

# NATURE-SPIRITS AND THE SPIRITS OF THE ELEMENTS

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The Blavatsky Lecture  
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# NATURE-SPIRITS

## AND THE SPIRITS OF THE ELEMENTS

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WHEN we turn our attention to the subject of elemental Intelligences or Nature-Spirits, we are confronted by this immediate difficulty, that we are led at the very beginning beyond and behind the world which we know through the channels of the senses. Sense perception does not help us at all in our study of that mysterious realm of life which constitutes the invisible background of physical manifestation. Madame Blavatsky warned us long ago that to describe Nature-Spirits or Elementals as having definite and corporeal form was likely to lead into great error. She said that those mysterious beings named Salamanders, Sylphs, Undines and Gnomes by Paracelsus and other Western Occultists; Bhutas, Devas, Ghandharvas by Eastern wisdom; Dæmons by the Alexandrian School, and so on, were possessed of neither form nor consciousness at all as we understand those terms, and that to imagine otherwise would lead into a psychic materialism far more obstructive to real occult progress than the

## NATURE-SPIRITS.

theories of modern scientific thought which would deny the existence of any such spirits.

Humanity is at present passing through a cycle of evolution during which the brain intelligence is developing at the expense of the direct spiritual intuition of early man ; it is now, and will be for a long time to come, man's task to regain the conscious knowledge of those worlds of ethereal matter whose denizens play such a fundamental *rôle* in the life of humanity. Ages ago man possessed in his body organs whereby supersensible worlds and beings were perceived and known more directly than we to-day perceive physical objects. He could not only look out into and control the life of worlds of elemental matter below him in the evolutionary scale ; he could also look out into worlds peopled by Hierarchies of Beings infinitely beyond him. He was not limited to the yields of his five senses, and indeed it is from one point of view true to say that the senses are the gates which shut man off from the consciousness he should possess as a Spiritual Being. They obstruct his vision alike of the worlds above him and the worlds below him, although they have an absolutely necessary function to fulfil in the development of his self-consciousness.

I cannot attempt to deal with more than a fraction of this vast subject in one lecture ; the worlds of Celestial Beings higher than man in the evolutionary scale had just to be mentioned, as the subject of life and beings inhabiting worlds below



## NATURE-SPIRITS.

the scale of manifested nature would otherwise be incomprehensible; but to enter into any detailed description would extend over a series of lectures.

I must now come to the closer consideration of the Spirits of the worlds of rudimental substance (to use Madame Blavatsky's word) lying behind the mineral kingdom and invisible to human sight. Nature-Spirits—for that is the term I shall adopt—are evolved in and from the four primary elements of Nature. They occupy a specific step in the ladder of being, but will never evolve into human beings *in this Manvantara*. I want you particularly to notice this. Ultimately, of course, according to an occult maxim, "everything that exists, is, has been, or will be, Man," but the beings spoken of in this connection by Madame Blavatsky will not begin to reach their human stage until some time during the next planetary incarnation of the earth. Occultly we recognise four fundamental elements, fire, air, water, earth, and each of these kingdoms has its own peculiar and individual Spirits. These Nature-Spirits are imprisoned, bewitched, so to say, in the elements, and it is man's task to release them, as we shall presently see. They have to be freed from their imprisonment and led back to the primary and spiritual condition which may be called "Light."

It is obvious that if these Nature-Spirits dwell in, and indeed compose, the elements, they have no permanent "physical" body. Fire

## NATURE-SPIRITS.

densifies and becomes air, air thickens and changes into water, water solidifies and becomes earth. There is continual interchange between them. *Any form which these spirits may temporarily possess is given them by the image-making faculty of the Mind of man*, spiritually cognising qualities and specific energies, and endowing them with pictorial outline or embodiment.

The unformed elements pass through the individual organisation of a man ; his mind acts on them in such a manner that specific forms are given to the formless elements. These are the *Nature-Spirits*—the Salamanders, Sylphs, Undines and Gnomes, etc., having embodiments indicative of the elements from which they evolve, due to the action of the mind of man on the element as it passes through his body. The kind of Nature-Spirits which are formed and the forms which are given them depend on the particular element that is worked on by the imagination, and upon the organs or parts of the body through which the element passes or which it contacts, and also upon the action of the desire of man in connection with his mind (Kama-Manas). The Nature-Spirits which are so formed are associated with the activities of the mineral, vegetable, animal and human kingdoms.

The general design of the elemental system remains the same through different epochs and periods ; but a variation of forms of the Elementals and Nature-Spirits is caused by the varia-

## NATURE-SPIRITS.

tions of man's desire and the changes in the development and activity of his Mind.

Man is not the only creator of elemental forms, or Nature-Spirits, in the sphere of the Earth; other Intelligences may call them into being out of the pure ethers. The Celestial Hierarchies of Angels, Archangels, and so on, call them into being by the WORD, and according to the WORD by which Elementals are called into being, will their nature, service, action and function be determined during their term of existence. An analogy is that a sound causes the particles in the air to be adjusted in geometrical plane, animal, or even human form, if the sound is prolonged until the form is taken by the particles. In the case of the sound made by a human being, the particles may not cohere long, because he does not know how to give to the Word the binding quality of permanence; but a Celestial Intelligence, Who calls beings out of the pure ethers or a pure element, gives to the form the permanence which is necessary for the function which the Intelligence is to fulfil. Spiritual Intelligences of the very highest orders *can endow sound with soul*. They are able to speak the Creative Word which brings universes into being. I would remind you here of the saying of Christ: "Heaven and Earth shall pass away, but My *words* shall not pass away." They should be understood in the sense at which I have just hinted, for I can do no more than hint in this connection.

