

THE WORD

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MOMENTS WITH FRIENDS.

Can you tell me anything about the nature of fire or flame? It has always seemed a most mysterious thing. I can get no satisfactory information from scientific books.

Fire is the spirit of the flame. Flame is the body of the fire.

Fire is the active energizing driving element in all bodies. Without fire all bodies would be immovably fixed—an impossibility. Fire is that in each body which compels the particles of the body to change. In man, fire acts in various ways. The element of fire enters through the breath and into the blood. It burns up the waste tissues which are carried away by the blood and removed through the excretory channels, such as the pores, lungs and intestinal canal. Fire causes the astral, molecular, form body of the physical to change. This constant change produces heat in the body. Fire and oxygen, the gross body in which fire manifests, stimulate the desires, causing outbursts of passion and anger, which burn up the astral body and use up the nerve force. Such action of fire is elemental and according to natural impulse.

There is another fire, known to some as the alchemical fire. The true alchemical fire is the fire of the mind in thought, which resists the elemental fires and controls and compels them to conform to intelligent design as determined by mind; whereas, when uncontrolled by man, the elemental fires of desire, passion and anger, are controlled by the universal mind, that is, the mind in nature, which is not individualized—called God, nature, or God acting through nature. Man, as an individual mind, acting on the elemental fires and compelling them to conform to intelligent design, causes them to enter into new combinations and the result of the combinations of elemental fires is thought. Through thought and in thought the fires of the body and elemental matter are given form in the invisible worlds. These forms of thoughts in the invisible worlds compel gross matter to adapt itself to the forms.

Some of the characteristics of fire and flame are that they are hot, that neither ever for an instant remains the same, that they are different from any other phenomenon that we know, that they give

light, that they produce smoke, that they change forms by reducing them to ashes, that through flame, its body, fire appears as suddenly as it disappears, that they always go upward and are pointed. The fire which we see is that condition in which the spirit of the body, held in bondage by gross matter, is liberated and passes back into its primitive elemental state. On its own plane, in its own world, fire is free and active, but in the course of manifestation by involution the action of fire is reduced and controlled and finally is held within the bodies of which it is the spirit, for fire is the spirit in all bodies. The fire held in bond by gross matter we may call latent fire. This latent fire is in all the kingdoms of nature. Latent fire is, however, more active in some of the departments of each of the kingdoms than in other departments of the same kingdom. This is shown by flint and sulphur in the mineral, by hard wood and straw in the vegetable kingdom and by fat and skin in animal bodies. Latent fire is also in certain fluids, such as oil. An inflammable body requires the presence only of the active fire to evoke and free the latent from its prison. As soon as evoked, the latent fire becomes visible for a moment, then passes into the invisible world from which it came.

Fire is one of the four elements known to all occultists. Fire is the most occult of the elements. Not one of the elements known as fire, air, water and earth is visible to the eye, except in the grossest condition of that element. Therefore we see only the very lowest phases or aspects of the elements which we commonly speak of as earth, water, air and fire. Each of the four elements is necessary in the building up of physical matter, and each of the elements is represented in connection with each of the others. As each particle of physical matter holds the four elements in combination in certain proportions, each of the four elements is returned to its elemental condition as soon as the combination is broken up. Fire is that which usually breaks up the combination and causes the elements which entered into the combination to return to their original states. When fire is evoked, it being the chief factor in inflammable bodies, it appears simply to pass away. In passing away it also causes the elements air, water and earth to return to their several sources. The returning air and water are seen in the smoke. That part of the smoke which is air, and which is noticed usually in the quivering of the smoke, soon becomes invisible. That part of the smoke which is water returns to the element water by the moisture, also suspended in the air, and which becomes invisible. The only portion remaining is the grossest part of the element earth, which is in the soot and the ashes.

Besides latent fire there is chemical fire which is shown by the corrosive action of certain chemicals brought in contact with other chemicals, by the oxygen absorbed by the blood, and by the ferments which cause the digestion of foods. Then there is the alchemical fire which is generated by thought. The action of the alchemical fire of thought causes gross desire to be transmuted into a higher order of desire, which is again refined and sublimated into spiritual aspirations, all by the alchemical fire of thought. Then there is the spiritual fire which reduces all actions and thoughts into knowledge and builds up an immortal spiritual body, which may be symbolized by a spiritual fire-body.

What is the cause of great conflagrations, such as prairie fires and fires that seem to spring simultaneously from different parts of a city, and what is spontaneous combustion.

