

The Ventricles
And
The Brain Dew



From
MAN Grand Symbol of the Mysteries
Manly Palmer Hall

CHAPTER X

THE VENTRICLES AND THE BRAIN DEW



IN HIS work on Rosicrucian anatomy, THE MICROCOSMI HISTORIA, Robert Fludd assigns the three departments of the *Empyrean* (or mundane heaven) to the cranium of the microcosm (man). In common with Boehme, therefore, he locates the paradisiacal spheres in the head, or highest part, of the inferior Adam. Fludd calls the highest plane or division of the brain the "Radius of Deity," or the "Uncreated Light." The middle he designates the "Luminous Sphere," or the "Created Light"; and the lowest he terms the "Spiritual Sphere", or the "Empyrean". This classification the great de Fluctibus derives from the Chaldaic-Cabalistic concept of AIN SOPH. The Absolute Deity of THE ZOHAR is caused to assume definition by imposing upon it certain hypothetical qualifications. The first is Boundlessness, the second Boundless Life, and the third Boundless Light. Fludd further visualizes these spiritual aspects as abiding in certain recesses of the brain. He establishes the location of these compartments by recourse to the divisions of the cranium laid down by earlier anatomists. In his astronomical teachings, Pythagoras taught that the gods did not reside in the planetary bodies but, more correctly, in the interplanetary "intervals." (*Iamblichus.*) In accordance with this astronomical concept, mediæval disciples of Galen and Avicenna assigned no organs to the "spirits" (vital centers) in the brain, but gave them cavities (ventricles) in which to mingle their essences. From this viewpoint, the soul was likened to a vapor, gas, or even a humidity, bottled up during life in remote caverns of the body (i.e., the ventricles, arteries, etc.).

Science recognizes four ventricles in the adult human brain—the two laterals, the third, and the fourth. To paraphrase the account given by Vesalius, the lateral ventricles are placed one in the upper right and one in the upper left in relation to the center of the brain. They are somewhat wing-shaped and are shown as L and M in the plate from DE HUMANI CORPORIS FABRICA. (See page 136.) The third ventricle is in the center and below them, "about midway from the forehead and the occiput." The fourth ventricle lies in the region of the cerebellum to the rear of and below the third ventricle. If to these be added the so-called fifth ventricle, and the sixth (the latter the tiny tube in the spinal cord) and all then be regarded as symbolically enclosed within the great cavern of the skull, the seven ventricles of the occultists are revealed. "There are seven cavities in the brain," writes H. P. Blavatsky, "which during life are empty in the ordinary sense of the word. In reality, they are filled with Akasa, each cavity having its own color, according to the state of consciousness * * *. These cavities are called in occultism 'the seven harmonies,' the scale of the divine harmonies, and it is these that the visions

must be reflected in if they are to remain in the brain-memory." In these cavities also the "brain stars" of Paracelsus are located, which are visible to the seer as twinkling atoms vibrating in the akasic field. The seven harmonies are reminiscent of the "singing Memnon," that lonely colossus of the Egyptian desert, which to this day utters his weird lament when the wind sweeps through the chambers of his head. St. Hildegard, of Bingen, an illumined mystic of the Middle Ages, writes thus of the mystery of the seven caves: "From the summit of the vessel of the brain to the extremity of the forehead seven equal spaces can be distinguished. Here the seven planets are designated, the uppermost planet in the highest part, the moon in front, the sun in the middle, and the other planets distributed among the other places."

