

THE THEOSOPHICAL BOOKSHELF



**THE THEOSOPHICAL
WRITINGS OF
ANNIE BESANT**

The Theosophical Writings of Annie Besant

Contents:

Thought-Forms

Foreword

Thought-Forms

The Difficulty Of Representation

The Two Effects Of Thought

How The Vibration Acts

The Form And Its Effect

The Meaning Of The Colours

Three Classes Of Thought-Forms

Illustrative Thought-Forms

Forms Seen In Those Meditating

Helpful Thoughts

Forms Built By Music

The Case For India

Presidential Address

Gone To The Peace.

Chapter I. Pre-War Military Expenditure.

Chapter II. Causes Of The New Spirit In India.

Chapter III. Why India Demands Home Rule.

My Path To Atheism

Preface To First Edition.

On The Deity Of Jesus Of Nazareth

A Comparison Between The Fourth Gospel And The
Three Synoptics
On The Atonement.
On The Mediation And Salvation Of Ecclesiastical
Christianity.
On Eternal Torture.
On Inspiration
On The Religious Education Of Children.
Natural Religion Versus Revealed Religion.
On The Nature And The Existence Of God.
Euthanasia.
On Prayer.
Constructive Rationalism.
The Beauties Of The Prayer-Book.
The Litany.
Prayers And Thanksgivings Upon Several Occasions.
The Communion Service.
The Baptismal Offices.
The Order Of Confirmation.
The Form Of The Solemnization Of Matrimony.
The Order For The Visitation Of The Sick.
The Order For The Burial Of The Dead.
A Commination Or Denouncing Of God's Anger And
Judgments Against
Forms Of Prayer To Be Used At Sea.
The Form And Manner Of Making, Ordaining, And
Consecrating Of Bishops,
The Articles.
The Church Of England Catechism

Death—And After?

Preface.

Death—And After?

Appendix.

[The Christian Creed, Or, What It Is Blasphemy To Deny](#)

[The Basis Of Morality](#)

[I - Revelation](#)

[Ii - Intuition](#)

[Iii - Utility](#)

[Iv - Evolution](#)

[V - Mysticism](#)

[Evolution Of Life And Form](#)

[Ancient And Modern Science.](#)

[The Functions Of The Gods.](#)

[Evolution Of Life.](#)

[Evolution Of Form.](#)

[London Lectures Of 1907](#)

[Psychism And Spirituality](#)

[The Place Of Masters In Religions](#)

[Theosophy And The Theosophical Society](#)

[The Place Of Phenomena In The Theosophical Society](#)

[Spiritual And Temporal Authority](#)

[The Relation Of The Masters To The Theosophical Society](#)

[The Future Of The Theosophical Society](#)

[The Value Of Theosophy In The World Of Thought](#)

[The Field Of Work Of The Theosophical Society.](#)

[Avatâras](#)

[First Lecture.](#)

[Second Lecture.](#)

[Third Lecture.](#)

[Fourth Lecture.](#)

Esoteric Christianity - Or The Lesser Mysteries.

Why I Became A Theosophist

Foreword.

Chapter I. The Hidden Side Of Religions.

Chapter Ii. The Hidden Side Of Christianity.

Chapter Iii. The Hidden Side Of Christianity(*Concluded*).

Chapter Iv. The Historical Christ.

Chapter V. The Mythic Christ.

Chapter Vi. The Mystic Christ.

Chapter Vii. The Atonement.

Chapter Viii. Resurrection And Ascension.

Chapter Ix. The Trinity.

Chapter X. Prayer.

Chapter Xi. The Forgiveness Of Sins.

Chapter Xii. Sacraments.

Chapter Xiii. Sacraments (*Continued*).

Chapter Xiv. Revelation.

Afterword.

An Introduction To Yoga

Lecture I - The Nature Of Yoga

Lecture Ii - Schools Of Thought

Lecture Iii - Yoga As Science

Lecture Iv - Yoga As Practice

Karma

Preface

Introduction

The Invariability Of Law

The Planes Of Nature

The Generation Of Thought-Forms

Activity Of Thought-Forms

The Making Of Karma In Principle

[The Making Of Karma In Detail](#)
[The Working Out Of Karma](#)
[Facing Karmic Results](#)
[Building The Future](#)
[Moulding Karma](#)
[The Ceasing Of Karma](#)
[Collective Karma](#)
[Conclusion](#)

The Theosophical Writings of Annie Besant
Jazzybee Verlag Jürgen Beck
86450 Altenmünster, Germany

ISBN: 9783849604387

www.jazzybee-verlag.de
admin@jazzybee-verlag.de

*Cover Design: based on an image by tetraktys, licensed
under Creative Commons Attribution ShareAlike 3.0
Unported.*

THOUGHT-FORMS

1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
1. High Spirituality.	1. Devotion mixed with Affection.	1. Devotion to a Noble Ideal.	1. Pure Religious Feeling.	1. Selfish Religious Feeling.	
2. Religious Feeling tinged with Fear.	2. Highest Intellect.	2. Strong Intellect.	2. Low type of Intellect.	2. Pride.	
3. Sympathy.	3. Love for Humanity.	3. Unselfish Affection.	3. Selfish Affection.	3. Pure Affection.	
4. Adaptability.	4. Jealousy.	4. Deceit.	4. Fear.	4. Depression.	
5. Selfishness.	5. Avarice.	5. Anger.	5. Sensuality.	5. Malice.	