Fairy Stories and Legends are full of references

## NATURE-SPIRITS.

to different classes of Nature-Spirits. I have given you certain suggestions which will explain the existence of their specific forms, and we can now pass to another side of the question.

Nature-Spirits appear and disappear only under certain definite conditions. To appear, a Nature-Spirit must introduce its own element into our atmosphere, or man must attune his atmosphere to the element of the Nature-Spirit, and must make a connection for his corresponding sense. Then it is that the Nature-Spirit, often assuming a form inherent in the memory of the man, will be seen either in human or other form, and may be heard to speak. The person who notices the appearance does not always become aware of the element of the Nature-Spirit, though he may see a form and hear a voice. He may even mistake such a phenomenon for the spirit of a dead friend. He will neither see nor hear anything if the line of vision or hearing makes no connection with the element of the Nature-Spirit, although myriads of such beings may be present.

One of the reasons why man of the present day cannot sense Nature-Spirits is that his senses are attuned to surfaces. He sees on the surface, hears on the surface, can smell and taste only the surface. When a man supposes he sees sunlight his eye is only resting on the objects which it makes visible, and as long as his sight is thus focussed, he cannot see the objects within and constituting the sunlight itself. When occult training makes this possible, man comes into contact with the

## NATURE-SPIRITS.

fire spirits, the Salamanders. Again, man cannot hear sound, because his ear is trained and focussed on the gross vibrations of the air. If he can so focus his hearing that all vibratory movements of the air disappear, he will perceive Sound and the Nature-Spirits of the Air—the Sylphs. Similarly, the active function of the Nature-Spirits of the water in man is what he calls his sense of taste ; but in reality he only tastes the foods or liquids which are the surfaces of the occult element of water. If man could focus that elemental Intelligence in him which presides over the sense of taste to the inner element of water, then he would perceive the Undines. Again, the earth must be known in its essential nature, through the elemental Intelligence in man which acts as his sense of smell. Every object on earth has a distinctive odour caused by emanations of earth Nature-Spirits through and from them. These emanations form an aura around the object, and if man can focus his sense of smell, not on the fragrant or unpleasant odours, but into the sphere of the emanations, then the gross object will disappear and the perception gained by him will reveal this physical earth as being an entity entirely different from that which he now believes it to be. He will also be able to see the Nature-Spirits of the earth element—the Gnomes.

Thus the Light and the realms of the air, the Seven Seas, and the kingdoms of the earth are inhabited by beings which man does not see and

## NATURE-SPIRITS.

of which he is usually unaware. To perceive Nature-Spirits man must *change the focus of his senses*, as I have said, from the surfaces to the interiors, from the outer to the inner elements. This is what occult development gradually enables him to do.

Since the principle of Hierarchy extends through every realm of Nature, it follows that Nature-Spirits are of different degrees of power and consciousness. The spirits whose natural home is the fire element have a greater range of activity than those whose natural element is the earth. Fire can penetrate air, water, and earth, and make them warm; the air can penetrate water and earth; the water can penetrate earth. Therefore, by a strange paradox, the earth, although the lowest, is capable of containing all the others. I shall return to this when I come to consider the activities of the human elemental.

The higher Nature-Spirits are rulers of those whose homes are in the lower elements and who have evolved out of them. They give orders which the lower Nature-Spirits obey readily and naturally as though such orders were their own intentions. But the authority which every Nature-Spirit, of whatever degree, obeys, is the *Conscious Mind* of man. Intelligence, or Mind, is the Great Unknown Power, which, although they cannot see it, they yet reverence and obey.

The reason why beings among the higher and lower Nature-Spirits seek to consort with and reverence man, even while they might despise



## NATURE-SPIRITS.

him, is that through the individual form of a man they recognise the independent action of the Divine Intelligence. They recognise that man, with his free will, can act with or against that Intelligence, while they cannot act against it.

The most advanced of the lower Nature-Spirits look forward to the time when man will perform for them that which they most desire, that is, the imparting to them of his immortal nature, and when they can in exchange render him service of which he will be conscious. He will be ready to enter into conscious association with them, as soon as he begins to know what and who he is, and as soon as he has the animal in him under control. In the meantime these lower Nature-Spirits swarm around and through man and urge him on to all manner of excesses and excitement. They are not necessarily of a malignant type. Their object is not to inflict pain, because it has not the same meaning for them as it has for man. They enjoy pain as readily as pleasure, because their delight is in the intensity of the sensation of either pain or pleasure. If man would have repose, they stir him up, prod him, urge him on, until he believes that inertia is dull, tedious, empty of results. After they have exhausted his ability to get keen sensations, they leave him alone for a while. The Nature-Spirits find the sensation they seek when a human suffers pain: they live in the moods of man, in his laughter, tears and anger. The nerves in the physical body are like so many strings on an instrument

## NATURE-SPIRITS.

upon which the Nature-Spirits play in order to bring out every phase of the emotions man is capable of producing.

