



# THE LIFE-POWER

## P A R T 2

The Life-Power is self-directing. When it works through the mechanical and chemical forces of the outer world, it seems to be blind and fatal, but this is because we see only part of what goes on about us. Really there are no blind forces, nor is there an atom of the universe without life and mind. The age-long process of evolution which has resulted in the formation of an instrument - the human brain - which can transform the Life-Power into mental states, is the expression of a mental or rational tendency which has always been present in the Life-Power itself.

In a crystal, nothing of that tendency appears but the mathematical (and hence rational) principles which find expression in crystalline structure. In a strawberry plant, more of this mental quality is evident because the plant will show rudimentary will and perception in sending out shoots toward that part of its surroundings where there is the best supply of water. In the animal kingdom we observe a gradually ascending unfoldment of the mental quality of the Life-Power, until man appears. With the appearance on earth of human brains and hands, the Life-Power begins to reveal itself as an energy which directs itself through thought and wherever there have been human beings whose brains were finely organized enough, the Life-Power working through them has taken form as true self-knowledge.

I have put the matter this way because, as I said in Part 1, our object is to enter into a mode of consciousness higher than that which finds expression through most people. In order to do so, we must first see intellectually that what we are now is a result



# THE LIFE-POWER

of processes that go back to the very beginning of the Life-Power's self-manifestation. We have a mental habit to form, and our work to that end must have a reasonable foundation. This rational basis for our practice may be stated thus: **All personal conditions are really particular manifestations of one universal principle.**

The logical consequence of this initial statement is particularly emphasized in Hindu philosophy, but it is also either expressly stated or else plainly implied in every sacred book. Human personality is absolutely dependent upon universal Being for everything. Of ourselves we can do nothing, and all the notions that we have about personal initiative are merely evidences of our want of understanding, proofs that in us the Life-Power has not reached the same high level of self-expression which it attains when it works through the personalities of those whom the whole world honors as its wisest men. Such illumined souls tell us over and over again:

"Be not deluded by the sense of separateness. The limitations of your consciousness are slowly but surely being overcome as the Life-Power works through you. When you can see intellectually that we are all in very truth members of one body, know that it is not you who have seen, but the Life-Power which has brought your brain to a certain degree of fineness which permits the realization of the unity of Being to take this intellectual form. Know, then, that even as your intellectual grasp of unity transcends that mental state of the savage who believes that he is surrounded by conflicting and hostile forces, so are there states of consciousness far above and beyond your comparatively feeble apprehension of the One-ness of All. Know that there is a direct experience of this One-ness which cannot be put into words, and cultivate expectancy to-

ward this experience. Expectancy, because that is the mood which better than any other makes personality receptive to the influx of light from the higher regions of Being."

You will, if you have read this paragraph carefully, have noted the paradoxical nature of all occult teaching - the apparent contradiction which arises from the limitations of thought expressible in words. The same teachers who tell us that the Life-Power is the only real force in the universe also advise us to cultivate certain moods. This advice seems to imply that we can cultivate these moods or not as we choose. As a matter of fact, those who take the advice thus given do so because that Life-Power has brought them to a stage of development which makes them responsive. Those who reject it do so because the Life-Power's expression through them has not yet made them susceptible to such teaching. The same universal energy takes form in the mental states that give the advice, in those that accept it and act upon it, and in those that reject it.

Thus through humanity we may trace a triple manifestation of the Life-Power. Among us there are illumined men and women; then there are those in whom the Life-Power's self-manifestation takes form as a quest for light; and finally, those who seem to be lovers of darkness. Or so it seems, at first. But if we study humanity a little more closely, it becomes apparent that in every one of us, this triple aspect of the one Reality is at work. We all have some illumination. We all seek more light. We all feel the pull, the fatal attraction, of the "powers of darkness".

In Sanskrit, these three aspects of the One Life are called gunas or qualities. Their names are: Sattva, the quality of light and wisdom; Rajas, the quality of passion and action (which is

# THE LIFE-POWER



the driving force behind all questing and adventure, whether the object of the quest be material or spiritual treasure, since the root of Rajas is desire, or the feeling of lack); and Tamas, the quality of inertia and indifference, which finds expression in slothful contentment with things as they are.

When Eastern wisdom passed into the Western world, much of the philosophy and psychology of India and Egypt was restated in terms which appear to relate to chemical operations. Thus came into existence the curious literature of alchemy, teaching the same ancient doctrine in a way that effectively concealed it from all who were not yet ready to receive it. Almost from the beginning, the real meaning of alchemy was misunderstood by people who spent much time and money in studying it. On this account there are two distinct classes of alchemical books, those written by true sages, and those produced by "bellows-chemists" who supposed the Philosophers' Stone was a material substance which would actually change base metal into gold.