MEANING OF THE COLOURS

FOREWORD

The text of this little book is the joint work of Mr Leadbeater and myself; some of it has already appeared as an article in *Lucifer* (now the *Theosophical Review*), but the

greater part of it is new. The drawing and painting of the Thought-Forms observed by Mr Leadbeater or by myself, or by both of us together, has been done by three friends—Mr John Varley, Mr Prince, and Miss Macfarlane, to each of whom we tender our cordial thanks. To paint in earth's dull colours the forms clothed in the living light of other worlds is a hard and thankless task; so much the more gratitude is due to those who have attempted it. They needed coloured fire, and had only ground earths. We have also to thank Mr F. Bligh Bond for allowing us to use his essay on *Vibration Figures*, and some of his exquisite drawings. Another friend, who sent us some notes and a few drawings, insists on remaining anonymous, so we can only send our thanks to him with similar anonymity.

It is our earnest hope—as it is our belief—that this little book will serve as a striking moral lesson to every reader, making him realise the nature and power of his thoughts, acting as a stimulus to the noble, a curb on the base. With this belief and hope we send it on its way.

ANNIE BESANT.

THOUGHT-FORMS

As knowledge increases, the attitude of science towards the things of the invisible world is undergoing considerable modification. Its attention is no longer directed solely to the earth with all its variety of objects, or to the physical worlds around it; but it finds itself compelled to glance further afield, and to construct hypotheses as to the nature of the matter and force which lie in the regions beyond the ken of its instruments. Ether is now comfortably settled in the scientific kingdom, becoming almost more than a hypothesis. Mesmerism, under its new name of hypnotism,

is no longer an outcast. Reichenbach's experiments are still looked at askance, but are not wholly condemned. Röntgen's rays have rearranged some of the older ideas of matter, while radium has revolutionised them, and is leading science beyond the borderland of ether into the astral world. The boundaries between animate and inanimate matter are broken down. Magnets are found to be possessed of almost uncanny powers, transferring certain forms of disease in a way not yet satisfactorily explained. Telepathy, clairvoyance, movement without contact, though not yet admitted to the scientific table, are approaching the Cinderella-stage. The fact is that science has pressed its researches so far, has used such rare ingenuity in its questionings of nature, has shown such tireless patience in its investigations, that it is receiving the reward of those who seek, and forces and beings of the next higher plane of nature are beginning to show themselves on the outer edge of the physical field. "Nature makes no leaps," and as the physicist nears the confines of his kingdom he finds himself bewildered by touches and gleams from another realm which interpenetrates his own. He finds himself compelled to speculate on invisible presences, if only to find a rational explanation for undoubted physical phenomena, and insensibly he slips over the boundary, and is, although he does not yet realise it, contacting the astral plane.

One of the most interesting of the highroads from the physical to the astral is that of the study of thought. The Western scientist, commencing in the anatomy and physiology of the brain, endeavours to make these the basis for "a sound psychology." He passes then into the region of dreams, illusions, hallucinations; and as soon as he endeavours to elaborate an experimental science which shall classify and arrange these, he inevitably plunges into the astral plane. Dr Baraduc of Paris has nearly crossed the barrier, and is well on the way towards photographing astro-

mental images, to obtaining pictures of what from the materialistic standpoint would be the results of vibrations in the grey matter of the brain.

It has long been known to those who have given attention to the question that impressions were produced by the reflection of the ultra-violet rays from objects not visible by the rays of the ordinary spectrum. Clairvoyants were occasionally justified by the appearance on sensitive photographic plates of figures seen and described by them as present with the sitter, though invisible to physical sight. It is not possible for an unbiassed judgment to reject *in toto* the evidence of such occurrences proffered by men of integrity on the strength of their own experiments, oftentimes repeated. And now we have investigators who turn their attention to the obtaining of images of subtle forms, inventing methods specially designed with the view of reproducing them. Among these, Dr Baraduc seems to have been the most successful, and he has published a volume dealing with his investigations and containing reproductions of the photographs he has obtained. Dr Baraduc states that he is investigating the subtle forces by which the soul—defined as the intelligence working between the body and the spirit—expresses itself, by seeking to record its movements by means of a needle, its "luminous" but invisible vibrations by impressions on sensitive plates. He shuts out by non-conductors electricity and heat. We can pass over his experiments in Biometry (measurement of life by movements), and glance at those in Iconography—the impressions of invisible waves, regarded by him as of the nature of light, in which the soul draws its own image. A number of these photographs represent etheric and magnetic results of physical phenomena, and these again we may pass over as not bearing on our special subject, interesting as they are in themselves. Dr Baraduc obtained various impressions by strongly thinking of an