Each organ in the body is presided over by an Intelligence, belonging to one of the four realms of Nature-Spirits. To make a distinction, however, I shall use the term "Elemental," or "Elemental Intelligence," to designate those Nature-Spirits which are performing functions in the body of man. The pelvic, abdominal and thoracic cavities in the human body are the three regions in which different Elementals play. Including and presiding over all of these is the Human Elemental which possesses no self-consciousness in our sense of the term, but is the instinctive co-ordinating principle of the human body. The Mind in the man is to this Human Elemental what the Intelligence of the Sphere of Earth is to the Elemental of that sphere. Under the impulse of the Human Elemental each organ performs its separate functions in the general economy of the body ; and under that Elemental all of the involuntary actions, such as respiration, digestion, absorption, excretion, circulation, sleep, growth and decay are carried on. This Human Elemental is in touch with the physical body by means of the nerves. As we have seen, it has a fourfold nature, of fire, air, water, and earth.

The calling and natural tendency and destiny of a man is determined by the constitution of his Human Elemental. If the Elementals or Nature-Spirits of the earth predominate, he will be a

## NATURE-SPIRITS.

miner or a farmer. His vocation may vary from one who digs in the bowels of the earth to a money-lender and financial magnate. If the water Elementals or Nature-Spirits predominate, he will follow the sea, or seek his pleasure on the water. If the Elementals of the air prevail, he will be a mountaineer, a climber, an aviator. Such people are not subject to dizziness; the action of their heart is not affected by great heights; they are sure-footed when moving at a distance from the ground. Those in whom the fire Nature-Spirits predominate are those who love to bask in the sun, who are stokers, smelters, etc. The lack of the several classes of Nature-Spirits in the nature of a man produces contrary effects.

Into the mortal part of man, then, beings from the four elements of the spheres are drawn together and concreted. The food with which the physical body is maintained is made up of the four elements and nourishes the Elemental Intelligences presiding over the organs of the body and the lesser Elementals under them. Man cannot draw in directly from the elements what is needed to supply and keep active the forces in his body, which are the magnetic spheres of Elemental Intelligences. He has to take what is necessary from the food furnished to him, and he has to consume that kind of food from which his organs can most easily extract the elements for his nourishment.

The relation of the Nature-Spirits outside of a

## NATURE-SPIRITS.

man to the Elementals embodied within him may continue to exist without consciousness on his part. It is not likely that man will become conscious of the existence of Nature-Spirits while there is still general disbelief in their existence, and where one is not able to compel their visible or audible presence; it is necessary to have at least an open mind. Otherwise it will be impossible to understand the nature and activities of Nature-Spirits or have dealings with them.

The period when human beings are most likely to attract and be attracted to Nature-Spirits is during early childhood, before egoism is manifested. Then the very young child forms natural associations with wood nymphs, undines, and sprites which cause it no surprise, because it is so very closely linked with the invisible worlds of nature. In every case the bond of attraction and the kind of Nature-Spirit attracted depend on the respective negative and positive qualities of the same elements in the Nature-Spirits and the child.

All the operations of nature are magical, but we call them "natural" because we see the physical effects daily. The processes are mysterious and unknown except to occult sight. They are so regular in their effects and in the production of physical results, that men do not think much of them, but are satisfied with what they call the workings of the laws of Nature. That, however, is not a satisfactory answer to the student of occultism. Man participates in these processes

## NATURE-SPIRITS.

without knowing it, and nature works through his body whether he works with her or against her. The forces of nature, which are in some instances the Celestial Intelligences in the unmanifested side of the sphere of earth, take hold of the result of the irregular actions of man, and marshal these results into order as his circumstances, his destiny, his environment, and this is the explanation of the legends that Michael, Gabriel and the other Archangels rule over respective periods of time. They become the Regents, for the time being, of cycles of time and of human history.

The body of man is the workshop which contains the materials needed by the Mind to perform all the magical operations performed in nature by the Nature-Spirits. He may perform wonders greater than any that have been recorded. When he begins to observe what is going on within him, and learns the laws governing the actions of the Elemental Intelligence within him, so that thereby he can contact the elements outside of him, then he can begin to work in the realm of Magic. If a man would be a conscious and intelligent worker in the realm of Nature he must direct the Human Elemental—with his Mind. All man's organs and systems are connected with each other by the sympathetic or ganglionic nervous system through which there is constant interplay between Nature-Spirits and Elementals functioning in the body. The Mind, on the other hand, acts through the central, or cerebro-spinal nervous system. In the case of an ordinary man, the mind does not act

## NATURE-SPIRITS.

directly on the organs which perform involuntary functions, as it is not at present in close contact with the sympathetic nervous system. It contacts his body only slightly, and in flashes, shocks and oscillatory movements over and sometimes touching the centres in the head connected with the optic, auditory, olfactory and gustatory nerves. Then the Mind receives reports from the senses ; *but its governing centre for the receiving of communications from the sympathetic nervous system, and for the issuing of orders in response to these messages, is the Pituitary Body, which is the seat of the Ego.* In the ordinary undeveloped man the Mind does not reach, even in sleep, below or as far as the central nerve of the spinal cord in the cervical vertebræ. To be able to associate intelligently with and to control the Elementals in his body and in nature, man must be able to live consciously in and through the central nervous system in his body. He cannot fulfil his right place in nature until he thus lives in conscious contact with the Elementals in himself and with the Nature-Spirits around him. A man, however, who acts consciously through his central nervous system, does not think in flashes and shocks, but steadily and surely. His mind is a steady, conscious light, which illustrates any object on which it is turned. I have dealt with this more fully in my book "The Path of Knowledge."

