spread over these things, but they must be brought into clear daylight. The lie consisted in setting up "People's High Schools" or "Educational Schools" in which an education was to be shared by the masses without any possible bridge over which it could pass to them. The proletariat stood on one side of the abyss, looked over it at the art, science, religion, ethics, which had been produced by the leading classes, did not understand them, and took them to be something which only concerned those classes, a sort of luxury. There they saw the practical application of the "surplus value" which they had talked about, but they actually felt quite different from what was spoken in this "thermometer" language about surplus value. They felt: here is a spiritual life created by what we produce, by our labour, from which, however, we are excluded!

This is the way in which we must approach the question of the surplus-value, not theoretically, but as it really and vitally exists in life. Then, too, we can see the essential problem of the social question taken as a whole—its spiritual side. We can see that, side by

side with the rise of the new technical science and new capitalist economics, arose an intellectual life only capable of living within the souls of men who were divided by a deep gulf from the great masses to whose education they gave inadequate attention and from which they held aloof. The tragedy of it! The ruling classes discuss these problems in well-warmed, mirrored rooms, speaking of their brotherly love for all men, our duty to love all men, or of the Christian virtues, while a fire warms them which is fed with coals from the mines into which children of nine, eleven, thirteen years of age are sent down. In the middle of the nineteenth century this was literally so (things have improved since then, not through any merit of the ruling classes but through the demands of the proletariat); these children went down before sunrise and only came up again after sunset, so that they actually never saw the sun the whole week through.

We are assumed to be agitating nowadays if we talk like this. Not at all! We have to say these things to show how the cultural life of the last few hundred years is separated from

the real life of men. People have talked in abstractions about morality, virtue, religion, while their real practical life was in no way touched by the talk of brotherliness, love of one's neighbour, Christianity and so forth. Here, then, confronts us, as a distinct aspect of the social question, the spiritual problem. We stand before the whole sweep of the spiritual life especially as it relates to men of the present age and the immediate future in the realm of teaching and education. As a result of the way in which the territories of dukes or princes have been formed into single state-economics, the intellectual life in its wider form has been absorbed by the State organization. It is to-day a source of pride that education has torn itself away, as regards science, as regards intellectual life generally, from its mediæval association with religion and theology. Proudly it is asserted and repeated: "In the Middle Ages the intellectual and scientific life were in leading-strings to religion and theology." Of course we do not want to have these times back; we must move forward, not backward. We are living in different times: we must not simply point

in pride to the way in which intellectual life was train-bearer to the Church in the Middle Ages. Something different is demanded. Let us take an example not so very far away.

A very distinguished scientist, for whom I have great respect (I do not mention these things in order to disparage people)—the Secretary of the Berlin Academy of Sciences—was speaking of the relation of this Academy to the State. He said, in a well-considered speech, that the members of this Academy regarded it as one of their highest distinctions to be “the scientific bodyguard of the Hohenzollerns.” That is only *one* example of what might be repeated a thousandfold, bringing to our lips the question: “What nowadays has taken the place of the Church which formerly used intellectual life as its train-bearer?” Nor were things so bad in the recent past as they must become, if such State regulations were to be made as would favour the growth of that appalling State-regulation of teaching which has arisen in Eastern Europe and which has conclusively proved that it would bring about the death of all culture. We must look not only into the past, but above all into the

future and assert that the time has come when intellectual and spiritual life must exist as a *self-dependent* part of the social organism and must be under its *own control*.

When a thing like this is mentioned, we are met by all sorts of prejudices, and we are reckoned mad if we cannot appreciate the enormous blessings to be found in State-control of education. But healthy conditions will never be found until education and everything connected with instruction, including the teachers from the lowest form to the highest grade in the public schools, passes from the control of the State into its own control. That is one of the great objectives we must specially aim at to-day.

The men who first showed me any friendliness when it came actually to fitting the idea of the threefold organization into the present age are those to whom we owe the first really free "Einheitsschule" in Stuttgart. In connection with the Waldorf-Astoria Factory, we are establishing the first model "Einheitsschule," based on the science of pedagogy and teaching which has its origin in the true and real knowledge of the growing human being.

