

Bulletin #22

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Symbol of the Light-Scale

The evidence from modern physical observation has led to a conception of light which is a vast extension of the visible light-range. We conceive of visible light as a series of waves of variable length and rate, the variation being so inter-connected that length and rate change in such a way that their product is always constant, i.e., the velocity of approximately 186,000 miles per second. In this series the combination of the greatest length and slowest rate gives us the just barely visible red light, while that of the shortest length and fastest rate gives the furthest extreme of visible violet light. The intermediate combinations supplies all the various visible colors and shades of color. This general form of the wave theory is not very recent, but the specific character of this wave structure as now conceived is a late development. It has been found that other phenomena exist which behave in such a way that we must conceive them as belonging to the same system. Thus we have waves of lengths and rates that fall below visible light and others that lie above visible light. But in every case the velocity is constant and the general character of the waves is the same. For technical reasons this whole series of waves is called electro-magnetic. At the present time something like 60 octaves have been discovered, of which visible light forms but one.

The sensory organization of man is capable of responding directly to only a few of these octaves. The eye responds to but one octave, as already noted. The ~~senses~~ temperature

sense responds over a wider range which, over-lap^ping
visible light, extends some distance below visible light
in the region of longer waves and slower rates. But the
vast bulk of rates and lengths lie beyond the range of
vision and the temperature ~~xxxx~~ sense. Our knowledge of
the latter is derived by indirect means through the use
of cleverly designed instr^uments which supply us with
visible readings or phenomena that can be observed by the
other senses.

The total picture of the electro-magnetic system of
waves as it now appears is as follows: At the lower
extreme, i.e., the combination of the longest waves and
slowest rate, we have the specific species called electro
magnetic waves, including those employed in radio-trans-
mission^{ss}. Here there are several octaves. Next come the
infra-red waves which produce heat, part of which can be
detected by the physical organism, but which do not
produce visible effects. Next, there comes one octave of v
visible light which also produces heat, part of which can
be felt by the organism. Above visible light is the ultra-
violet consisting of several octaves, in the lower portion
of which there still remains some heat that can be detected
by instruments, but the upper portion is cold. With still
shorter waves we have the octaves known as X-rays. Beyond
this the Gamma radiation, such as that given off by radio-
active substances. The final group is known as the Cosmic
Rays which consists of a band of many octaves. The whole
group is thus divided into six species, though apparently
the electro-magnetic sequence is continuous. The division

into species is justified by notable differences in properties. But all the waves have certain characteristics in common and so they form one genus. Sometimes the whole series is called light rays or radiation.

Since from the standpoint of our philosophy, the whole of nature is an inter-locked or interdependent totality, any part of nature may serve as a symbol representing consciousness-relationships or properties. Thus we are enabled to use the phenomena of nature to suggest the reality concerning aspects of consciousness or being which do not form objects for direct study or representation for the subject-object consciousness. The light-system as above outlined supplies a valuable symbol which has many ramifications, of which a portion will be discussed here.

Symbolically, Light represents Consciousness or Intelligence while Heat represents Love or Life. Now physical light and heat form the only portion of the whole series that produce direct impressions upon the physical sensorium of man. The rest of the series thus corresponds to qualities of consciousness either above or below ordinary human consciousness. We will regard these as forms of consciousness which are indistinguishable from unconsciousness so far as the ordinary man is concerned.

Now, if we conceive of consciousness as a rising scale varying directly with the rate of the electro-magnetic series, the inferior element of the unconscious would correspond with the waves below the heat series, while the superior element would be that above the heat and

visible portion. In this rising scale it is to be noted that heat is the first organically conscious quality to become manifest. This gives to Life and Love the first place chronologically. Thus, out of the unconscious inferior roots the first differentiation into relative consciousness is the immanent Life and Love. (In this connection it is important to remember that the meaning of love is not confined to its most cultured or developed form, but includes a whole range of modifications, some of which are very primitive and some even destructive. In this sense, love is a genus which includes passion, lust and hate, as well as that high product of culture known as Compassion and the more or less excellent intermediate differentiations of love.) In this sense, all that produces heat, whether of a noble or ignoble nature, belongs to the genus Love.) For all living creatures, love in this broad sense is a necessity of life. Remove the heat beyond a certain point and life, in the organic sense, ceases. But not all creatures require visible light. In fact, some react negatively to light and must escape from it or they will perish as organisms. We may say that living organisms boil up from the inferior unconscious through the action of heat, first of all. But long before man appears upon the ~~scene~~ scene organisms become photophilous, that is, lovers of light.

