

[Nature spirits]

T177 The Inner Teachings 14th October 1947 St Mary Abbot's Place, London

Invocation:

O Great Spirit, Eternal Light, we come into Thy presence praying that we may serve Thee according to Thy will, according to Thy law. Thou knowest the heart of each one of Thy children. O Gracious Spirit, we await Thy blessing. May we be unblindfolded, O God, and see the light of the heavens. May we have understanding of the life invisible and work in accord with the powers of love, with the powers of the light. We pray that the light may shine on earth as it shines in the heavens.

Amen.

At our last talk we referred to the angelic beings and the beautiful human spirits who dwell in the invisible worlds, and we told you that we would like to continue and tell you more. You asked that we would speak about fairy tales and interpret some of them for you. Before we can pass to that aspect of the subject we must make it clear what these nature spirits are.

You are all accustomed to fairy tales telling of the little people who inhabit the woods, or of the mermaids in the sea. Some people will vouch for the truth of mermaids. Others will tell you that they have seen etheric forms in the foam of the sea waves. It has been known for such forms to be photographed. It is perhaps inexplicable that the sensitive plate of film which registers material objects is also able to photograph the invisible. There is still much doubt about this, but we believe we are making a true statement when we say that the forms of fairies have actually been photographed. Nevertheless, people are quick to say it is not true. Against this all down the ages stories and folklore have told of the fairies and when we go more deeply into these things you will see the inner meaning and the effect the invisible worlds have upon man's* life and spiritual development.

*[*For editorial policy around gender, see the introduction.]*

Who and what are nature spirits? We will try to classify them as we proceed, but first let us explain to those of you who do not know that all nature spirits are materialised or in existence in the ether. There are the four elements of life—Earth, Air, Fire and Water—and within these four is an ether finer than air. The air you breathe can be registered, but there is also an air of much finer ether. It is the same with water and fire and earth. Behind the physical substance of the earth is a finer ether, and it is from this that nature spirits are created. They belong to the etheric world in which they function.

As we have said, these little people have been seen by thousands of people. Fairy stories are generally accepted throughout the world. They have come from Egypt, China, India, Greece, from Scandinavia especially, and from Britain and also the West. Most of the stories tell much the same tale of the little people. Bearing this in mind we can classify the earth spirits under the general heading of gnomes; the water spirits we will call undines; the fire spirits go under the name of salamanders, and the air spirits under the name of sylphs. Within all these four groups are many sub-groups to which names are given which vary according to the country in which the particular nature spirit is living.

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You in Britain largely owe your folklore and your fairy stories to the Scandinavian or the northern countries of Europe. Think about this because from the north comes a heritage of great spiritual knowledge. The wise men, the sages, withdrew, when much of the earth was plunged into great darkness in past centuries, to the hyperborean or northern regions. That again has a mystical meaning which we cannot refer to tonight but we want to make the point clear. From the north you inherit a wealth of spiritual knowledge which is wrapped up in folklore, fairy tales and mystery teaching.

Shall we speak first of the gnomes? Try to realise that we are telling you a true fairy story. Afterwards you can ask your questions. The gnomes are the little people who live in the earth, concerned with the development of stones and mineral veins, which make formation of the stones. We know well that archaeologists will have a different explanation; nevertheless we are telling you from *our* learning that these gnomes are concerned with the earth element, with the formation and creating of jewels. Many fairy stories tell about the little people with all their jewels stored in caves. They are founded on truth. Such places exist inside the earth where jewels are preserved. In appearance the gnomes are like dwarf men but nearly all the nature spirits have power to change their size at will. Sometimes for a specific purpose they will enlarge themselves. They can also reduce their size and can do almost anything within their own element, but not one can change into another element. For instance, the gnomes concerned with earth cannot change over into the air element, the water or the fire. They can only live and move and have their being in their own ether. They can live for a number of centuries, even as long as a thousand years, but they are not immortal, and this is where they differ from man and from that higher line of spiritual beings known as angels. The angelic messengers which come to the earth, which hold power over the elementals, are immortal, but not those little nature spirits. They can die (so the ancients have taught us) of diseases peculiar to their own particular element. They have no life after death, becoming absorbed in the element of which they are created.

We will tell you what the gnomes who are busy with the earth, who are known to inhabit the trees, the bushes and the grasses and the plants, are like in appearance. They dress sometimes in material which they create, again from the ether in which they exist. Their clothing is the physical or the earth-ether. They frequently wear long beards and caps on their heads and long, tight leg coverings, and are clad in jerkins or tunics with a band round the waist. Those of you who have seen the little people know that they are kindly and friendly towards and will help humans. One thing they do not like. They do not cooperate with humans for selfish ends, and they get cross if people use the power which the gnomes give them in this way. They respond to love, so it is good and wise to send out thoughts of love to these little people.