Social class and rank make no real difference to him between the seventh and fifteenth years—all human beings are at the same stage. But to be able to teach and educate him means learning first to understand him. As it fell to me to give the preliminary course to the teachers working at the school, there came under my notice certain things which are nowadays taken as a matter of course. The serious significance of such an acceptance is not realized. It has only developed fully in the last decades. Since these things are the subject of practical life-work and must form its experience, I may remark, on such an occasion as this, that my comments on them arise from no irresponsible youthful mind, I speak as one who has already reached the sixties. I can remember how in days gone by the syllabus was short : the subject of teaching was presented by means of lectures, books and the experiences of men who had living ideas of education, who were creative spiritually. But to-day we have no short syllabus ; instead, we have thick books which not only direct us to take one subject in one year, another in another, but tell us *how* to teach it. What

should be the subject of free instruction is to be—indeed is—a matter of regulations. Unless we have a clear, adequate feeling of how unsocial all this is, we shall not be ready to collaborate in the real healing of mankind. Therefore, in the establishment of a spiritual, intellectual life which is free and independent of the State lies the first, central problem of the social question. This is the first of the three self-dependent members of the threefold organism which we have to set up. If we represent these facts, pointing out how healthy it may be to have no authority within the spiritual part of the social organism save that of those who take some active part in it, then the teaching of the future will be seen to have little kinship with that of the present-day unitary State. The whole of life will resemble a model republic. Teaching will be created out of the spirit, to satisfy the demands of education, not given according to the claims of regulations. We shall not merely enquire what standard shall be set in the socialized State for a pupil of thirteen or seventeen, but what lies deeply in man himself, which we can draw out of him in such a way that when these forces, liberated

from the depths of his being, are at his disposal, he will not be weak-willed or crushed, as so many men are to-day, but will be equal to his destiny and able to direct his forces with determination to the tasks of his life. This points us to the first member of the threefold social order.

To give utterance to such thoughts as these brings questions, objections, like the one I had to meet in a South German city. I was answered in the discussion at the end of a lecture by a secondary school teacher, somewhat in this wise: " We Germans shall be a poor nation in the future, and here is a man who wants to make the spiritual and intellectual life independent: a poor people cannot pay for that, there will be no money, therefore we shall have to draw on the national exchequer and pay for education out of the taxes. What becomes of independence then? How can we refuse the right of the State to inspect, when the State is the source of income? " I could only reply that it seemed strange to me for the teacher to believe that what was drawn from the Treasury as taxes *grew* there somehow or other, and would not



in future come out of the pockets of the "poor nation." What strikes me most is the lack of thought everywhere. We need to develop a real practical thinking which sees into the facts of life. That will give us practical suggestions which can be carried out.

Further, just as on the one hand the spiritual life, in education, etc., must become independent, so on the other hand must the economic life. Now, two demands, rather remarkably, have lately arisen from the depths of human nature, the one for Democracy, the other for Socialism. They contradict one another. Before the War the two contradictory impulses were thrust into each other's company and a party was even founded with the title "Social Democratic." You might as well talk of "wooden iron." They are contradictory, yet both are noble and honest demands of our times. Since then, the catastrophe of the War has passed over us, with all its consequences, and now there is a new form for the social demands and a "democratic Parliament" is rejected. When such a theoretical demand, entirely unaccompanied by knowledge of the facts, with its catchwords of an

abstract kind, like "the seizure of political power" or "the dictatorship of the proletariat" and the like, is pushed forward, this originates in the depths of socialist feeling, but it shows that people have come to realize the contradiction between that attitude and the democratic one. In future, we shall have to take into account the realities of life, not be content with catchwords: we shall realize that a socialist is quite right when he feels there is something repellent about democracy. And the democrat is right when he finds "the dictatorship of the proletariat" an alarming prospect. What are the real facts in this sphere?

We must observe the economic life in its connection with the State in the same way as we did the life of the mind and spirit. A common idea of modern times, especially amongst people who consider themselves advanced thinkers, is that the State should more and more participate in industry. Post office, railways, should be under State control, and its authority should be even more widely extended. This is a very comprehensive subject to touch upon in a few words; and since

I must limit myself to a short lecture, I must risk being charged with superficiality in making these remarks, which are, however, really to the point, and can be supported by countless instances from modern history. They are far from being superficial. This idea of the "advanced" thinkers will reveal itself in its true form if we take socialism seriously. Moreover, we can ascertain that true form if we so regard a remark made by Friedrich Engels in one of his most brilliant moments, in his book *The Development of Socialism from Utopianism to Science*. There he says: "If we survey the State, in its present development, we find that it includes management of branches of production and control of the distribution of goods; but, inasmuch as it has undertaken economic management, at the same time it controls men." The State laid down the laws according to which men who stand within the economic life must act whether within or outside of their economic activities. In future this must become different.