For the most part, the ancients concerned themselves with only three of the brain ventricles, i.e., the laterals (considered as one), the third, and the fourth. In the earlier works of Albertus Magnus, these cavities are represented by three circles of equal size filling the entire cranium. No effort was made towards anatomical accuracy, the figure herewith reproduced being unmodifiedly diagrammatic. This is a pertinent example of the "theoretical" science of the Scholastics, whose dogmatism provoked Lord Bacon to attempt the INSTAURATION. It is the temperament of the twentieth century to take too extreme an attitude towards matters of earlier learning. We have outgrown a little, so we reject all. The recently discovered ciphers of Roger Bacon are a warning against hasty conclusions, and there is evidence that Albertus Magnus knew the true purpose of the ventricles, while we are acquainted only with their shape. In the course of time, the circular ventricles of the first authors were modified until, as in the drawing published in the first encyclopedia—a quaint old incunabula entitled REISCH'S MARGARITA PHILOSOPHICA—these caverns, or "cells," have assumed indescribable proportions and are connected by ducts, or stems. In some of his early anatomical drawings Leonardo da Vinci follows the same general concept as the Arabians, but the virtues of da Vinci's own temperament cause him to depict the ventricles as orderly and "artistic." Later, however, through dissection, he learned the correct relationship of these cavities, and the figures from his fuller knowledge, while not comparable with the exactitude of modern textbooks, are of vital importance as revealing the transition from the old to the new in the understanding of the interior structure of the brain. Da Vinci anticipated to some degree the work of Vesalius, whose monumental achievement, DE HUMANI CORPORIS FABRICA, was to bring to a close the mediæval period of theoretical anatomy. As Garrison so well notes, the FABRICA caused anatomical science to break forever with the past and throw overboard Galenical tradition. Leonardo, as his drawings prove, had the Vesalian spirit stirring within his soul, but destiny had chosen another to give the vision to a waiting world.

In his *LEONARDO DA VINCI THE ANATOMIST*, Professor J. Playfair McMurrich prefaces his consideration of Leonardo's conclusions concerning the interior construction of the brain with a summary of the earlier writers. He says in part: "Galen had located the intellectual faculties in the brain substance in close proximity to the ventricles, which contained the psychic pneuma, but his successors, notably Poseidonius and Numesius, transferred their seat to the ventricles themselves." Then, to paraphrase the professor,



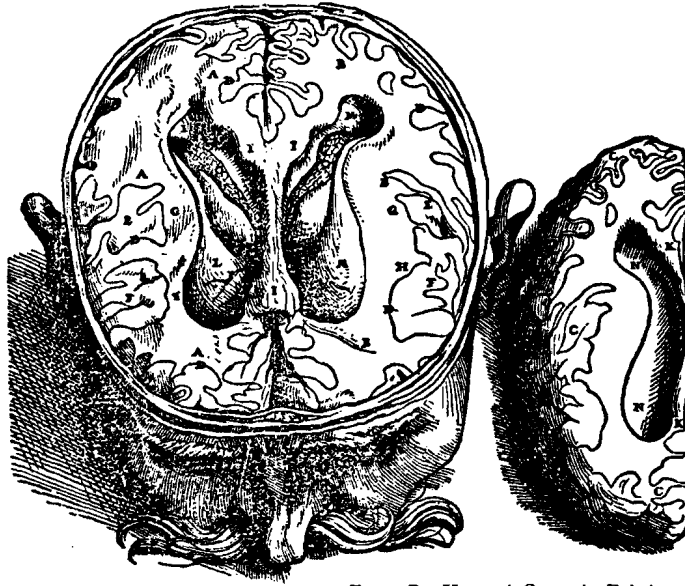
—From *Musæum Hermeticum*.

THE SEVEN SPIRITS WHICH ABIDE IN THE BRAIN

The three figures seated above the cavern bear the symbols of the ventricles

Avicenna with his Arabic penchant for metaphysical subtleties added to and revised the opinions of these first authorities. Where Leonardo's observations did not agree with the earlier traditions, he promptly disregarded traditions and gave expression to his own theories as to the localization of function in the brain. In da Vinci's drawings the posterior ventricle is marked with the older legend, *memory*, "but the other two each have a double legend. To the middle ventricle, in addition to *sensu commune*, there is assigned also *voluntá*, and the anterior one besides the legend *imprensiva* bears that of *intelletto*." Leonardo associated the will with the *sensus communis* in the middle ventricle "where the nerves are said 'to move the members at the good-pleasure of the will of the soul,'" and the soul is located "in the judicial part (of the brain)." Da Vinci also made the extremely significant statement "that the ventricles of

the brain and those of the sperm (seminal vesicles) are equally distant from those of the heart." Leonardo, then, recognized with the earlier anatomists of the initiate period, the presence in the body of three great systems of ventricles—those of the brain, those of the heart, and those of the reproductive system. The Bembine Table of Isis is supposed to represent in its divisions the three great rooms, or chambers, wherein abide the gods of the world, and the parts of the human soul. These compartments with their lesser divisions are analogous to the ventricular systems of the ancients.



—From *De Humani Corporis Fabrica*.