I will now pass to the question of Disease. The ordinary human mind has not intelligence suffi-



## NATURE-SPIRITS.

cient to warrant its interference with the natural order of curing disease, which is under the care of a great Intelligence, far superior to it. The Nature-Spirits obey this great Intelligence, being in touch with it and under its control. The unlawful interference of a human mind consists in changing or attempting to change the natural order—that is, the work of the Nature-Spirits under this great Intelligence.

When the human mind is directed to the removing of physical ills without the physical means of medicine, diet, air and light, it calls into action a set of elemental beings which interfere with the natural, though diseased, condition of the body. There might appear to be a cure, but there is no cure. There is merely an usurpation of the duties of one set of Nature-Spirits by another set; and the result will be disease in the physical, moral, or mental nature of the operator and of the patient. Soon or late the disturbance injected by the puny interference of an ignorant mind against the natural law will bring its reaction and the inevitable consequences. The disease will reappear in the same or some other form.

The mental power of the healer of diseases is lawfully exercised when it is applied to an understanding of the elemental Intelligences and the laws governing them at the time of gathering, preparing and giving of “simples,” all of which embody elemental life. There are some “simples” which aid in the cure of physical ills,

## NATURE-SPIRITS.

and some, like poppy, which can cure or bring on mental ills. Other preparations, such as alcohol, may be made from roots, seeds, grains, leaves, flowers or fruits, which may adjust the mental and psychic and physical nature, or disorganise it. It is lawful for a human to search the secrets of nature, and what has to be done to use them most effectively in the curing of disease. The use of the mind of the healer is legitimate in so far as it seeks to know all about the curing properties of the medicines, and about the condition of the patient. Both have to do with the action of Nature-Spirits and Elementals.

One of the reasons why medicines cannot be relied on, and why medicine is prevented from being an exact science, is that vegetable drugs are gathered irrespective of the elemental influence prevailing at the time of gathering. The effect produced varies according to the time of gathering and the time when the influence of the herb or root or flower or extract is brought into the system of the patient. Different Nature-Spirits are active at different times of the day and night, during the months, and seasons. If proper contact between the Nature-Spirits and the Elemental in the plant is not made, and if these are not brought into the right contact with the patient, there is no cure, but often an aggravation of the ailment. The effects of healing are caused by bringing Nature-Spirits into direct touch and action with the Elemental in the diseased organs or system in the body, and by setting up a reciprocal

## NATURE-SPIRITS.

action between them. The medicine does not make the cure ; it simply allows the Nature-Spirits to come into touch with the Human Elemental and through that into touch with the organs or system in the human body. By setting up this reciprocal action, the adjustment is made between nature and man. This is the basis of the science of Homœopathy.

Physicians, not knowing of the reciprocal action between nature and man, nor how this is brought about by elemental intermediaries, not giving attention to the proper time to gather and to prepare “simples,” cannot depend on their medicines to produce certain definite results. No potion or external application can in any constitutional sense cure an ailment or disease ; the potion or application is merely the physical means by which the Nature-Spirits may take contact with the Elementals in the body and thereby bring them into tune with the laws by which nature works. The disease disappears when the bodily elemental is adjusted to the Nature-Spirits, and through the Nature-Spirits to the wisdom of Nature. If the dose given or the medicine applied makes the appropriate contact, the ailment will be relieved or cured, but unless the physician administers what he calls the cure by a true instinct—which is to say that he is guided by Elemental influences—his practice of medicine will be little better than guesswork. Like the switches in an electric power-house for throwing on the current, so in

## NATURE-SPIRITS.

nature are the means for cures, but it is as necessary to know how to make contact for cures as it is necessary to know how and what switch to operate for electric power.

There are four means or agencies by which Elementals are led or made to knit bones, connect tissues, grow skin, heal wounds, cuts, scalds, burns, blisters, growths : relieve throes, spasms and pains, cure ills of the physical, psychic, mental and spiritual natures of man. Opposite effects can be produced by the same agency ; and the same means or agency which is used to effect the cure may produce the disease ; instead of bringing life-giving virtues, it can be made to bring death-dealing forces. Some of the modern experiments made with radium and the application of X-rays are a striking example of this.

The four agencies are mineral, vegetable, animal, and human or divine. The mineral agencies are soils, stones, minerals, metals or what is called inorganic matter. The vegetable agencies are herbs, roots, bark, pith, twigs, leaves, juice, buds, flowers, fruits, seeds, grains, mosses. The animal agencies are parts and organs of animal bodies and any living animal or human organism. The human or divine agency consists in the power of a word, or words.