object, the effect produced by the thought-form appearing on a sensitive plate; thus he tried to project a portrait of a lady (then dead) whom he had known, and produced an impression due to his thought of a drawing he had made of her on her deathbed. He quite rightly says that the creation of an object is the passing out of an image from the mind and its subsequent materialisation, and he seeks the chemical effect caused on silver salts by this thought-created picture. One striking illustration is that of a force raying outwards, the projection of an earnest prayer. Another prayer is seen producing forms like the fronds of a fern, another like rain pouring upwards, if the phrase may be permitted. A rippled oblong mass is projected by three persons thinking of their unity in affection. A young boy sorrowing over and caressing a dead bird is surrounded by a flood of curved interwoven threads of emotional disturbance. A strong vortex is formed by a feeling of deep sadness. Looking at this most interesting and suggestive series, it is clear that in these pictures that which is obtained is not the thought-image, but the effect caused in etheric matter by its vibrations, and it is necessary to clairvoyantly see the thought in order to understand the results produced. In fact, the illustrations are instructive for what they do not show directly, as well as for the images that appear.

It may be useful to put before students, a little more plainly than has hitherto been done, some of the facts in nature which will render more intelligible the results at which Dr Baraduc is arriving. Necessarily imperfect these must be, a physical photographic camera and sensitive plates not being ideal instruments for astral research; but, as will be seen from the above, they are most interesting and valuable as forming a link between clairvoyant and physical scientific investigations.

At the present time observers outside the Theosophical Society are concerning themselves with the fact that emotional changes show their nature by changes of colour in the cloud-like ovoid, or aura, that encompasses all living beings. Articles on the subject are appearing in papers unconnected with the Theosophical Society, and a medical specialist has collected a large number of cases in which the colour of the aura of persons of various types and temperaments is recorded by him. His results resemble closely those arrived at by clairvoyant theosophists and others, and the general unanimity on the subject is sufficient to establish the fact, if the evidence be judged by the usual canons applied to human testimony.

The book *Man Visible and Invisible* dealt with the general subject of the aura. The present little volume, written by the author of *Man Visible and Invisible*, and a theosophical colleague, is intended to carry the subject further; and it is believed that this study is useful, as impressing vividly on the mind of the student the power and living nature of thought and desire, and the influence exerted by them on all whom they reach.

Dr Hooker, Gloucester Place, London, W.

THE DIFFICULTY OF REPRESENTATION

We have often heard it said that thoughts are things, and there are many among us who are persuaded of the truth of this statement. Yet very few of us have any clear idea as to what kind of thing a thought is, and the object of this little book is to help us to conceive this.

There are some serious difficulties in our way, for our conception of space is limited to three dimensions, and when we attempt to make a drawing we practically limit ourselves to two. In reality the presentation even of ordinary three-dimensional objects is seriously defective, for scarcely a line or angle in our drawing is accurately shown. If a road crosses the picture, the part in the foreground must be represented as enormously wider than that in the background, although in reality the width is unchanged. If a house is to be drawn, the right angles at its corners must be shown as acute or obtuse as the case may be, but hardly ever as they actually are. In fact, we draw everything not as it is but as it appears, and the effort of the artist is by a skilful arrangement of lines upon a flat surface to convey to the eye an impression which shall recall that made by a three-dimensional object.

It is possible to do this only because similar objects are already familiar to those who look at the picture and accept the suggestion which it conveys. A person who had never seen a tree could form but little idea of one from even the most skilful painting. If to this difficulty we add the other and far more serious one of a limitation of consciousness, and suppose ourselves to be showing the picture to a being who knew only two dimensions, we see how utterly impossible it would be to convey to him any adequate impression of such a landscape as we see. Precisely this difficulty in its most aggravated form stands in our way, when we try to make a drawing of even a very simple thought-form. The vast majority of those who look at the picture are absolutely limited to the consciousness of three dimensions, and furthermore, have not the slightest conception of that inner world to which thought-forms belong, with all its splendid light and colour. All that we can do at the best is to represent a section of the thought-form; and those whose faculties enable them to see the original

cannot but be disappointed with any reproduction of it. Still, those who are at present unable to see anything will gain at least a partial comprehension, and however inadequate it may be it is at least better than nothing.

All students know that what is called the aura of man is the outer part of the cloud-like substance of his higher bodies, interpenetrating each other, and extending beyond the confines of his physical body, the smallest of all. They know also that two of these bodies, the mental and desire bodies, are those chiefly concerned with the appearance of what are called thought-forms. But in order that the matter may be made clear for all, and not only for students already acquainted with theosophical teachings, a recapitulation of the main facts will not be out of place.

Man, the Thinker, is clothed in a body composed of innumerable combinations of the subtle matter of the mental plane, this body being more or less refined in its constituents and organised more or less fully for its functions, according to the stage of intellectual development at which the man himself has arrived. The mental body is an object of great beauty, the delicacy and rapid motion of its particles giving it an aspect of living iridescent light, and this beauty becomes an extraordinarily radiant and entrancing loveliness as the intellect becomes more highly evolved and is employed chiefly on pure and sublime topics. Every thought gives rise to a set of correlated vibrations in the matter of this body, accompanied with a marvellous play of colour, like that in the spray of a waterfall as the sunlight strikes it, raised to the *n*th degree of colour and vivid delicacy. The body under this impulse throws off a vibrating portion of itself, shaped by the nature of the vibrations—as figures are made by sand on a disk vibrating to a musical note—and this gathers from the surrounding atmosphere matter like itself in fineness

from the elemental essence of the mental world. We have then a thought-form pure and simple, and it is a living entity of intense activity animated by the one idea that generated it. If made of the finer kinds of matter, it will be of great power and energy, and may be used as a most potent agent when directed by a strong and steady will. Into the details of such use we will enter later.