THE LATERAL VENTRICLES OF THE BRAIN, MARKED L AND M. (After Vesalius)

Having visualized the three ventricles and their mutual relationships as these were understood in ancient times, we can better appreciate the words of Nicolai, "physician and instructor," as they have descended to us in his *ANATOMIA*: "On account of the three divisions of the brain, the ancient philosophers called it the temple of the spirit, for the ancients had their chambers in their temples, first the vestibulum, then the consistorium, finally the apotheca. In the first the declarations were made in law cases; in the second the statements were sifted; in the third final sentence was laid down. The ancients said that the same processes occur in the temple of the spirit, that is, the brain." Nicolai then explains the organization of thought and its orderly motion through the ventricles in an effort to show how the philosophers patterned the harmony of their external lives after the exemplar of the brain. Hippolytus, the Ante-Nicean Father, writing in the early centuries of the Christian Era, published several fragments from the arcanum of the Gnostics and other heretical sects. One of these fragments, *AGAINST HERESIES*, is

related to our subject. He speaks first of the brain as being the dominant portion of the entire body and follows the concept of Aristotle that it remains calm and unmoved, being isolated by a narrow isthmus from the contentions of the animal nature and "containing within itself the spirit." He then observes that, when dissected, the brain reveals within itself a vaulted chamber, on either side of which are little wings which are moved gently by the motion of



—From *Philosophia Naturalis*.

THE VENTRICLES AS THE ABODE OF THE SOUL,
ACCORDING TO ALBERTUS MAGNUS

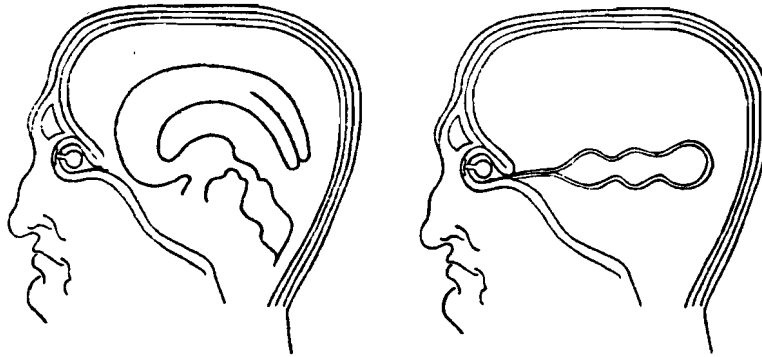
the spirit. There is also the significant statement that because of its shape the brain was likened by the pagan initiates to the head of a serpent. It must be remembered that when the word *spirit* is used in connection with the brain ventricles, the term does not signify the divine nature of the theologian but rather the Paracelsian *spiritus*—a life force or breath; an agent, but not necessarily the Supreme Agent. In some cases, it corresponds with the *prana* of the Hindus, or solar force, and in others with the astral light of Levi, the transcendentalist. In its ancient use, the word *soul* often signified the ego and the word *spirit* merely the emanations of force therefrom. The circulation of the *spiritus*

throughout the parts and members of the soul was analogous to the circulation of the blood through the veins and arteries of the body.

To summarize the older doctrines, the brain contains in its central part four cavities of major importance. In reality, these are but one great cavity in which four rooms connected by "aqueducts" are distinguishable. According to Burton, in his *ANATOMY OF MELANCHOLY*, these rooms "are the receptacles of the spirits, brought hither by the arteries from the heart," there to be refined "to a more heavenly nature to perform the actions of the soul." In the graphic language of 1548, the comparative dignities of the ventricular chambers are thus described: "The foremost is the most, the second or middlemost is less, and the third or hindermost is least." According to Culpeper, imagination is seated in the anterior ventricle, memory in the posterior, and judgment in the median cavity between them. This old physician, whose name will endure to the end of science, further makes the front ventricle to be hot and dry, the central warm and moist, and the rear cold and dry. Do these ventricles, then, contain the philosophical sulphur, mercury, and salt, the ingredients of the Wise Man's Stone, which Paracelsus, in his *NINE BOOKS OF THE NATURE OF THINGS*, declares to signify soul, spirit, and body? Among the figures of Nicholas Flamel from *THE BOOK OF ABRAHAM THE JEW* is one depicting the sun and moon pouring their rays into a small central bottle. Is the third ventricle that vessel in which the "marriage" of the sun and moon takes place? Are the animal spirits in the cerebellum united with the intellectual spirits in the lateral ventricles in the central chamber, which Burton calls "the common concourse"?