A physical ill will be relieved or cured when the fit object of the mineral agency is applied at the right time to the physical body ; ills of the etheric body will be cured when the appropriate object of the vegetable agency is properly pre-

## NATURE-SPIRITS.

pared and applied to the form-body through the physical body which is its precipitation ; ills of the psychic nature or astral body may be relieved or cured when the right object of the animal agency contacts the psychic nature through the appropriate part of the physical body ; mental and spiritual ills are cured when the right word or words are used and reach into the moral nature through the mind.

The attitude of mind of the patient will have little to do with the diseases cured through mineral, vegetable, or animal agencies ; but it will decide whether he will or will not have his mental or spiritual disease cured through the human or divine agency. When the mineral, or vegetable or animal agencies are used at the right time and under the right conditions, these objects in contact with the body generate a magnetic action in the body. As soon as the magnetic action produces a magnetic field of the right power, then the curative elemental forces, acting under the great Intelligence of the Sphere, are induced to operate in that magnetic field.

Man of the present day uses the Nature-Spirits and Elementals in a crude and indirect way, unconsciously, and is unable to control them ; whereas those who in earlier ages were possessed of wisdom were able to understand and direct forces and beings in external nature. Our minds do not contact the Nature-Spirits immediately through the Elementals within us, and so we construct machines, and through the machines

## NATURE-SPIRITS.

develop heat, electricity, steam and magnetism, and with the aid of these machines harness the elemental forces ; but our control is clumsy and insecure.

The operations of Nature-Spirits are to be seen in the formation and growth of stones such as diamonds, rubies, sapphires and emeralds. In nature this is done by the fertilisation of a cell of magnetic quality in the earth. The magnetic cell is fertilised by sun forces. The sun force, an occult Fire Nature-Spirit of the earth sphere, reaches the magnetic cell and induces the sunlight into that cell, which then begins to grow and develop, according to its nature, into a crystal of the diamond or other precious stone. The cell forms a screen which admits only a certain ray of the sunlight, or several rays, but these only in certain proportions. Colour is produced by the degeneration of light away from its pure state, and so the colouring of white, red, blue or green is obtained in the stones. Any one of these precious stones can be produced within a short time by a magician able to control Nature-Spirits ; the time may be no more than a few minutes or an hour. The stone is grown by the formation of a matrix into which the Nature-Spirits precipitate the element, under the direction of the magician, who must hold the picture of what he wants steadily in his mind, and "will" the element into the matrix which he has provided.

Another magical feat performed with the aid of Nature-Spirits is prophecy of future events.



## NATURE-SPIRITS.

In ancient days, those who could not obtain the information they required at all times, nor get it directly, were aided, if they could come under the favourable environment furnished at certain times and places by some physical object, through which Nature-Spirits could communicate. They sought magic environment at holy stones, and groves of certain trees, among them oaks, elders, laurels, and yews. There were magic springs and pools in the woods, subterranean streams, or fissures and caves through which airs came out from the interior of the earth, or a rocky recess from which fire appeared without human intervention. The information was usually given in the form of oracles, through the utterances of Sybils, who in a wild, chaotic way came into touch with the inner wisdom of nature. Priests and priestesses had often to learn a language or code wherein to receive and interpret an oracle. The communication may have been under the form of signs or sounds, which, however meaningless to the multitude, were definite and instructive enough to the initiated. Many times the prophecies of the future were direct and unequivocal, while at other times they seemed ambiguous. The Nature-Spirits did not desire to elude the questioners in the prophecies which they made, but they could only tell what had already been set going in the past by destiny acting through Karma. Often there was a moral instruction embodied in the sybilline wisdom. The Nature-Spirits did not possess the wisdom, but gave it

## NATURE-SPIRITS.

under the guidance of Spiritual Intelligences which used them as channels for imparting "commandments" to men. The oracles remained genuine as long as the priests and priestesses remained true to their vows, but gradually the connections between the priests and the spiritual worlds were severed. The Nature-Spirits no longer communicated, but the priests kept up the oracular institutions, and temples were erected in such places where phenomena of this kind had once taken place. For instance, Westminster Abbey is built upon the site of an ancient Temple of Apollo.

So-called Black Magic, which is the use of magical power for selfish purposes, employs all possible means to obtain the end in view. Many results are achieved by the use of Nature-Spirits which these magicians summon and direct, at times and at places which facilitate communication and permit the exercise of the power. The times are usually those when the lethal influences of the moon prevail. The place is often made artificially by consecrating it with rites to the purpose. To this class of Black Magic belongs the calling of a Nature-Spirit into existence, and then sending it out on a mission to do some bodily injury to, and even to cause the death of, persons against whom it is sent. The Nature-Spirit or Elemental can be made to take a human or animal form when attacking. It may appear in the semblance of a person known to the victim. Usually the attack is made in a dim or dark