There are many contributory causes of conflagrations, but these many causes are represented in the immediate cause of the conflagration, which is the presence of the fire-element before the flame appears. It should be understood that fire as an element is capable of combining with other elements, on the plane of fire, or on other planes. By the combination of the different elements we get definite results. When the fire-element is present in great force it dominates the other elements present and compels them to ignition by its overpowering presence. The presence of the fire-element evokes the fire in neighboring bodies and through the transitional flame the imprisoned fire-element passes back into its original source. The flame which leaps up is used by the fire which evokes it to enter into the world through the flame. When the fire-element dominates the atmosphere in sufficient force it acts on all inflammable matter; then by the merest provocation, such as friction, this matter springs into flame. Prairie or forest fires may be caused from a traveler's camp fire, or by the rays of the setting sun, and incendiarism may be the cause of the burning of a great city, yet these are by no means the main cause at all times. One may often have noticed that the effort to build a fire under very favorable conditions is quite frequently followed by utter failure, whereas, on the throwing of a glowing match stick on a dock, or on the bare floor of a large building where nothing seems present that will easily burn, yet fire has been engendered by the glowing match stick and has spread so rapidly that it has burned an entire building to the ground, however great the efforts may have been to save it. Conflagrations

which have consumed great cities are chiefly due to the presence of the fire-element in every such case, however many the other contributory causes may be.

Spontaneous combustion is said to be the too rapidly uniting of inflammable matter with oxygen. But the cause is primarily due to the preparation of conflicting inflammable matter which attracts the fire-element. Thus, the friction between two inflammable materials, such as oil and rags, is followed by the sudden uniting of the matter with the oxygen in the air; this induces the fire-element, which starts the material into flame.

How are such metals as gold, copper and silver formed?

There are seven metals, which are sometimes called the sacred metals. Each of these is the precipitated and imprisoned force, light or quality which emanates from one of the seven bodies of light which we see in space and call planets. The force, or light, or quality, of each of those bodies which we call planets is attracted by the earth with its moon. These forces are living and are called the elemental spirits of the elements or planets. The earth with its moon gives body and form to the elemental forces. The metals represent the seven stages or degrees through which the elemental forces must pass in the mineral kingdom before they can have distinct entity and pass into higher kingdoms of physical nature. There are many uses to which the seven metals may be put. Cures may be effected and diseases brought about by the use or misuse of the metals. The metals possess life-giving as well as death-dealing qualities. Either of these may be evoked, consciously or unconsciously, when certain conditions prevail. It would be pedantic to give the order of the progression of the metals and their corresponding virtues, even though we were in possession of the facts, because, while there is an orderly progression from state to state of the elemental forces working through the metals, this order could not be made use of by all persons alike; what would apply to the benefit of one would be disastrous to another. Each person, although built according to the same plan, has in his composition certain qualities which correspond to the elemental spirits of the metals; some of these are beneficial, other are inimical. Generally speaking, however, gold represents the highest stage of development among the metals. The seven metals referred to are tin, gold, mercury, copper, lead, silver and iron. This enumeration should not be taken as the order of progression, or the reverse.

Metals most commonly used in past ages are not the most common at present. Gold is considered by us to be the most valuable of the seven metals, though it is not the most useful. We could more easily dispense with gold today than we can with iron. Of the metals, iron is the most necessary to our civilization, as it enters into all phases of industrial life, such as the erection of high structures, the building operation and use of steamships, of railroads, engines, tools, household utensils and furniture. It is used for decorative purposes, and it is valuable and essential in medicine. Other civilizations have run through their different periods, which are known as the golden, silver, bronze (or copper) and iron ages. The people of the earth, generally speaking, are in the iron age. It is an age which is hard and which changes more quickly than any of the others. What we do now will affect us more positively than at any other age because things move more rapidly in the iron age than in any other. Causes are followed by their consequences more swiftly in the iron than in any other age. The causes which we set up now will pass over into the age to follow. The age to follow is the golden age. In America, where a new race is forming, we have already entered it.

The seven metals here enumerated are numbered among the seventy odd elements postulated and tabulated by modern science. As to how they are formed we have said that the forces, lights, or qualities coming from the seven bodies in space, called planets, are attracted by the earth. The earth sets up a magnetic attraction and, owing to the prevailing conditions, there are precipitated these forces which are gradually built up by accretion, forming particle on particle within the magnetic belt attracting the force. Each of the seven forces is known by its particular color and quality and the manner in which the particles lie together. The time it takes for the formation of any one metal depends on prevailing conditions, as gold may be produced in an exceedingly short time when all the conditions necessary are present.

A FRIEND [H. W. Percival]



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