Engels was quite right. It was his opinion that within the sphere of economic production

itself there should be no more control of men : control should be limited to the production and distribution of goods. A right view, but only half or one-quarter of the truth : because the laws effective within the economic sphere have hitherto coincided with the life of the State, and if the State is removed as controller and manager of economics, the economic sphere must have a place of its own, not one from which men shall be ruled from a centre, but where they will rule themselves democratically.

That means that these two impulses, democracy and socialism, point to the fact that by the side of the independent spiritual member of the social organism there must be two other separate spheres, covering what remains of the function of the former type of State. These two spheres are the control of *economic life* and the domain of *public rights*, this latter including everything on which a man is entitled to give judgment when he is of age. What is the meaning of the demand for democracy ? It means that, as a matter of history, humanity is becoming capable of deciding, in the sphere of the free State and public rights, everything in which all men are

equal, every question on which any man who is of age can pronounce, whether directly through a referendum, or indirectly by representation. In future, therefore, we must have an independent *sphere of rights*, which will take the place of the old State built up of power and might. We can never have a proper State based on law and right, unless the sphere of law is limited to those matters on which every adult human being is capable of judgment. There has been a good deal of talk on this subject among the workers, though, once again, we can only take their words as a social thermometer. There is a remark of Karl Marx which has sunk deeply into their feelings: "It is an existence unworthy of a human being when a worker must sell his labour-power in the market, as if it were a commodity: we pay for a commodity at its market price and we pay for labour-power by means of wages which are the price of this commodity, labour-power."

This is a remark which has been significant in the development of modern humanity, not so much through its actual content as through the electrical effect it has had on the pro-

letariat, an effect of which the ruling classes can hardly form any idea. What is at the bottom of it all? In the economic circuit, *i.e.*, in the production, distribution and consumption of goods, which alone belong to this circuit, the regulation of labour, according to amount, time and character, etc., has been placed. We shall never have a healthy condition of things in this sphere until the character, amount and time of human work has been taken out of the economic circuit, whether the work be physical or intellectual. The actual regulation of labour-power does not belong to the economic life, in which the economically stronger can impose the type of work upon the economically weaker. The regulation of work as between man and man, what one man does for another, should belong to the sphere of law and right, where each adult human being is on a level with every other. How much work one human being has to do for another ought never to be decided on economic grounds, but solely on principles which will develop in the State of the future, the State of Rights as opposed to the present State of Might.

Here again we meet with a mass of prejudices. It is a commonplace nowadays to maintain that so long as the economic order is settled by the conditions of a free market, so long will it be natural for labour to depend on production and the price of commodities. But if we imagine that things must always go on as they do now, we are shutting our eyes to the different demands which are growing up as history unrolls. In future we shall see, for instance, how foolish it would be for men in control of some industry to meet and, examining their accounts for a certain year, to say : " We produced so much last year. This year, to equal that total we shall need so many days of rain, so many of sunshine, etc." We cannot dictate to Nature to accommodate herself to our prices ; prices must be subject to Nature-conditions. On the one side economic life is bounded by natural conditions, on the other by the State of Law or Rights, through which, as we have seen, labour has to be regulated. Hours of work must be settled on purely democratic grounds and prices will follow them, regulated according to natural conditions, as is the case in agricul-

ture. We have not to consider alteration in a few minor details of the system: we must change our whole way of thinking and learning. The unrest created at present in our industrial life will never disappear until labour-power is judged on an independent democratic basis, when one adult human being stands over against his fellow as equal and can, as free man, bring his work into the independent economic life, in which agreements about *production* will be made, not about work. This must be understood.

I can but touch on these things in the short time at my disposal. I would gladly give a whole course of lectures to deal with them, but that is impossible. I must just indicate what form this third member, the economic life, must take in the threefold social organism of the future.