## NATURE-SPIRITS.

place, and unless a man is protected by Karma against such attacks he will be injured or destroyed, according to the plan of the magician. Some mysterious deaths have occurred in this manner. When a man is attacked in this way, the Elemental sent attacks the Human Elemental in the body of the victim. The Human Elemental fights, feeling by natural instinct what it has to fight, and this, by reaction, produces in the mind of the victim the horror it feels in the presence and under the attack of the messenger of the magician. At such a time the resources of the mind are called upon and the Human Elemental is encouraged and given new strength to fight. In the end the Elemental sent may be itself destroyed. The law is that if an Elemental is destroyed, the man who conquers it receives an increase in power equal to that represented in the elemental vanquished, and the one who sent it loses power to an equal extent. He may himself be destroyed. Those who are able to summon or create an Elemental and send it on such a mission are advanced occultists, and know of the law that they themselves will suffer injury or death in case the Elemental sent forth fails to do its work. They are, therefore, very cautious about the creating and sending forth of these elementals, and rarely take the risks it involves. Were it not for this knowledge and fear by black magicians, there would be many more attempts to injure through Elemental agency. Priests of certain orders sometimes use Elementals to bring

## NATURE-SPIRITS.

deserters back into the fold, but they know the risks involved and fear to go beyond a certain point, lest their order suffer for the failure. One of the reasons for the reaction is that the creator, and even the mere transmitter of an Elemental, must put into it a portion of himself, that is, he must endow it with a part of the forces in his own elemental body, and, as the messenger is always in contact by an invisible cord with him who sent it, that which is done to the attacking Elemental is transferred to the sender.

The antithesis to this magic is the real *White Magic*, which is the preparing of the Human Elemental in order that in another planetary incarnation it may reach the human stage and become endowed with Mind.

A man who, through his Mind, has power over his Human Elemental, can, without any physical means, and often irrespective of time and place, compel the action of Nature-Spirits to produce any of the results which the physicist produces mechanically or the wonder-worker brings about magically. He does it by knowledge through the power of his will and imagination.

It is erroneous to believe that the possession of amulets, charms, spells, talismans, seals, or any magical object will enable the possessor or beneficiary to escape his Karma. The most these objects can do is to postpone what is his Karma. Often, indeed, the possession of a magical object precipitates Karma, much against the expectations of the possessor. A man may procure

## NATURE-SPIRITS.

amulets and talismans, charms and seals, which will protect him in danger and endow him with power; but on the other hand, a man who has confidence in his own power, and goes through life attending to his affairs with rectitude, who speaks truthfully, and who relies on the law of justice, secures a better protection and acquires better and more permanent powers than all the magical seals in the world can bring him. To think and speak and act with rectitude is more difficult than invoking Elemental Spirits in Ceremonial.

Cursing is the act of making a connection through which Nature-Spirits can cause certain evils to follow and descend upon the person who is cursed. The Elemental which is created in the form of a curse lasts until the curse is fulfilled, and its life is in this way exhausted. So, too, a blessing is an Elemental, the body of which is made up of past thoughts and deeds of the person blessed. The Elemental can be created when a suitable occasion arises, such as the departing or dying of a parent, the entering upon a journey, or the beginning of a career. Persons who themselves are ailing, miserable or unfortunate, and especially among them the old people, may by this use of Elemental Force call down an effective blessing on one who has tried unselfishly to do good.

It is not safe at present for men to know of occult laws governing Nature-Spirits nor how to work their occult forces, nor how they may be

## NATURE-SPIRITS.

adjusted to physical objects. The danger lies in the lack of knowledge among men and in their selfishness and the absence of self-control. The Intelligences ruling the earth will therefore not permit men at large to become possessed of such dangerous information. So long as man is controlled by the desire Elementals in him, and these are in turn subject to attractions from all kinds and orders of Nature-Spirits and the shells of disembodied entities, man cannot be trusted. What would happen if one man or a Government should be able to operate forces which are at least as far above those working in the present aeroplane, submarine, mortar guns, poison gas tubes and gas bombs, as these instruments are above a simple club and a stone ? What would become of human civilisation ? *One great air Elemental, with its hosts of lower spirits, could wipe out an army of men, destroy a countryside, efface factories and institutions.* Formal declaration of war is not necessary to start the destruction. One man could do that in the midst of peace, merely to vent his spleen or reap the fruits of his rule of terror.

Men should know of the existence of these forces, of the possibilities of these things, and of the benefits that may come to the world from occult knowledge and dominion, with unselfish use, and they should try to qualify to be the guardians of this knowledge. But at present they cannot be trusted with powers to call forth Nature-Spirits and to command them.

