

VEGETARIANISM AND ITS
OCCULT MEANINGS

C. W. LEADBEATER

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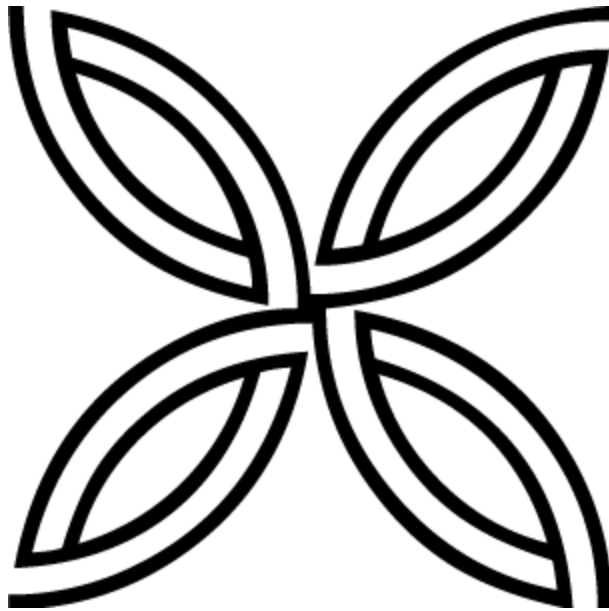
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Introduction

IN speaking of the relation between vegetarianism and occultism, it may be well for us to begin by defining our terms. We all know what is meant by vegetarianism; and although there are several varieties of it, it will not be necessary to discuss them. The vegetarian is one who abstains from eating flesh-food. There are some of them who admit such animal products as are obtained without destroying the life of the animal, as, for example, milk, butter and cheese. There are others who restrict themselves to certain varieties of the vegetable - to fruit and nuts, perhaps; there are others who prefer to take only such food as can be eaten uncooked; others will take no food which grows underground, such as potatoes, turnips, carrots, etc. We need not concern ourselves with these divisions, but simply define the vegetarian as one who abstains from any food which is obtained by the slaughter of animals - of course including birds and fish.

How shall we define occultism ?

The word is derived from the Latin *occultus*, hidden; so that it is the study of the hidden laws of nature. Since all the great laws of nature are in fact working in the invisible world far more than in the visible, occultism involves the acceptance of a much wider view of nature than that which is ordinarily taken. The occultist, then, is a man who studies all the laws of nature that he can reach or of which he can hear, and as a result of his study he identifies himself with these laws and devotes his life to the service of evolution.