Petrocellus, in describing the purposes of the three cells of the brain, declares the ability to discern good or evil is located in the middle one and that the soul is in the rear, which agrees with John Heydon, who maintains that the *anima* is in the fourth ventricle. Though following the general theory of the older writers, Robert Fludd makes each of the cavities twofold, a right and a left, in harmony with modern science. The two lateral ventricles he terms *sense* and *imagination*; the halves of the third ventricle, *cogitation* and *estimation*; and the halves of the fourth ventricle, *memory* and *motion*. In describing Fludd's diagram of the ventricular and sensory harmonies (see page 132), Grillot de Givry writes: "The celestial world, composed of God and the angels, penetrates directly into the skull, communicating with the soul; the perceptible world, composed of the four elements, communicates with the five senses. Then there is a sphere called the 'imaginable world,' corresponding to the entirely metaphysical sensations of the imagination, which are produced 'as in dreams, by non-existent objects and, consequently, by the shadows of elements.' Hence we see a system of spheres exactly following the preceding and containing 'the shadow of Earth, the shadow of Water, the shadow of gross Air, the shadow of tenuous Air, and, lastly, the shadow of Fire.' The intellectual sphere and the imaginative sphere are oddly linked by a slender,

sinuous 'worm.' Last of all, the author places at the back of the skull the sphere which he calls 'memorative, or pertaining to remembrance.' And he shows it communicating with the spinal marrow." (See LE MUSEE DES SORCIERS.) Thus, the intellectual Deity is established in the midmost place, with Mercury and Mars (sense and motion) as the two extremities of the brain. The two lateral ventricles are divided by a thin, transparent, "skinlike" wall, called the *septum lucidum*, or *speculum*. The words *septum lucidum* (*septum translucidum*, according to the most modern authorities) are generally translated "translucent wall," but in their older form they can also be interpreted as "the wall of light," and the word *speculum* means "a mirror," or "that which catches reflections."



TWO DRAWINGS OF THE VENTRICULAR SYSTEM FROM AMONG THE PAPERS OF LEONARDO DA VINCI

According to Sir Kenelm Digby, "gentleman of the bedchamber to King Charles the First," the "species and similitudes of things" have their abode in the lateral ventricles, "where they are moved and tumbled about when we think." These "molecular bodies" of notions and ideas hide themselves in the numerous concavities of the brain, until mental activity causes a "wind or forceful stream" to sweep through the caverns. This motion picks up the minute particles and causes them "to strike against" the *speculum* (a phenomenon which finds its analogy in the olfactory process), thus stimulating the seat of fantasy. The *speculum* is, then, the magic mirror, upon the surface of which "spirits" conjure up the shadows of ideas. Good Sir Digby continues his discourse by explaining how these spirits (minute bodies in suspension) "run long and perplexed journeys up and down in the brain" (from one chamber to another), to at last "smoke at liberty in the hollow ventricles." From these cavities they "reek out of the little arterial branches" (chorioid plexuses) and "being now grown heavy" (precipitated), fall downward through the fourth ventricle through the medulla oblongata into the marrow (spinal cord) of the backbone, from which they are distributed through the nerves as sensory impulses to all parts of the body.