The elementals in the trees of course look much bigger. It is possible for them to grow to a great height at will. Have you not a story about a child who was told to drink a potion and she became very large; then she drank another potion and she shrank to a very small size? These stories do not originate in man's mind. Men and women who think this never made a bigger mistake. All fairy stories have their origin in the fairies themselves. That is just one instance of fairy growth and diminution.

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We come next to the undines, the water spirits, which are beautiful little creatures of the finer water ether, to be found on all the waves of the ocean, in rocky pools where there are ferns and flowers, and on marsh land. These water spirits are clothed in a shimmery substance like water, coloured green. They wear watery colours and they look very beautiful. Their work is wholly in connection with the plants under the water and with the motion of the water. The water spirits are also connected with the water element in man's nature or with the emotional reactions of man. When you get great emotional reactions in man these nature spirits come crowding in, causing confusion and sometimes a kind of emotional storm. The only thing which will control that storm is the power of the Master of Love. These elementals are real creatures and work a great deal with man, who can receive service and great help. If he gives way to violent emotions he attracts violence in return from these elemental creatures.

The water spirits, the little undines, usually show themselves as winged beings that you call fairies, and are to be found on the flowers that grow in watery places. They are very lovely with their gossamer wings and gossamer clothing. Often, in the mists, little will-o'-the-wisp can be seen which usually comes from some marshy place on the moor and is composed of watery ether—like an animated bit of fog it hovers about from place to place. Clever people say this is only an old wives' tale but they know more than we do if that is so. We can assure you that these creatures are real and can be seen to dance.

Then there are the air spirits which are called sylphs. They live in the air. People are sceptical of these things until they receive a demonstration of their truth. It has been said that the air spirits much dislike being disturbed by man flying through the air. Do you wonder? Any severe commotion in the air can upset the air spirits which work upon the mental body of man. Man thinks that he originates all his ideas, inventions and inspiration of music, art and literature. Man thinks that he is the sole agent. He does not know, nor would he readily accept the statement that these air spirits come to help him a great deal in creative art.

The other little people are called salamanders, and are concerned with the fire element. They are usually quite small (about twelve inches high) but again can extend their size or diminish it. They are always present when a fire is lighted. Do you remember a little girl who declared she saw a little man on the hearth? Innocently and sincerely she said he had helped the fire to burn. That child never spoke a truer word. Wherever there is fire, there is a fire spirit who works to bring that fire into being. Every time you use a lighter to make a flame a fire spirit is with you. It sounds funny but it is true. The little man is behind the spark and causes the fire. Those of you who are not apt at lighting fires should talk kindly to the fire elemental, saying, 'Little brother, help my fire to burn'. If you are friendly and really mean it, your fire will burn merrily. You will say, 'White Eagle, you are telling us fairy tales'. No, we are *explaining* fairy tales because they have an age-old meaning. As you can imagine, when a great fire is roaring away the salamanders are having a famous time. Sometimes the salamanders will prove mischievous if there happens to be an inharmonious condition in a home or building, or if there is something there of a disagreeable nature; or if they have been upset or offended they are even likely to cause a fire. When there has been difficulty of a psychic nature in a house or building there is always danger. They can be troublesome; they are just like children; they do not realise what they are doing.

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There is another type of elemental outside the four ethers of earth, air, fire and water, called 'astral' elementals. They are the product of man's dark thoughts when an impure condition of the physical body is brought on through a dissipated life, or when the individual gives way to depressing thoughts or to severe drug-taking or drinking alcohol to excess. When these things are done it creates astral entities within and outside the aura of the individual. These can live for a long time, and they are still created by the practice of black magic, as they have been created to a great extent in past ages. They eventually come back to their creator. In ancient Egypt the ritual ceremonies practised caused elementals which have lived for thousands of years. In the Druidical magic the same thing happened. They live on until they are released by love or by white light, by white magic.

One thing we would like to impress upon you very seriously and it is this: all elementals, whether of earth, air, fire or water, or the astral elementals created by the evil thoughts of men, are controlled by the one great Master, Christ. No man or woman need ever be troubled or hurt in any degree by any elemental entity so long as they live in the supreme light of the Christ love. There is no need to fear hauntings or unpleasant manifestations by any elemental, because you hold the mystery; that mystery is purity of motive, purity of life, and love to all creation. They will serve and will help man very much if man is living in accordance with the laws of the master Christ.

Q. What about giant fairies?

A. They are those who inhabit the mountains. The ancients taught that the king of the air spirits lived on the highest mountain in the world. It may be so or it may not. You can sort it out for yourselves. Is it not true that expeditions have tried to climb the highest mountain in the world and some mysterious force always seems to prevent the climber from reaching the top? Our explanation is that the great air spirits do not like humans interfering with their domain and so they gently prevent them from doing so.