When the man's energy flows outwards towards external objects of desire, or is occupied in passional and emotional activities, this energy works in a less subtle order of matter than the mental, in that of the astral world. What is called his desire-body is composed of this matter, and it forms the most prominent part of the aura in the undeveloped man. Where the man is of a gross type, the desire-body is of the denser matter of the astral plane, and is dull in hue, browns and dirty greens and reds playing a great part in it. Through this will flash various characteristic colours, as his passions are excited. A man of a higher type has his desire-body composed of the finer qualities of astral matter, with the colours, rippling over and flashing through it, fine and clear in hue. While less delicate and less radiant than the mental body, it forms a beautiful object, and as selfishness is eliminated all the duller and heavier shades disappear.

This desire (or astral) body gives rise to a second class of entities, similar in their general constitution to the thought-forms already described, but limited to the astral plane, and generated by the mind under the dominion of the animal nature.

These are caused by the activity of the lower mind, throwing itself out through the astral body—the activity of Kâma-Manas in theosophical terminology, or the mind dominated by desire. Vibrations in the body of desire, or astral body, are in this case set up, and under these this body throws off

a vibrating portion of itself, shaped, as in the previous case, by the nature of the vibrations, and this attracts to itself some of the appropriate elemental essence of the astral world. Such a thought-form has for its body this elemental essence, and for its animating soul the desire or passion which threw it forth; according to the amount of mental energy combined with this desire or passion will be the force of the thought-form. These, like those belonging to the mental plane, are called artificial elementals, and they are by far the most common, as few thoughts of ordinary men and women are untinged with desire, passion, or emotion.

THE TWO EFFECTS OF THOUGHT

Each definite thought produces a double effect—a radiating vibration and a floating form. The thought itself appears first to clairvoyant sight as a vibration in the mental body, and this may be either simple or complex. If the thought itself is absolutely simple, there is only the one rate of vibration, and only one type of mental matter will be strongly affected. The mental body is composed of matter of several degrees of density, which we commonly arrange in classes according to the sub-planes. Of each of these we have many sub-divisions, and if we typify these by drawing horizontal lines to indicate the different degrees of density, there is another arrangement which we might symbolise by drawing perpendicular lines at right angles to the others, to denote types which differ in quality as well as in density. There are thus many varieties of this mental matter, and it is found that each one of these has its own especial and appropriate rate of vibration, to which it seems most accustomed, so that it very readily responds to it, and tends to return to it as soon as possible when it has been forced away from it by some strong rush of thought or feeling.

When a sudden wave of some emotion sweeps over a man, for example, his astral body is thrown into violent agitation, and its original colours are for the time almost obscured by the flush of carmine, of blue, or of scarlet which corresponds with the rate of vibration of that particular emotion. This change is only temporary; it passes off in a few seconds, and the astral body rapidly resumes its usual condition. Yet every such rush of feeling produces a permanent effect: it always adds a little of its hue to the normal colouring of the astral body, so that every time that the man yields himself to a certain emotion it becomes easier for him to yield himself to it again, because his astral body is getting into the habit of vibrating at that especial rate.

The majority of human thoughts, however, are by no means simple. Absolutely pure affection of course exists; but we very often find it tinged with pride or with selfishness, with jealousy or with animal passion. This means that at least two separate vibrations appear both in the mental and astral bodies—frequently more than two. The radiating vibration, therefore, will be a complex one, and the resultant thought-form will show several colours instead of only one.

HOW THE VIBRATION ACTS

These radiating vibrations, like all others in nature, become less powerful in proportion to the distance from their source, though it is probable that the variation is in proportion to the cube of the distance instead of to the square, because of the additional dimension involved. Again, like all other vibrations, these tend to reproduce themselves whenever opportunity is offered to them; and so whenever

they strike upon another mental body they tend to provoke in it their own rate of motion. That is—from the point of view of the man whose mental body is touched by these waves—they tend to produce in his mind thoughts of the same type as that which had previously arisen in the mind of the thinker who sent forth the waves. The distance to which such thought-waves penetrate, and the force and persistency with which they impinge upon the mental bodies of others, depend upon the strength and clearness of the original thought. In this way the thinker is in the same position as the speaker. The voice of the latter sets in motion waves of sound in the air which radiate from him in all directions, and convey his message to all those who are within hearing, and the distance to which his voice can penetrate depends upon its power and upon the clearness of his enunciation. In just the same way the forceful thought will carry very much further than the weak and undecided thought; but clearness and definiteness are of even greater importance than strength. Again, just as the speaker's voice may fall upon heedless ears where men are already engaged in business or in pleasure, so may a mighty wave of thought sweep past without affecting the mind of the man, if he be already deeply engrossed in some other line of thought.