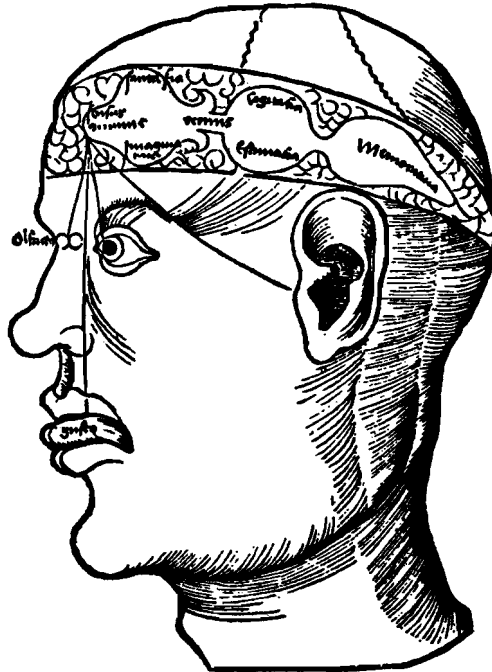
Burton expresses the same thought when he says that the fourth "creek" (ventricle) is common to both the cerebellum and the marrow and, receiving the animal spirits from the other cavities into itself, conveys them into the spinal cord. In the cell of fantasy we gather ideas, says an old anatomist, in the central cell we think them over, and in the cell to the rear we commit them to memory. Galen defines *melancholy* as "a privation or infection of the middle cell of the head." Costa ben Luca, of Baalbek, writing in the ninth century, gives what Lynn Thorndike, Ph.D., calls in his work, *A HISTORY OF MAGIC AND EXPERIMENTAL SCIENCE*, "a most amusing explanation" of the processes by which memory, imagination, and reason—the three hypostases of thought—take place. In clarifying his point, this Arab refers to the third and fourth ventricles only, explaining that the recalling of anything to the memory is accomplished by the passage of a subtle essence from the anterior cavity to the posterior (i.e., from the third ventricle to the fourth). The opening (cerebral aqueduct) between these two cavities of the brain is closed by a sort of valve, which Costa ben Luca describes as "a particle of the body of the brain similar to a worm" (Robert Fludd's *Vermis?*). Occultism would identify this "worm" as a somewhat extraordinary title bestowed upon the pineal gland which, according to the esoteric tradition, is actually so placed that in the normal individual it forms a little door, closing the ventricles from each other. When this gland has been stimulated by Kundalini, it is said to "rise" and when in an erect position it is referred to as an "open door" through which a free circulation of the volatile forces in the ventricles is made possible. (See section on the *Pineal Gland* for details.) The activities of the sensory and motor nerves, then, may be regarded as a sort of Jacob's ladder up which impulses ascend to seek audience with intellect and down which descend "vapors" pregnant with despotic edicts.

There are delicate fringelike processes consisting almost entirely of blood vessels which project into the third, fourth, and lateral ventricles of the brain and are termed the *chorioid plexuses*. It is the epithelial cells of these plexuses that secrete the cerebrospinal fluid and pour it into the ventricles, from whence it flows through the numerous apertures which open into the subarachnoid spaces. Santee describes the cerebrospinal fluid which fills the various serous spaces of the central nervous system as a displaceable fluid "more like tears and sweat than lymph" in consistency. In writing of the *Brahma-randhra* as the greatest of the chambers in the brain, Dr. Rele says that this cavity is constantly secreting a fluid called "the nectar of life" or "the divine fluid," which bathes the brain and the spinal cord. The cerebrospinal fluid, then, is synonymous with the "tears of the sky God," or "the wine-weeping heavens," yes, even *lachrymae Christi*, "the tears of Christ." It is symbolically the *liquor amnii* of the brain fœtus. We cannot but be reminded of the Ganges River which rises from hidden springs in the head of Shiva, or again the sacred Jordan and the deified Nile. It should prove both interesting and instructive

to explore the mystery of this heavenly water, as its secrets have been preserved in the writings of ancient and mediæval "adepts."

In their search for the elixir of life, the alchemists discovered the occult properties of a certain mysterious "dew" and were moved to write thereof, but always in a most guarded manner. In the preparation of their medicines with which they sought to heal all the diseases and evils of the world, these philosophers made use of a crystalline "dew" gathered at night on plates of glass

De potētijis aie lenitiue



—From Reisch's *Margarita Philosophica*.

THE FRONT CELL OF THE HEAD AS THE SEAT OF THE SENSORY REFLEXES
according to fifteenth century anatomists.

during the major conjunctions of planets and at certain phases of the moon. They declared that they were thus able to capture the celestial "virtues" and apply them to the all too numerous ills of humankind. The word *dew* is traceable to the Sanskrit *Dhav*, "to flow," and the term is occasionally applied to tears. It will be remembered that the Egyptians, and often the Greeks and Latins, highly esteemed tears and caused them to be collected in lachrimatories, or tear bottles. In some cases, these bottles were buried with the dead as evidence of grief. More often, however, they were preserved for purposes of healing or magic.