## NATURE-SPIRITS.

I now come to the subject of Alchemy. The work of the alchemists was with Elementals in their own bodies and Nature-Spirits. The alchemists knew how the elements of fire, air, water and earth are mingled in precipitation as metals ; how the metals, stones, plants, colours and sounds act by sympathy and antipathy on human bodies, and throughout nature ; how Nature-Spirits are bound into metals, and how loosed and bound again. They knew the neutral states through which metals pass from one state into another in precipitations, transmutations, and sublimations. They created Elemental Intelligences which assisted them in the alchemical works and were known as "familiars." In speaking about the processes in the human body the alchemists made use of many terms applicable to their work with the metals. This is one reason for the strange vocabulary found in alchemical writings. Other reasons were that they could not communicate information, as the Church was powerful and opposed them, and as kings and nobles would put them to death, either after their secret of making gold had been obtained, or because they had failed to perform what was demanded of them by such despots whom stories of the magic gold had attracted. The alchemists extracted from the *Mysterium Magnum*, discovered the *Alcahest* and the *Organum* ; used Salt, Sulphur and Mercury with the four elements of Fire, Air, Water, Earth ; mingled the *Gluten* of the *White Eagle* with the *Blood* of the *Red*

## NATURE-SPIRITS.

Lion ; performed the Mystical Marriage of Christos with Sophia, in physical symbols of these spiritual facts. When they had done their work they became possessed of the Philosopher's Stone and the Elixir of Life. Then they could turn all base metals into pure gold, literally, as well as in the figurative sense.

The work of the true alchemist was to control the Elementals in his own body, subdue and harness his animal desires, and direct and transmute his energies so as to create new life and new powers within himself. The alchemist who attempted to turn his interior powers to the transmutation of physical metals and the production of gold, before he had attained the Philosopher's Stone, might succeed in the transmuting of metals and in the making of gold, but he would fail in his true work. The beings with whom he had worked would eventually react upon him and overthrow him because he had failed to overcome Elementals in himself. One of the sayings of the alchemists was that in order to make gold one must first possess gold to begin the work. If he had not created the philosophical "gold" first in himself, he could not, according to the law, make external gold. He had first, then, to control the Elementals in him and bring them to that pure state called "gold." That done, he could with safety perform his work with metals. The alchemist knew of the peculiar relation of all metals to the elemental forces of colour and sound. These Elementals may manifest as metals,



## NATURE-SPIRITS.

which are the first concrete expression of elemental beings in physical embodiment. Colour and sound are convertible one into the other, in the psychic world. The metals are precipitations and transmutations of colour and sound Elementals. The forces which manifest as colour in the psychic world may become ore in the earth. Similarly what is a certain violet astral matter, turns, if it is physically precipitated, into silver. When the baser metals have attained their full stature, they become pure gold. *Gold is the Regent of the Metals—it is the blending in right proportion of silver, copper, tin, iron, lead and mercury.*

Elemental beings or Nature-Spirits are imprisoned in metals. The Nature-Spirit bewitched or imprisoned in the metal is the pure element in physical precipitation. It emanates an influence, which acts not only on its kindred spirits, but has peculiar influence upon sensitive persons by reaching the Elementals in them directly. The alchemists knew of the elemental power of antipathy and sympathy in metals and plants, and used it in curing diseases. They knew of the special times connected with the phases of the Moon, the position of the planetary bodies in the Zodiacal signs, etc., when herbs had to be gathered to produce curative results or the contrary. They also knew of the principles active in distillations, congelations, purifications of herbs and metals, and so they produced the results they wanted through the forces of sympathy and antipathy.

## NATURE-SPIRITS.

Many other mysterious operations were performed by the alchemists of which man of the present day has not the faintest knowledge ; I have only mentioned a very few here.

All occurrences of life, including all processes connected therewith, are possible only by the working of Nature-Spirits. This sphere of action is not limited to the phases of the waking life of man. Dreams, too, are caused by the action of Elementals and Nature-Spirits, and in the cases of men of some degree of occult development, by Celestial Intelligences of a higher order. Dreams are the employment of one or more of the senses, and the senses are Elementals within the man. Dreams, in the first instance, are the shaping of subtle matter in such a way as will correspond to sense experiences of waking life, produced by the response of Nature-Spirits outside in the elements, to the Elementals embodied in man.

The difference between waking and the dreaming life is that in waking the senses act through their particular nerves and organs, transmitting their impressions to the Ego in the Pituitary Body. In the dream the senses do not need their physical organs, but can act directly with subtle etheric or astral matter in connection with Nature-Spirits in external nature, on the nerves. Though the senses do not need the organs in dreams, they do need the nerves.

The cause for man's thinking that only the physical world is real and that dreams are unreal is that his Sense-Elementals are individually not

## NATURE-SPIRITS.

strong enough and not sufficiently highly organised to act independently of their physical nerves and organs in the physical world, and therefore are not able to act apart from and independently of the physical body in the astral or dream world. If the Sense-Elementals were able to act in the astral world independently of their physical organs, then man would believe that world to be the real and the physical the unreal, because the sensations of the astral worlds are finer and keener and more intense than the sensations produced through gross physical matter.

When a person falls asleep, dreams begin, whether they are remembered or not, from the time the Conscious Principle, or the Ego, leaves its seat in the Pituitary Body. They continue while that Conscious Principle remains in the magnetic field of the sense nerve areas of the brain and in the mysterious ventricles of the brain, until that Principle either passes into the cervical vertebræ or rises above the head, as it usually does. In either case the Conscious Principle is out of touch with the brain. The man is then said to be "unconscious." He has no dreams, while in either of these states, and pays no attention to any of the sense impressions, even though the Elementals in the body may bring some of them to the consciousness of the Human Elemental. The Human Elemental does not respond, because the power which the Conscious Principle gives to it is shut off. The Human Elemental takes care, nevertheless, of the body in sleep, by superin-

## NATURE-SPIRITS.

tending the *involuntary* functions which go on during the state called sleep.