It should be understood that this radiating vibration conveys the character of the thought, but not its subject. If a Hindu sits rapt in devotion to Kṛiṣṇa, the waves of feeling which pour forth from him stimulate devotional feeling in all those who come under their influence, though in the case of the Muhammadan that devotion is to Allah, while for the Zoroastrian it is to Ahuramazda, or for the Christian to Jesus. A man thinking keenly upon some high subject pours out from himself vibrations which tend to stir up thought at a similar level in others, but they in no way suggest to those others the special subject of his thought. They naturally act with special vigour upon those minds already habituated to

vibrations of similar character; yet they have some effect on every mental body upon which they impinge, so that their tendency is to awaken the power of higher thought in those to whom it has not yet become a custom. It is thus evident that every man who thinks along high lines is doing missionary work, even though he may be entirely unconscious of it.

THE FORM AND ITS EFFECT

Let us turn now to the second effect of thought, the creation of a definite form. All students of the occult are acquainted with the idea of the elemental essence, that strange half-intelligent life which surrounds us in all directions, vivifying the matter of the mental and astral planes. This matter thus animated responds very readily to the influence of human thought, and every impulse sent out, either from the mental body or from the astral body of man, immediately clothes itself in a temporary vehicle of this vitalised matter. Such a thought or impulse becomes for the time a kind of living creature, the thought-force being the soul, and the vivified matter the body. Instead of using the somewhat clumsy paraphrase, "astral or mental matter ensouled by the monadic essence at the stage of one of the elemental kingdoms," theosophical writers often, for brevity's sake, call this quickened matter simply elemental essence; and sometimes they speak of the thought-form as "an elemental." There may be infinite variety in the colour and shape of such elementals or thought-forms, for each thought draws round it the matter which is appropriate for its expression, and sets that matter into vibration in harmony with its own; so that the character of the thought decides its colour, and the study of its variations and combinations is an exceedingly interesting one.

This thought-form may not inaptly be compared to a Leyden jar, the coating of living essence being symbolised by the jar, and the thought energy by the charge of electricity. If the man's thought or feeling is directly connected with someone else, the resultant thought-form moves towards that person and discharges itself upon his astral and mental bodies. If the man's thought is about himself, or is based upon a personal feeling, as the vast majority of thoughts are, it hovers round its creator and is always ready to react upon him whenever he is for a moment in a passive condition. For example, a man who yields himself to thoughts of impurity may forget all about them while he is engaged in the daily routine of his business, even though the resultant forms are hanging round him in a heavy cloud, because his attention is otherwise directed and his astral body is therefore not impressible by any other rate of vibration than its own. When, however, the marked vibration slackens and the man rests after his labours and leaves his mind blank as regards definite thought, he is very likely to feel the vibration of impurity stealing insidiously upon him. If the consciousness of the man be to any extent awakened, he may perceive this and cry out that he is being tempted by the devil; yet the truth is that the temptation is from without only in appearance, since it is nothing but the natural reaction upon him of his own thought-forms. Each man travels through space enclosed within a cage of his own building, surrounded by a mass of the forms created by his habitual thoughts. Through this medium he looks out upon the world, and naturally he sees everything tinged with its predominant colours, and all rates of vibration which reach him from without are more or less modified by its rate. Thus until the man learns complete control of thought and feeling, he sees nothing as it really is, since all his observations must be made through this medium, which distorts and colours everything like badly-made glass.

If the thought-form be neither definitely personal nor specially aimed at someone else, it simply floats detached in the atmosphere, all the time radiating vibrations similar to those originally sent forth by its creator. If it does not come into contact with any other mental body, this radiation gradually exhausts its store of energy, and in that case the form falls to pieces; but if it succeeds in awakening sympathetic vibration in any mental body near at hand, an attraction is set up, and the thought-form is usually absorbed by that mental body. Thus we see that the influence of the thought-form is by no means so far-reaching as that of the original vibration; but in so far as it acts, it acts with much greater precision. What it produces in the mind-body which it influences is not merely a thought of an order similar to that which gave it birth; it is actually the same thought. The radiation may affect thousands and stir up in them thoughts on the same level as the original, and yet it may happen that no one of them will be identical with that original; the thought-form can affect only very few, but in those few cases it will reproduce exactly the initiatory idea.

The fact of the creation by vibrations of a distinct form, geometrical or other, is already familiar to every student of acoustics, and "Chladni's" figures are continually reproduced in every physical laboratory.