The real alchemists, however, knew better, and simply chose the names of material substances as symbols for mental and spiritual states. Like the Hindu philosophers, they realized that the Life-Power has three aspects, and these they called; Mercury, which corresponds to the Sanskrit Sattva, inasmuch as Hermes or Mercury, the messenger of the gods, personifies illumination; Sulphur the fire-principle, the flaming heat of desire, or Rajas; and Salt, the symbol of inertia because its use as a preservative is based upon resistance to change, the characteristic quality of Tamas. (It should be understood that there are many, many other points of correspondence between Mercury and Sattva, Sulphur and Rajas, and Salt and Tamas. Some of them will be

brought out later on in this chapter, others will be discussed in our special course on Alchemy.)

In the Kabalah, the same three principles are associated with the three "mother-letters" of the Hebrew alphabet. We find a reflection of this Kabalistic doctrine in the second part of Goethe's *Faust*, which speaks of the mothers who work "surrounded by a picture of everything created." Goethe does not state the number of the mothers but indicates it by mentioning a tripod in his description of them.

The names of the mother-letters are Aleph, Mem and Shin, and the Kabalistic doctrine about them is based upon the teaching of a book entitled *Sepher Yetzirah* (Book of Formation). Chapter III of that book says:

Section I. The first three elements, Aleph, Mem and Shin, are typified by a balance, in one scale the merit and in the other the criminality, which are placed in equilibrium by the tongue. There three mothers Aleph, Mem and Shin, are a great, wonderful and unknown mystery, and are sealed by six rings, or elementary circles, namely: air, water and fire emanated from them, which gave birth to progenitors, and these progenitors gave birth again to some offspring.

Sect. III. The three mothers, Aleph, Mem and Shin, in the world are: air, water and fire. Heaven was created from fire or ether; the earth from the elementary air, or spirit, which establishes the balance among them. (Kalisch's translation).

Primitive fire is designated in Hebrew by the word *Ash* (pronounced *aysh*), which is spelt with the two mother letters Aleph and Shin. A word identical in origin and formation, but pro-



# THE LIFE-POWER

nounced "ish", combines the same two letters in a noun meaning "entity"; and in Aramaic the two letters which spell aysh are again used, with vowel-points, to make the word "ohsh" to form a noun meaning "foundation" or "basis". This same word Ash (aysh) is used in Deuteronomy 4:24 "The Lord thy God is a devouring fire", and according to Psalm 104: "his ministers (are) flames of fire". The very same idea is found in the eleventh chapter of the Bhagavad-Gita where Arjuna sees Krishna as the soul of the universe, and says: "Thee ... do I behold, so difficult to behold, immeasurable, on all thy sides the majesty of burning fire and sun."

The secret wisdom has always taught that fire is the aspect of Being which is the driving energy behind every form of manifestation. Even material science now recognizes the truth that the different forms of matter are produced by different rates of electro-magnetic vibration. Let this be rapid enough and you have heat and light - the primal Fire. By a cooling of the Fire, or by a slowing down of the vibratory speed, nature's finer forces are projected into the grosser material forms, and the Hebrew and Aramaic words just mentioned bring this out. The cosmic Fire (aysh), is the "entity" (ish) which is the basis or "foundation" (obsh) of all that exists. Fire, therefore, is causal, and this is why the Sepher Yetzirah says that heaven, the place of causes, was created from that primal Fire symbolized by the letter Shin.

This fire is the Rajas of Hindu philosophy, the quality predominating in action, passion and desire. This is the quality which incites to action, whether it be expressed in the cosmos or in man. The esoteric doctrine has always been that manifestation has its root in the desire for self-expression and all desire is Rajas.

This also is the alchemical Sulphur. Some occultists believe that the word "sulphur" is derived from the Latin Sol, or "sun", and the Greek pyr, or "fire", and hence they interpret the alchemical use of this word as a reference to solar energy, or sun-fire. I question the accuracy of this derivation, but the conclusion drawn from it is correct. The same quality of the Life-Power which produces all the variations of desire when its vibratory activity is at work on the plane of consciousness, is what manifests as the light and heat of the sun when it is at work on the plane of physical existence.

A definite color is associated with Ash-Rajas-Sulphur. This hue is a flame-red, which has for its tonal correspondence the musical note "C". As Edward Maryon says, "Red" is "C". The correspondence between the color and the tone is not fanciful, nor is it anything we have to accept on tradition (although knowledge of this fact is preserved in a certain traditional presentation of the secret wisdom). It is a fact, established scientifically by the researches of Mr. Maryon and confirmed by some of the leading physicists and mathematicians of Europe.

To hum the tone "C", therefore, is to set up sound vibrations which have a true correspondence with the cosmic Fire. If, at the same time, you visualize the corresponding color, and intone words (thought-forms) whose meaning is in harmony with this tone and color, you will be able to get in conscious touch with a limitless store of energy.

In like manner, if you intone the note "E", and bring before your mind's eye a sphere of pure, bright Yellow, you will put yourself in harmony with the rate of vibration represented by the letter Aleph, by the alchemical principle



Mercury, by the guna named Sattva, or wisdom, in Sanskrit, and by what the Kabalists describe as AUIR (pronounced awyer).