In this economic sphere there must not be, as in the past, control of capital, of land, of means of production (which incidently is control of capital) and of labour: we may only admit control of the production, distribution and consumption of goods. And how is the essential fact of an economic life which is to be



based only on knowledge of facts and on practical ability—this “ *settling of prices* ”—to be achieved? It must not be decided by the chances of a free market as has been the case hitherto in both national-economy and world-economy. By means of the Associations which will come into being to suit the circumstances existing between the various branches of production and consumption—Associations which will be composed of men whose position is justified by their knowledge of facts and practical ability—we shall obtain organically and rationally what is nowadays attained through crises in the chances of a free market. In the future, when a decision as to the kind and character of human labour has to be made in the Rights State, it will happen in the economic life that a man will receive in return for his product enough exchange-values to supply his needs until he can produce another such product. To give a rough superficial example, I might explain that, supposing I produce a pair of boots, I must be able, through the mutually-fixed values, to get as much goods in exchange for my boots as I shall require for my needs until I have made

another pair. There will have to be arrangements within the society for supplying the needs of widows, orphans, the sick, of education, etc., but the actual regulation of prices in this way—and that alone will be the task of the economic organization—will depend on the formation of Corporations (whether elected, or nominated from the Associations formed among the various branches of production combined with the Associations of consumers) whose business it will be to get at true prices in real life.

This can only be achieved if the whole economic life (not planned after a Möllendorff scheme, but in a living fashion) is so ordered that, for instance, notice is taken of actual conditions. Say that some particular article shows a tendency to become too expensive : that means that it is too scarce. Workmen must be diverted to that branch of production, through some form of agreement, in order to produce more of it. If some article is too cheap, factories must close down and the workers be transferred to other factories. “ It is all very difficult,” people reply when we mention this sort of thing to-day : but they

should realize that to reject it as difficult, and to prefer to play about with minor improvements in social conditions, means to preserve present conditions as they are. What I have said shows you that, as a result of the Associations created simply out of the economic life, economic life can be made self-dependent, controlled only by the economic forces themselves instead of being under the ægis of the State: and in such a way that within this self-dependent control the initiative of the individual will be maintained as much as possible. This cannot be done by a planned economy, by the establishment of a common organization of the means of production, but only by the Associations belonging to such free branches of production and their agreement with the consumers' Associations.

It would be a terrible mistake to push to extremes the State control which has hitherto been under the direction of the ruling classes, and extend "Corporations" over the whole life of the State, using the framework of the State for the purpose, a procedure which could but undermine all connection between such a planned economy and the economic forces

outside it. The Associations, on the other hand, as part of the Threefold Organization, would aim particularly at maintaining the free initiative of those engaged in industry and at keeping open everything which unites a closed economic circuit with other economic circuits without.

Many things would look very different—for example, something I can only indicate by an analogy. Socialist doctrine demands “the abolition of private property” and “transformation of private possessions into communal property”—mere unmeaning words, which can signify nothing to a man with practical knowledge of affairs. Yet they might have a meaning—which I can describe to you in pictorial fashion. We are very proud nowadays, for instance, of our philosophers, and in one way they do think fairly accurately, that is, where intellectual or spiritual work is concerned. In the material sphere they do not manage to think in the same healthy way. In the matter of intellectual possessions it is realized that what is produced in that realm by anyone is his own work, he has to be present. Nobody talks of its being produced

by some common economy or corporate industry. Everything here must be left to the individual, for we get the best result when he is present with his faculties and talents at the work, not when he is cut off from it ; but from a social aspect we think that thirty years or less after his death the spiritual product should no longer be the property of his heirs, but of any person who can best make it accessible to the community. That seems natural to us, because we do not value spiritual product as anything peculiar. But we make no effort, in the case of material property, to treat it in the same way, and see that it should only remain private as long as a man is in contact with it with all his faculties. When this is no longer the case it should pass over—not to the community (which has no real being) bringing fearful corruption in its train, but to the man who could in his turn by use of his faculties put it to the best use for the community.

It is easy enough to see clearly if we think impartially. We have undertaken to found a school for Spiritual Science, the Goetheanum, at Dornach, near Basel, in Switzerland. This

has been its title ever since the world became "Woodrow-Wilsonized" and it became necessary for Germany's spiritual life-treasure to be boldly displayed before the world. A very different thing, this, from ordinary Chauvinism—a Goetheanum in a foreign country as the representative of German spiritual life. Further, it is being built, and it will be controlled, by those who have the capacities to call it into being; but to whom will it belong when these people are no longer among the living? It will not pass by inheritance to anyone, but to those who can control it best in the service of humanity. Actually it belongs to nobody. Social thought in economics will bring into being the things which are necessary for health in the future. I have dealt more fully with the circulation of private property in my *Threefold Commonwealth*, where I have shown how the social organism must be divided into three members, separate but co-operating as such:

- (a) The spiritual organization with control of itself on the basis of a free spiritual life.
- (b) The organisation of the State with political rights and with democratic control based on the judgment of every grown-up person.