Several authors, including Mosheim and Higgins, are of the opinion that the word *Rosicrucian* is derived from the words *Ros* and *crux*. *Ros* is a Latin

word which may be translated dew or dripping moisture or even tears without taxing the credulity. In a Gnostic ritual it is written that the rulers of the sphere (zodiac) create the soul from their own substance "out of the tears of their eyes and the sweat of their torment." The Latin form of rose is *rosa* and by a simple cabala this becomes *ros-a*. As the first of the sacred vowels the *a* is the moon, which in the Mysteries was the symbol of the brain, as already noted. In early anatomical treatises it is even mentioned that the brain moves in the skull according to the phases of the moon. So the word can be interpreted as the "dew or moisture from the brain" or, as the Rosicrucians themselves called it, "the dew in the brain." This is the "dew" from heaven described by the sages as "descending upon the tops of the mountains." In their letter to Eugenius Philalethes, the Brothers of R. C. hint at this mystery in these words: "Near the daybreak there shall be a great calm and you shall see the Day-Star arise and the dawning will appear, and you shall perceive a *great treasure*. The chief thing in it, and the most perfect, is a *certain exalted tincture*, with which the world (if it served God and were worthy of such gifts) might be tinged and turned into most pure gold." (See LUMEN DE LUMINE.) Is not this *exalted tincture* covering the mountains at dawn "the dew of the sages," which contains captured within itself the *shadow* of the whole world and the virtues of the stars? Did not the wise Paracelsus go forth just preceding dawn to *gather* the heavenly moisture which falls more thickly on the *mountains* about Hohenheim than any other part of the world?

This "dew" lost all its virtue unless it was gathered by certain means in especially purified vessels. One ancient alchemist recommended four glass plates, another linen cloths that had been made absolutely clean. The purified vessels, the clean glass plates, and the linen cloths refer, of course, to the regenerated body of the alchemist, who has gained the right to discover the *Universal Solvent* by cleansing, as it were, the inside of his own cup. The philosophers also revealed that this mysterious "dew" drips down into the heart of the redeemed (baptism), by which such a man is empowered to understand all mysteries. Therefore, the "dew" is also called truth. Hence, Emanuel Swedenborg, the uninitiated seer, refers to "dew" in one place as the truth of good, which is derived from a state of innocence and peace, and in another place as the *multiplication* of good from truth and the fructification of good by truth. By the term *multiplication* it is indicated that Swedenborg sensed the alchemical significance of that heavenly moisture which is both physical and spiritual in its esoteric interpretation.

It has already been hinted that the "dew" was to be found only in the most mountainous parts. This, of course, intimates the brain, which is the *high place* so often referred to in the sacred writings. Lest this analogy be regarded as far-fetched, let us turn to the SIPHRA DTZENIOUTH—*The Book of the Concealed Mystery*—wherein it is said of the head of the great Universal Man that it has been formed in the likeness of the cranium, or skull



—From Anatomia Corporis Humani.

**THE VENTRICULAR CONTROL OF THE SENSORY FUNCTIONS,
ACCORDING TO JOHANN DRYANDER**

(the monad) and "is filled with the crystalline dew." (See THE ZOHAR.) This "dew" is called the second confirmation or aspect of the Great Face. Is not this "dew" the *lux* or light fluid, the pure *akasa*, the fiery mist, the heavenly luminous water, the *Schamayim*, or the fiery water, the sea of crystalline before the throne of God, the fountain from which flows the four ethereal rivers that water the whole earth? Philo even suggests that the cherub which guards Eden is, in reality, a cloud of divine humidity which conceals the paradisiacal garden from the relapsed mankind even as the Rosicrucians were declared to have concealed their sanctum—the House of the Holy Spirit—from the profane by surrounding it with what one of their writers called "clouds" or "mists."

A few quotations from the HA IDRA RABBA QADISHA—*The Greater Holy Assembly*—will give further hints. "And from that skull distilleth a dew upon him which is external, and filleth his head daily." It may be well to mention here that the word *cranium*, or skull, is used in THE ZOHAR to signify what the Pythagoreans would call the monad (or wholeness). It is, so to speak, the seed of the world and is referred to as a skull to symbolize its spherical shape. In the quotation just given this monad is depicted as causing its spiritual emanations to flow into the lesser cranium—the inferior universe—for it is also written, "and by that dew are sustained the holy supernal ones." If we desire to discover the nature of the supernal ones mentioned in THE ZOHAR, it is only necessary to read on a little and learn that the "dew" dripping down waters the field in which grow "the holy apple trees." It is also written that the "dew of the lights is thy dew." Are not these *lights* identical with the stars of Paracelsus, which must never be considered as heavenly bodies but powers or centers of intellection? "All that intellect can conceive of," writes the Swiss Hermes, "comes from the stars." And he adds: "The activity of the organism of man is the result of the actions of the interior constellations of stars existing in his inferior world." When the Cabalists maintain that these stars are contained within the skull of Macroprosopus, the secret is out.