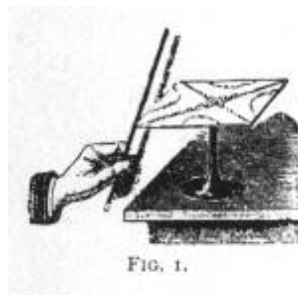


FIG. 1. CHLADNI'S SOUND PLATE

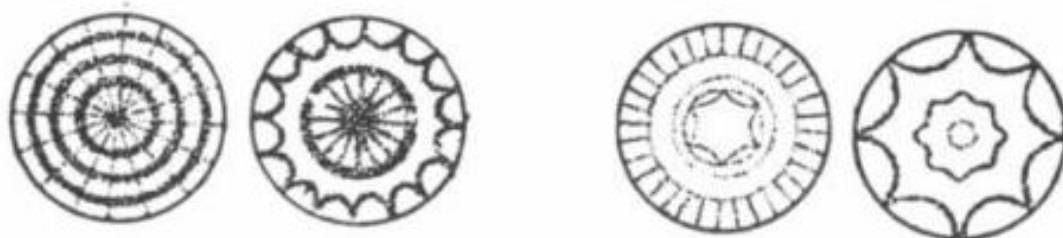


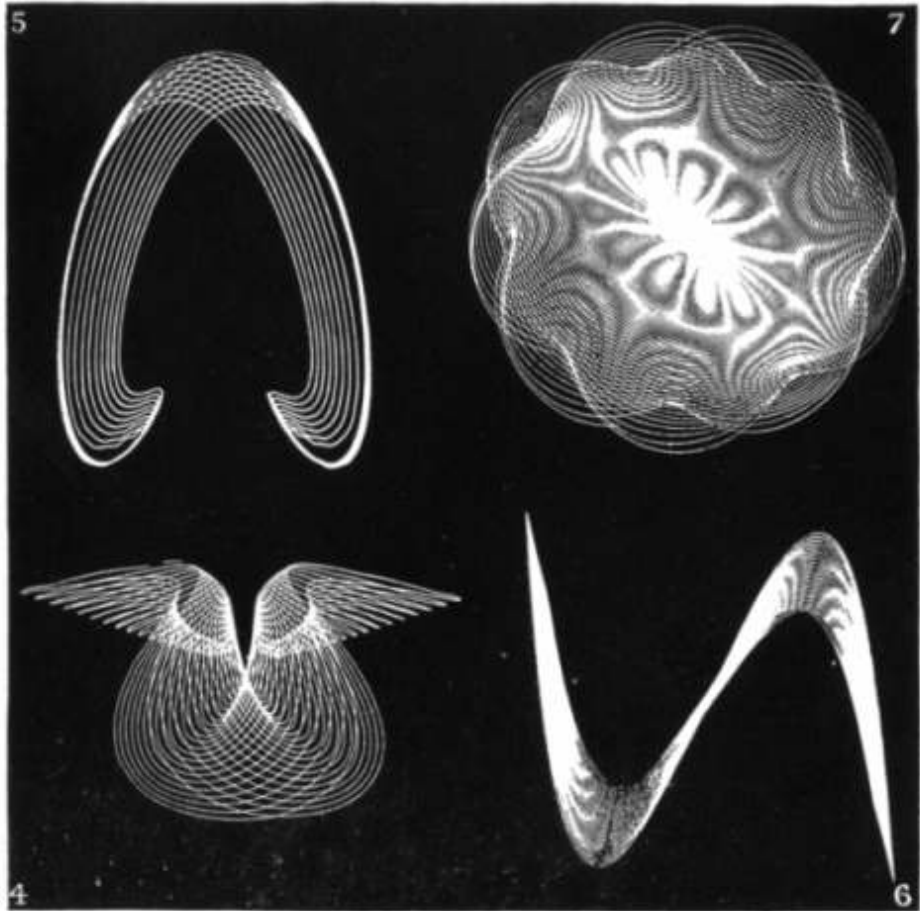
FIG. 2.

FIG. 2. FORMS PRODUCED IN SOUND

For the lay reader the following brief description may be useful. A Chladni's sound plate (fig. 1) is made of brass or plate-glass. Grains of fine sand or spores are scattered over the surface, and the edge of the plate is bowed. The sand is thrown up into the air by the vibration of the plate, and re-falling on the plate is arranged in regular lines (fig. 2). By touching the edge of the plate at different points when it is bowed, different notes, and hence varying forms, are obtained (fig. 3). If the figures here given are compared with those obtained from the human voice, many likenesses will be observed. For these latter, the 'voice-forms' so admirably studied and pictured by Mrs Watts Hughes, bearing witness to the same fact, should be consulted, and her work on the subject should be in the hands of every student. But few perhaps have realised that the shapes pictured are due to the interplay of the vibrations that create them, and that a machine exists by means of which two or more simultaneous motions can be imparted to a pendulum, and that by attaching a fine drawing-pen to a lever connected with the pendulum its action may be exactly traced. Substitute for the swing of the pendulum the vibrations set up in the mental or astral body, and we have clearly before us the *modus operandi* of the building of forms by vibrations.