There is another line of beings who are neither human nor sub-human (that is elemental) but are angelic. These do not incarnate in bodies of flesh but are clothed in a finer ether and have their own particular work in the great plan of life and spiritual evolution. They are very beautiful, and are used as messengers by God. In the Greek mysteries you will find that the gods of the air, the water, and so forth, were worshipped by the people as gods. Actually they were elementals sometimes attached to individuals. Apart from this there were angelic beings who came as messengers. Sometimes these were attached to human souls; they were called 'familiar' spirits. The word 'daemon' was used on occasion for the messengers from the higher spheres which came to the Illuminati, to the initiates.

No doubt some of you have become acquainted with the idea which the ancients had of the union between one of these beings and a mortal. Do not the Arthurian legends tell that the magician Merlin was the child of a mortal and an immortal? This is an illustration of what we mean, that these immortal beings can come and mingle with man for a very special purpose. Only those who have a great mission or who are about to take a high degree of initiation are

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concerned. We impress upon you the reality and truth of these beings. Because your eyes cannot register and your ears cannot hear it does not mean that they do not exist. You are told that countries overseas exist; you receive messages and goods from them, so you accept what you are told and believe that these places and people are real. So also do spheres of life exist and interpenetrate the physical life. Because you cannot see them is no proof that they are not there. A great deal of evidence waits for those who take the trouble to study it; a great deal of evidence will help to convince you of the existence of these creatures in the finer ethers.

By the way, the gnomes marry and live a family life. They eat food, but not of a kind that you would understand—food of their own element. They live happy family lives and they have a king and a queen ruling their colonies. The gnomes have a substance which they use for building, somewhat like alabaster, but transparent, of which they build their palaces. You have all heard fairy stories of children being taken into the hillside and there they find little fairy palaces. These things do exist, but they are within physical matter and because of this you cannot see them; when you develop true vision, clear vision, you will be able to see these places in the earth. The same applies in the air and in the water. The water spirits are sometimes described as mermaids. They do exist but the point is that they are within this physical ether and cannot be clearly seen with man's own eyesight, but occasionally you can see them. When a sailor declares that he has seen a mermaid he is laughed at. It only means that for a flash that individual had his dense vision unveiled and he was able to see within the physical matter, within the physical water into the water ether and there he saw his mermaid.

I should like to say that the same little girl who saw the little man on the hearth making the fire burn always talked about 'the little king and queen' of gnome-land, whom she visited in her sleep, and described them most vividly. Children having recently come back from the spirit world where they have been used to these elementals, these little creatures, still have the memory of them fresh in their minds. That is why children, if left to themselves and allowed to grow up with nature, will touch this well of truth. The children whom you heard about at the time these things happened were living in the wilds of Australia, so you will understand why it was that they were receptive to the influence of these gnomes who would be all around them. That is an interesting comment and helps to illustrate what we are saying.

- Q. Am I right in believing that one can affect the weather by cooperation with the sun spirits and the nature spirits?
- A. A very interesting point. Some people think that the thoughts of the masses affect the weather. Others say that it is just nonsense. Since people's thoughts are peculiarly linked with the air spirits, their massed thoughts affect the latter which are to a certain extent responsible for the weather. Our brethren of the Indian race used to call down rain at certain seasons if the rain was held up too long. They worked a ceremony for seven days or more but it always produced rain. The further away man gets from the secrets of nature, the more he will suffer. He cannot go on too long. He is the king of the earth, man thinks, and he does not embrace the brotherhood of the other kingdoms. He will have to do so in time. He will yet work in harmony with these elementals to his good.

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- Q. Why is it that man is so averse to invisible things? Is it because he is afraid of losing his power or is he afraid of waking his own spirit?
- A. We would go one step further. We think it is pride. Man is afraid of appearing foolish. The amazing thing is that the great intellectuals of your day have only to study the records of the great teachers such as Socrates, Plato and Paracelsus. They only have to read the works of Shakespeare where he describes in 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' the nature spirits assembled. It is extraordinary to us that your people still deny the existence of these elementals when great minds have given their testimony to their existence.

Sometimes people who have had a great deal to do with elementals in the past come back into incarnation feeling an urge to work in harmony with the little people, particularly the air spirits. That is how a man like Walt Disney gets his ideas. It is not surprising that he knows their thoughts, their ways of life, their Puckishness. He knows their merriment, their mischief. He is one of them in a sense for he has been one of their kingdom.

- Q. Is the number three of special significance in the fairy stories?
- A. The number three represents the three degrees of initiation, the three gifts of the wise men—gold, frankincense and myrrh—love, wisdom and experience. Again you get the interpenetration of the three aspects of life—the Holy Trinity—body, soul and spirit. The wish of the elementals was to become mortal. They copied the habits and the ways of life of the mortals. In other words they wanted to become immortal, to enter into eternal life. They wanted to become body, soul and spirit, and that is how you get the three wishes of the fairy tales.

Benediction:

Receive the blessing of the Eternal Spirit. Beloved ones, let us give thanks to the Source of Light and Love which enables us to hold this blessed happy communion between the two planes of life. May Christ, the great Brother and Saviour of all mankind, bless every one.

Amen.

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Myth, natural world