The *holy apple trees* which are nourished by the heavenly "dew" cannot but be identical in significance with the golden apple trees of the Hesperides. Apollodorus assures us that the golden apples carried away by Hercules grew in the Hyperborean Atlantis. Hyperboreas was the Northern Paradise of the Greeks, the sub-polar continent, the terrestrial Eden, where also grew the symbolic apple tree of the Chaldo-Hebraic Mysteries. The importance of the golden apples which grew on Mount Atlas—the North Pole of the human body—can be more fully understood when we realize that they signify the spiritual monads, atoms or stars which abide in the superior worlds and which are the origins of the terrestrial natures suspended from them. (See ORPHEUS, by G.R.S. Mead.) These *apples* are the effulgent blossoms of Proclus, "the golden atoms" in the hearts of living things, whose reflections are set up in the ether of the brain. Here also is the mystery of the Golden Fleece guarded by the Polar Constellation of the mystic Dragon.

We have already learned that the Seven Builders seated upon their akasic thrones in the vast cranium of the Universal Man have their microcosmic correspondences in the human brain. These are the Seven Stars—the supernal ones—whose essences are carried by the "dew," even as the sidereal "humidity" carries the seven aspects of the astral light. There can be no doubt that the seven Dhyana Buddhas (two unnamed) which are described as abiding within the aura of the heart have their correspondences in the seven cavities of the brain, wherein their essences are enthroned by reflection. Thus, Mars corresponds with the cerebellum, Saturn with the corpora quadrigemina, Venus with the pineal gland, Mercury with the same gland after it has been tinctured



—From *Musæum Hermeticum*.

**AN ALCHEMICAL REPRESENTATION OF THE VENTRICULAR SYSTEM,
ACCORDING TO F. BASILIUS VALENTINUS**

The lateral and fourth ventricles are represented as two contesting swordsmen, with Mercury as the third ventricle in equilibrium between them

with Kundalini, Jupiter with the whole cavity of the skull filled with *akasa*, the moon with the fornix, and the sun with the *prana* in the third ventricle. Some modern writers assign Uranus to the pituitary body and Neptune to the pineal gland, or vice versa.

The crystalline "dew" described by St. John and the oceans above the heavens indicated in the opening verses of Genesis are not without their physiological correspondences in the human body. The Ocean of Eternity and the Milky Way—are these not again hints as to the crystalline "dew" of the adepts? There is confirmation again in the Oriental philosophies. The seventh chakra—the *sahasrara*, or highest brain chakra—is frequently spoken of as a *lotus tank* in Hindu mystical books. (See T. Subba Row.) "The 'sweet-sounding water' of this tank," continues the eminent scholar, "is described as *amrita*, or nectar." An entirely new line of research is opened up. The *amrita*, or the "water of immortality," was obtained, according to the Vedas, from the churning of the great ocean. The word means literally, "deathless." Here is the elixir of life of the alchemists. It was also called the sacred soma juice, the drink of initiation, the true formula of which, like the prescriptions of the alchemists, is supposed to have been lost. "Plainly speaking," writes H. P. Blavatsky, in *LUCIFER*, "soma is the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge." Soma is also a symbol of the moon, and esoterically the moon is the ruler of the mind even as the sun is the ruler of the spirit. To return to the *sahasrara* chakra, it

is written in the ARUNOPNISHAD that in this chakra "is a golden cup surrounded by bright rays, the abode of happiness." Here, then, is the Sangrail, the sacred chalice guarded by the knights in the domed castle on the heights of Christian Spain. Here is the esoteric significance of the communion cup, for does not even Max Müller say that the soma juice "has the same significance in Veda and Avasta sacrifices as the juice of the grape had in the worship of Bacchus"? The wine of Bacchus became the wine of Christ, the blood of the Logos, which is pictured flowing from the Paschal Lamb in seven streams.