This word AUIR is not found in old Hebrew. It is used only in rabbinical and Kabalistic works, and is obviously a technical term, a "made word", coined by placing the creative letter I, or Yod, between the last two letters of the old Hebrew noun AUR, which means light. I shall explain this in greater detail in another lesson.

Again, hum "G-sharp" (or A-flat), and at the same time visualize a pure, deep blue, like the blue of the Gulf Stream, and you put yourself in the vibratory octave of the letter Mem whose name means "the waters". The guna corresponding is Tamas, the stabilizing quality of inertia, represented in alchemy by Salt.

To get the best results, use a pitch-pipe to determine the tones and follow very carefully the directions given in Edward Maryon's book on Maroo-tone, which is sold by G. Schirmer, the New York music publisher at four dollars.

These three colors, red, yellow and blue, are the mother-colors from which all the hues we know are developed. Color is light-vibration and light-vibration is the very substance of all things. When we know how to use it scientifically, in combination with sound and mental imagery, we have at our command the knowledge which, as Eliphas Levi says, makes man the depository even of the power of God.

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## SUMMARY AND DIRECTION OF WORK

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The first step toward this mastery consists in practicing to establish the three tones, C, E and G-sharp which correspond to the letters Shin, Aleph and Mem. Not over fifteen minutes a day is necessary for this practice, which should be done in a room as free from noise as possible. But long before perfection is gained in this work of establishing an absolute tonal sense, you can make practical use of the tone and color correspondences.

Simply provide yourself with an adjustable pitch-pipe, which will enable you to sound any note of the scale at will. Then, if you feel the need of more energy, you only need to get alone long enough to sound the note "C" on your pipe. Then close your eyes, visualize a flame-red, upright equilateral triangle, and hum the word Ash to the note "C". Take a good, deep breath, and hum the note on the long sound of "A" in Aysh, expelling the breath sharply when you have held the vowel as long as you can without strain or discomfort, and at the same time uttering the "sh" which closes the word. As a rule, not more than five repetitions are necessary to change your whole rate of vibration, and make you vividly conscious of an access of energy.

The opposite course should be followed when you find yourself too feverishly active, or when an angry mood threatens to disturb you. Then the note to be sounded is "G-sharp", the



# THE LIFE-POWER

color to be visualized (as an inverted equilateral triangle) is blue, and the word is Mem, pronounced maym. This exercise with the letter Mem sometimes overcomes insomnia when other remedies fail. It should be used sparingly, however - most of us have plenty of the quality of darkness and inertia in our make-up.

On the whole, the best of the three mother-letters for general purposes is Aleph, because it preserves equilibrium. The exercise for this letter is pitched to the note "E", hummed while you are visualizing a yellow sphere. The word is unlike Ash and Mem in that it has two syllables: Aw-yer. The first is the one which should be prolonged.

Some people find benefit from using the word "Power" with red and the note "C"; "Poise" with yellow and "E"; and "Rest" or "Calm" with blue and "G-sharp". You will remember that I spoke of this in my lecture. But I much prefer that my pupils use the Hebrew words in the preceding paragraph. They are more scientifically constructed, and they are easier to vibrate.

In practicing for tone-consciousness, you should be sure to follow strictly the directions given by Edward Maryon. And if you are a really serious student of the secret wisdom, you will not be contented to be dependent upon a pitch pipe to get the correct tone. Remember, these are the foundations for practical work which will make your moods, your thoughts and the conditions of your body your obedient servants, as they are intended to be. Such mastery, however, demands daily practice, and assiduous attention to details.

I have no formula that you can memorize in five minutes, nor do I pretend to be able to lead you along a royal road to freedom. Today, as it has been always, the way to freedom is

straight and narrow, and the entrance thereto is by no means easy to find. As Eckartschausen says in The Cloud upon the Sanctuary, none may enter the Inner School save those who are "ripe for entrance". When the Life-Power has brought one of its personal expressions, through long ages of growth and development to the point where the Hidden Way opens, then begins the real initiation for which all the experience that preceded it is but the preparation.

Thousands seek health, thousands wealth, and thousands are in search of happiness: but although nearly two millenniums have passed since it was written: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added unto you", one, perhaps, in ten thousand is able to understand the inner meaning of these words, nor are all those who grasp their import fully prepared to devote themselves whole-heartedly to coming into harmony with the laws of the Life-Power.

To live in harmony with these Laws means that we must definitely abandon the world's interpretation of life, and must often be at variance with customs and beliefs built upon that insecure foundation. This is why the true Way is a Hidden Way, and this is the reason why only those who pass the tests of drudgery, of rigid self-direction, and above all of wise silence can become sharers in the knowledge of the Great Secret.

If you have eyes to see and ears to hear, you know already that I am pointing out to you the first steps on the "small, old path" which leads to liberation. If not, you will soon tire of me and my teaching, which after all, is not really mine, for it is but the formulation of knowledge even now latent in the Hidden School of your own inner and greater life.