For man both heat and light are essential which is simply another way of saying that love and intelligence are fundamental. But of visible light there are many

colors and shades. At the lowest and commonest level of human consciousness the most potent color is red. At this level the heat factor dominates the light factor. Here love becomes lust and passion, including all the emotions of the marital nature. But there are also superior manifestations of this phase of heat-love, including the feelings that serve to protect and cherish living organisms. The lighter the shade of red the more superior the quality of love. In the more common use of the word, "humanism" centers around the superior phases of the red-quality. We may say that all men understand some phase of the red-consciousness, but not all men understand consciousness corresponding to higher levels in the scale.

As we rise in the scale the intensity of the heat diminishes, but its quality tends to rise. Along with this, the visible light increases in intensity part of the way, and then diminishes. Visible light attains a maximum in the color yellow, with all its various shades, while there still remains a notable intensity or quantity of heat. The result is that it is in the yellow light that love attains its highest manifestation, for the intensity is still strong enough to be a ^{important} strong power while the cultural effect of the light of intelligence is in a most favorable state. Thus yellow, with its various shadings, represents the most superior combination of Love and Intelligence. Yellow is thus also the highest possible humanistic aspiration. Beyond yellow other possibilities of consciousness come into the ascendancy, some of which are barely envisaged by man, but most entirely beyond his imagination. Beyond visible light

lies the consciousness that is wholly trans-human which presently becomes such that it does not fall in the forms of love and intelligence, but belongs to another order.

Human consciousness and life ranges from the red to the violet of visible light. But, in general, only a part of this seven-fold possibility is developed in any considerable degree in any given individual. We may say that the level of any individual in the scale is determined by the point where his consciousness centers. The qualities corresponding to the other colors occupy a penumbral ~~positi~~^{eral} or peripheral position. That which is decisive in the life of an individual determines where he is. Among men as a whole light is less developed than heat, though within restricted groups the reverse is the case. Intelligence may be well developed and yet play a subordinate role with respect to heat. In such a case, the real level of the individual consciousness is represented by some shade of color below yellow.

What is the nature of that kind of consciousness represented by the portion of the light-scale above visible light? It is not to be conceived as love or intelligence in anything like the humanistic sense. It is consciousness of some totally different order, something not at all like our ~~thinkin~~ human thinking, feeling and valuation. Beings who have awakened on the levels above heat and visible light are of an order which we, as men, are quite unable to envisage. We might call them gods, but we may rest assured that they are not like any god which we can imagine. For the gods which we do imagine are created in the image

of man, that is, they have humanly conceivable qualities which have been merely exalted to a superlative degree. Only when man himself becomes a god can he understand what the real nature of a god is, and this understanding can never be translated into human terms without radical distortion. But from these supernal levels something can be translated to the human understanding and thus it is possible dimly to sense the superior consciousness although its real nature cannot be apprehended. Indirectly we are able to feel or see the effects of the supernal just as indirectly we have become conscious of the octaves of light which are not visible nor produce warmth. The physicist speaks of the softening of rays of light. When a ray of high rate and short wave length passes through a medium that has a capacity for absorption, often secondary rays are emitted of longer wave length and lower rate. Sometimes the softer ray falls in the range of visible light. This effect is manifested in the phenomenon of fluorescence. In such a case, we have what corresponds to cross-translation into the range of human consciousness. As the source is not within the range of visible light, we thus have evidence of a supernal source, which implies that there is something beyond human consciousness. But the thinkable or feelable content which is cross-translated is something different from the original consciousness before the softening process.

The mass of men have their roots in the substratum below visible light. Thus life-energy wells up from hidden deeps, that often seem appalling to the consciousness functioning within the visible range. But occasionally it happens that

an individual is uprooted and transplanted so that his roots are established in the consciousness above visible light. In this case life-energy is drawn down from a supernal source. Both types of men function within the range of the visible light but their "unconscious" roots are of totally different nature. Thus they speak different languages even when using the same words. In these two cases introceptive penetration into the unconscious leads to material of very different significance. Both classes appear to be men or beings of the same type, but actually they are creatures of totally different orders. For the one the consciousness of visible light is an attainment, the result of successful aspiration, while for the other, it is a reaching downward to something less, which is done, of course, for a purpose. But when by "life" we mean merely the octave of visible light, then for the first group it is something highly desirable, while for the latter it is a restriction and a burden. Saying this in other terms, we have the following principle; Embodied existence is a highly valuable possession for those who are reaching to it from the infra-red levels, but is a restriction for those who have had their roots transplanted into the ultra-violet. Thus the value of any octave in the scale is a matter of relativity.

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