(c) An economic life placed under the control only of individuals, who have shown themselves expert and competent, and their Associations and Corporations.

All this seems so new that once when I was talking of it in Germany, someone objected that I was dividing the State (which must be a unity) into three parts. I could only ask in reply whether I should be dividing a horse into parts if I said it must stand on its four legs? Or is a horse a unity only if it stands on one leg? Just as little can one expect that the social life should be an abstract unity, if such a unity could exist at all. We must not in the future allow ourselves to be hypnotized by the abstract idea of the "unitary State"; we must see that it must be divided into three members on which it can be supported—into a free spiritual sphere controlling itself, an organization of rights with democratic legislation, and an economic organization with expert and competent economic control.

One-half of a great truth was uttered more than a hundred years ago in Western Europe, in the words: "Liberty, Equality and Fraternity," three ideals which were capable

of being graven deep into the hearts and souls of men : but it was not fools or madmen who maintained in the nineteenth century that these ideals were really contradictory, that where absolute equality rules, neither freedom nor fraternity can exist. These objections were sound, but only because they were made at a time when men were obsessed by the idea of the so-called " unitary State." Directly we free ourselves from the hypnotism of this idea and can understand the necessity for the three-fold social organism we shall speak otherwise.

I hope you will allow me in closing, to sum up in a comparison what I fain would discuss at greater length. I have only been able to give an outline sketch of what I meant : I know I have but hinted at what needs a comprehensive description to be understood ; but in conclusion I should like to point out what a hypnotic effect the " unitary State " idea has had on men, and how they have let the unitary State be dominated by the three great ideals of " Liberty, Equality, Fraternity." We shall have to change that idea. At present people look on the Unitary State as a sort of divinity. In this, their attitude is like Faust's attitude



towards the sixteen-year-old Gretchen. It is like the lessons which Faust gave to the child Gretchen, suited to her years, but usually regarded by philosophers as something highly philosophical. There Faust says, "The All-enfolding, the All-upholding, folds and upholds he not thee, me, Himself?" (*Faust, Part I, Scene XVI.*) This is almost the same view as of the Unitary State. Men are hypnotized by it as by an idol of unity and cannot see that this unitary picture must become threefold for the health of mankind in the future. Many a manufacturer would be only too glad to speak to his work-people about the State as Faust speaks to Gretchen: "The all-enfolding, all-upholding State, does it not enfold and uphold you, myself, itself?"—only he would have to clap his hand over his mouth lest he should say "myself" too loudly! The necessity of the threefold ordering must be realized, especially amongst the workers, but that will only be when their eyes are opened to the need. In future it will not be the cry of "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity," with all the contradictions involved in these ideals. They will hold sway, but the independent spiritual

life will be the domain of "Liberty" for there it is justified. "Equality" will be the rule in the democratic State, where all grown men will be equal in rights ; finally, "Fraternity" will hold dominion in the economic life, independently controlled, supporting and sustaining every one. Thus applied to the three divisions of the social organism the three ideals no longer contradict each other.

And now, though we look in agony at what has happened at Versailles, seeing in it the starting-point of much misery, poverty and pain, yet we can still hope. Things external can be taken from us, yet if we have the vigour to reach back over the years in which we were false to our own past to the Goetheanism of the period at the turn of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries when Lessing, Herder, Schiller, Goethe and others were active in other spheres : if we have the vigour to reach back in our time of need, in the strength of our own inner being, to the great glories of Central Europe, then, in spite of the stress of our times, will peal forth from Central Europe the complement to the half-truth of "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity"

which rang out a hundred years ago, the *other* half—perhaps in external dependence, but certainly in inner freedom and independence—

Liberty in the Life of the Spirit.

Equality in the democratic Life of Rights.

Fraternity in the Economic Life.

In these words we can sum up what men must think and say and feel if they are to comprehend the Social Question in its entirety. May it be received and grasped by many, many minds, so that what is only a question to-day may be the practice of to-morrow.



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