To speak of dreams, their kinds and causes, would need so much space as to require a separate treatise, and would be foreign to the subject-matter. Therefore I mention here only so much as is necessary for a foundation.

In the case of a person who is to some extent developing occult powers, dreams occur which convey information of various kinds to the personality. Such dreams are a faint echo of the direct spiritual knowledge which the man of Atlantis, for instance, had at his direct command. Enlightenment in philosophy, science, art and the past and future progress of the earth and its races may come in this way. Records of the past may be brought before the dreamer, or hidden process of nature may be shown to him, or symbols may be illustrated and their meaning explained.

Such instruction through the means, always, of Elementals and Nature-Spirits is given in dreams where the Higher Mind cannot reach the personality directly. A sufficiently strong tie has not been established between the incarnated portion of the Mind and that higher portion which is not as yet incarnate, and man should aim at creating that which in *waking life* will be a connection enabling him to be directly in touch with his Higher Mind.

I must just touch now on the subject of obsession. Nature-Spirits may obsess not only

## NATURE-SPIRITS.

human beings, but animals, and even machines, trees and certain places such as pools, lakes, stones and mountains. The obsession consists in hovering over or entering into the body or object obsessed. Obsessions vary with different kinds of Nature-Spirits and the circumstances and manner under which the persons are obsessed. Obsession of a human being is different from the phenomenon of a multiple personality, though among the so-called "ghosts" of living and of dead men which share in the possession of a human body not their own, may occasionally be found an Elemental which also obsesses the body at times, and so appears to be one of the personalities. The Nature-Spirits which obsess are either harmless creatures seeking only some sensation to have a little fun, or they are malignant, evil in purpose. There may be occasionally an obsession by Nature-Spirits to give a warning or a prophecy. This occurs principally among people who are nature worshippers. There the Nature-Spirits communicate in this way in return for the worship paid them.

Obsession comes about either naturally or by solicitation. In the case of human beings it comes naturally, because of their psychic organisation, because of some peculiar position of the body, as in the case of nightmares, because of psychic derangement brought on by disease or extreme excitement or exhaustion.

Obsession may be brought about by various kinds of diseases, which either exhaust the body

## NATURE-SPIRITS.

or unbalance or dislodge the mind. Diseases accompanied by convulsions offer a favourable opportunity to Nature-Spirits for temporary obsession. Where epilepsy dates from infancy and originates in obsession by a Nature-Spirit (I am not here speaking of any other kind of "ghost" or human disembodied entity), it means that through some prenatal condition the Nature-Spirit has made contact with the Human Elemental of the epileptic. In such a case the epilepsy has no physical cause, but is due to the seizure at certain times of the body of the patient by the Nature-Spirit. The cure for this kind of epilepsy is exorcism by which the connection between the Nature-Spirit is severed. Exorcism, however, may have no effect whatever on epilepsy of another origin.

The Nature-Spirits or Elementals obsessing want to do neither good nor evil, as a rule, but simply wish to get sensation, and that preferably through human beings. If a definite purpose is shown through many phases of obsession, then an Intelligence directs the Elemental.

The sybils of former days were usually obsessed by Nature-Spirits. There is a difference between a sybil and a medium, the latter being a psychic man or woman whose body is open to any influence that may seek entrance, whether it be a Nature-Spirit or a physical "ghost" of a living or dead person. A medium is unprotected except in so far as his or her own nature wards off that which is not of its kind. A sybil, on the other

## NATURE-SPIRITS.

hand, was one who was naturally endowed or by preparation fitted to come into contact with Nature-Spirits. When the sybil was ready she was dedicated to the service of an Elemental "Regent" or Ruler, who at times permitted her to be obsessed by a Spirit of his element. She was held apart, sacred to that work.

It will be realised from what I have said, that the subject of Nature-Spirits and Elemental forces is intimately related to real life, and not remote from human affairs, as one may at first be inclined to suppose. The elemental world is around and within every single department of life ; the structure of physical objects is made up of elemental beings ; in and around all physical phenomena heave the oceans of the four occult elements. Their Spirits temporarily embodied or bewitched into physical objects in the mineral and vegetable worlds and in animal and human bodies I have referred to as "Elementals" or "Elemental Intelligences," and those in external invisible nature as "Nature-Spirits," because it was necessary to make a distinction. It is man's task to redeem these beings which are imprisoned into matter. By means of his senses he constantly receives into himself hosts of these beings, and through his spiritual activity he either changes and frees them back into their own element, or makes their imprisonment still more secure. Moods of depression, of idleness, of pessimism, all have the effect of binding these bewitched

## NATURE-SPIRITS.

Nature-Spirits or Elementals more closely into matter. Optimism, cheerfulness, kindness have exactly the opposite effect. Those elemental beings which a man has not released during his life remain within his soul sphere and return with him at his next incarnation as "skandhas" until he is able to free them into their element. There is constant action and reaction between man and the ocean of elemental life around him which Rosicrucian Wisdom poetically named "the waters under the earth." Man has the destiny of this planet in his keeping, to make or mar as he will.