The following description is taken from a most interesting essay entitled *Vibration Figures*, by F. Bligh Bond, F.R.I.B.A., who has drawn a number of remarkable figures by the use of pendulums. The pendulum is suspended on knife edges of hardened steel, and is free to swing only at right angles to the knife-edge suspension. Four such pendulums may be coupled in pairs, swinging at right angles to each other, by threads connecting the shafts of each pair of pendulums with the ends of a light but rigid lath, from the centre of which run other threads; these threads carry the united movements of each pair of pendulums to a light square of wood, suspended by a spring, and bearing a pen. The pen is thus controlled by the combined movement of the four pendulums, and this movement is registered on a drawing board by the pen. There is no limit, theoretically, to the number of pendulums that can be combined in this manner. The movements are rectilinear, but two rectilinear vibrations of equal amplitude acting at right angles to each other generate a circle if they alternate precisely, an ellipse if the alternations are less regular or the amplitudes unequal. A cyclic vibration may also be obtained from a pendulum free to swing in a rotary path. In these ways a most wonderful series of drawings have been obtained, and the similarity of these to some of the thought-forms is remarkable; they suffice to demonstrate how readily vibrations may be transformed into figures. Thus compare fig. 4 with fig. 12, the mother's prayer; or fig. 5 with fig. 10; or fig. 6 with fig. 25, the serpent-like darting forms. Fig. 7 is added as an illustration of the complexity attainable. It seems to us a most marvellous thing that some of the drawings, made apparently at random by the use of this machine, should exactly correspond to higher types of thought-forms created in meditation. We are sure that a wealth of significance lies behind this fact, though it will need much further investigation before we can say certainly

all that it means. But it must surely imply this much—that, if two forces on the physical plane bearing a certain ratio one to the other can draw a form which exactly corresponds to that produced on the mental plane by a complex thought, we may infer that that thought sets in motion on its own plane two forces which are in the same ratio one to the other. What these forces are and how they work remains to be seen; but if we are ever able to solve this problem, it is likely that it will open to us a new and exceedingly valuable field of knowledge.



FIGS. 4-7. FORMS PRODUCED BY PENDULUMS

General Principles.

Three general principles underlie the production of all thought-forms:—

1. Quality of thought determines colour.
2. Nature of thought determines form.
3. Definiteness of thought determines clearness of outline.

THE MEANING OF THE COLOURS

The table of colours given in the frontispiece has already been thoroughly described in the book *Man Visible and Invisible*, and the meaning to be attached to them is just the same in the thought-form as in the body out of which it is evolved. For the sake of those who have not at hand the full description given in the book just mentioned, it will be well to state that black means hatred and malice. Red, of all shades from lurid brick-red to brilliant scarlet, indicates anger; brutal anger will show as flashes of lurid red from dark brown clouds, while the anger of "noble indignation" is a vivid scarlet, by no means unbeautiful, though it gives an unpleasant thrill; a particularly dark and unpleasant red, almost exactly the colour called dragon's blood, shows animal passion and sensual desire of various kinds. Clear brown (almost burnt sienna) shows avarice; hard dull brown-grey is a sign of selfishness—a colour which is indeed painfully common; deep heavy grey signifies depression, while a livid pale grey is associated with fear; grey-green is a signal of deceit, while brownish-green (usually flecked with points and flashes of scarlet) betokens jealousy. Green seems always to denote adaptability; in the lowest case, when mingled with selfishness, this adaptability becomes deceit; at a later stage, when the colour becomes purer, it means rather the wish to be all things to all men, even

though it may be chiefly for the sake of becoming popular and bearing a good reputation with them; in its still higher, more delicate and more luminous aspect, it shows the divine power of sympathy. Affection expresses itself in all shades of crimson and rose; a full clear carmine means a strong healthy affection of normal type; if stained heavily with brown-grey, a selfish and grasping feeling is indicated, while pure pale rose marks that absolutely unselfish love which is possible only to high natures; it passes from the dull crimson of animal love to the most exquisite shades of delicate rose, like the early flushes of the dawning, as the love becomes purified from all selfish elements, and flows out in wider and wider circles of generous impersonal tenderness and compassion to all who are in need. With a touch of the blue of devotion in it, this may express a strong realisation of the universal brotherhood of humanity. Deep orange imports pride or ambition, and the various shades of yellow denote intellect or intellectual gratification, dull yellow ochre implying the direction of such faculty to selfish purposes, while clear gamboge shows a distinctly higher type, and pale luminous primrose yellow is a sign of the highest and most unselfish use of intellectual power, the pure reason directed to spiritual ends. The different shades of blue all indicate religious feeling, and range through all hues from the dark brown-blue of selfish devotion, or the pallid grey-blue of fetish-worship tinged with fear, up to the rich deep clear colour of heartfelt adoration, and the beautiful pale azure of that highest form which implies self-renunciation and union with the divine; the devotional thought of an unselfish heart is very lovely in colour, like the deep blue of a summer sky. Through such clouds of blue will often shine out golden stars of great brilliancy, darting upwards like a shower of sparks. A mixture of affection and devotion is manifested by a tint of violet, and the more delicate shades of this invariably show the capacity of absorbing and responding to a high and beautiful ideal. The

brilliancy and the depth of the colours are usually a measure of the strength and the activity of the feeling.

Another consideration which must not be forgotten is the type of matter in which these forms are generated. If a thought be purely intellectual and impersonal—for example, if the thinker is attempting to solve a problem in algebra or geometry—the thought-form and the wave of vibration will be confined entirely to the mental plane. If, however, the thought be of a spiritual nature, if it be tinged with love and aspiration or deep unselfish feeling, it will rise upwards from the mental plane and will borrow much of the splendour and glory of the buddhic level. In such a case its influence is exceedingly powerful, and every such thought is a mighty force for good which cannot but produce a decided effect upon all mental bodies within reach, if they contain any quality at all capable of response.