AMB

Ambrosia was the drink of the gods on high Olympus. It was the all-sustaining beverage of the immortals, and as the cup of Ganymede is now perpetuated in the water vessel of the constellation of Aquarius. Like the waters of life referred to by the Holy Nazarene, those who drank thereof thirsted no more. Can we doubt that all these mysterious hints point to some occult truth of profound significance which, for the most part, has escaped the attention of modern symbolists? In the Gothic rites before mentioned the neophyte consummated his initiation by drinking the heavenly mead from a bowl fashioned out of a human skull. Similar skull bowls are among the sacred paraphernalia of the Tibetan Mysteries. Does not this ritual possess a significance more profound than merely the outer ceremony? The Rosicrucian rose rising out of the skull restates the formula once more—the "dew" and the brain. We move gradually amidst the mass of symbols and one of the most convincing links in the chain of analogies comes from an unexpected source—the EDDAS. In describing the World Tree—Yggdrasil—as explained in a later chapter of this work, it is clearly revealed that the entire symbol was devised to interpret not only the universe but also the human body. In the upper branches of the tree, at a point analogous to the brain, are depicted five animals—*heidrun*, Odin's goat, which supplies the heavenly mead, and four stags, *dain*, *dvalin*, *duneyr*, and *durathor*, from whose horns, according to the legend, honey "dew" drops down upon the earth. The branches of the tree are the same as those referred to in THE ZOHAR, in which the birds (angels) have their nests (plexuses).

Denuded of its symbolism and applied to the microcosm, all these allegories point to a secret in occult anatomy. The activity of the human brain, which we have already seen to be filled and surrounded by a subtle humidity, causes an akasic precipitation, a brain "dew," which is more of a luminous ether than a liquid. This "dew," however, is more tangible than a gas, and as the manna is said to have fallen from heaven, so this "dew" of thought trickles down between the two hemispheres of the cerebrum and finally fills the third ventricle, which is the reservoir, so to speak, of this heavenly water. This "dew" carries in suspension, or as the alchemists might say, is "tinctured" by the mental activity of the seven brain stars which form the northern constellation of man.

It is this water which is contained within the celestial microcosmic "Dipper," which is called by the Hindus the constellation of the Seven Rishis of the Pole.

We have another clue in the practice of primitive peoples of anointing the head with oil and fat and allowing it to run down over the body. Sir E. A. Wallis-Budge, in his *OSIRIS AND THE EGYPTIAN RESURRECTION*, describes how certain natives tie to their heads lumps of fat or substances saturated with oil or filled with grease, "which melted down through the hair of his head and ran down over his hair or wig, and penetrated to his shoulders and body." Having reached the third ventricle and being caught therein, the "dew" must act in conformity with the symbolism involved. It must be *caught* by the wise man in the cup of the Mysteries. We must, therefore, search for the sacred vessel, the lachrimatory, which is to hold the tears of the brain, produced as is told in the *MAHABHARATA* by the churning of the Suras and Asuras. The search is not an extended one. We have already learned that among the symbolic names for the pituitary body is the Holy Grail. Thus, the brain "dew" is collected, for it flows or seeps from the third ventricle into the pituitary body through a tiny tube, the infundibulum. In his description of the posterior lobe of this gland, Gray writes that it "is developed by an outgrowth from the embryonic brain and during foetal life contains a cavity which communicates through the infundibulum with the cavity of the third ventricle." It is believed that this channel is closed in the adult, but occultism knows this to be erroneous. After this point, the distribution of the "dew" through the body is made possible by the fact that the pituitary gland is, so to speak, the key of the bodily harmony. Of the secretions of the pituitary body, Dr. Herman H. Rubin writes: "From the anterior portion of the gland a secretion passes directly into the blood stream—from the posterior a fluid called pituitrin joins the spinal fluid that bathes the nervous system. Pituitrin is a *complex and most marvellous substance*." (Italics mine, M.P.H.) Thus it seems that through the brain "dew" the Governors of the body convey their will and purpose to the several departments thereof. There can be no direct connection between spirit and matter. The former must work upon the latter through an intermediary, a fact well established through the philosophy of Emanationism. Water—either the physical fluid or its occult analogue, ether—must always be the medium through which the impulses of the superphysical life centers communicate with the lower personality and distribute their energies throughout the corporeal body. Paracelsus thus sums up the mystery: "The whole of the Microcosm is potentially contained in the *Liquor Vitae*, a nerve fluid—in which is contained the nature, quality, character and essence of beings."