If, on the other hand, the thought has in it something of self or of personal desire, at once its vibration turns downwards, and it draws round itself a body of astral matter in addition to its clothing of mental matter. Such a thought-form is capable of acting upon the astral bodies of other men as well as their minds, so that it can not only raise thought within them, but can also stir up their feelings.

THREE CLASSES OF THOUGHT-FORMS

From the point of view of the forms which they produce we may group thought into three classes:—

1. That which takes the image of the thinker. When a man thinks of himself as in some distant place, or wishes earnestly to be in that place, he makes a thought-form in his

own image which appears there. Such a form has not infrequently been seen by others, and has sometimes been taken for the astral body or apparition of the man himself. In such a case, either the seer must have enough of clairvoyance for the time to be able to observe that astral shape, or the thought-form must have sufficient strength to materialise itself—that is, to draw round itself temporarily a certain amount of physical matter. The thought which generates such a form as this must necessarily be a strong one, and it therefore employs a larger proportion of the matter of the mental body, so that though the form is small and compressed when it leaves the thinker, it draws round it a considerable amount of astral matter, and usually expands to life-size before it appears at its destination.

2. That which takes the image of some material object. When a man thinks of his friend he forms within his mental body a minute image of that friend, which often passes outward and usually floats suspended in the air before him. In the same way if he thinks of a room, a house, a landscape, tiny images of these things are formed within the mental body and afterwards externalised. This is equally true when he is exercising his imagination; the painter who forms a conception of his future picture builds it up out of the matter of his mental body, and then projects it into space in front of him, keeps it before his mind's eye, and copies it. The novelist in the same way builds images of his character in mental matter, and by the exercise of his will moves these puppets from one position or grouping to another, so that the plot of his story is literally acted out before him. With our curiously inverted conceptions of reality it is hard for us to understand that these mental images actually exist, and are so entirely objective that they may readily be seen by the clairvoyant, and can even be rearranged by some one other than their creator. Some novelists have been dimly aware of such a process, and have

testified that their characters when once created developed a will of their own, and insisted on carrying the plot of the story along lines quite different from those originally intended by the author. This has actually happened, sometimes because the thought-forms were ensouled by playful nature-spirits, or more often because some 'dead' novelist, watching on the astral plane the development of the plan of his fellow-author, thought that he could improve upon it, and chose this method of putting forward his suggestions.

3. That which takes a form entirely its own, expressing its inherent qualities in the matter which it draws round it. Only thought-forms of this third class can usefully be illustrated, for to represent those of the first or second class would be merely to draw portraits or landscapes. In those types we have the plastic mental or astral matter moulded in imitation of forms belonging to the physical plane; in this third group we have a glimpse of the forms natural to the astral or mental planes. Yet this very fact, which makes them so interesting, places an insuperable barrier in the way of their accurate reproduction.

Thought-forms of this third class almost invariably manifest themselves upon the astral plane, as the vast majority of them are expressions of feeling as well as of thought. Those of which we here give specimens are almost wholly of that class, except that we take a few examples of the beautiful thought-forms created in definite meditation by those who, through long practice, have learnt how to think.

Thought-forms directed towards individuals produce definitely marked effects, these effects being either partially reproduced in the aura of the recipient and so increasing the total result, or repelled from it. A thought of love and of desire to protect, directed strongly towards some beloved

object, creates a form which goes to the person thought of, and remains in his aura as a shielding and protecting agent; it will seek all opportunities to serve, and all opportunities to defend, not by a conscious and deliberate action, but by a blind following out of the impulse impressed upon it, and it will strengthen friendly forces that impinge on the aura and weaken unfriendly ones. Thus may we create and maintain veritable guardian angels round those we love, and many a mother's prayer for a distant child thus circles round him, though she knows not the method by which her "prayer is answered."

In cases in which good or evil thoughts are projected at individuals, those thoughts, if they are to directly fulfil their mission, must find, in the aura of the object to whom they are sent, materials capable of responding sympathetically to their vibrations. Any combination of matter can only vibrate within certain definite limits, and if the thought-form be outside all the limits within which the aura is capable of vibrating, it cannot affect that aura at all. It consequently rebounds from it, and that with a force proportionate to the energy with which it impinged upon it. This is why it is said that a pure heart and mind are the best protectors against any inimical assaults, for such a pure heart and mind will construct an astral and a mental body of fine and subtle materials, and these bodies cannot respond to vibrations that demand coarse and dense matter. If an evil thought, projected with malefic intent, strikes such a body, it can only rebound from it, and it is flung back with all its own energy; it then flies backward along the magnetic line of least resistance, that which it has just traversed, and strikes its projector; he, having matter in his astral and mental bodies similar to that of the thought-form he generated, is thrown into respondent vibrations, and suffers the destructive effects he had intended to cause to another. Thus "curses [and blessings] come home to roost." From