

The Difference Between Elementals and Elementaries

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FROM the similarity of the terms used to designate two classes of astral beings who are able to communicate with man, a certain confusion has arisen in the public mind, which it would be as well, perhaps, to aid in, removing.

"Elementals" is a term applied to the nature spirits, the living existences which belong peculiarly to the elements they inhabit; "beings of the *mysteria spetialia*" according to Paracelsus, "soul-forms, which will return into their chaos, and who are not capable of manifesting any higher spiritual activity because they do not possess the necessary kind of constitution in which an activity of a spiritual character can manifest itself." "Matter is connected with Spirit by an intermediate principle which it receives from this Spirit. This intermediate link between matter and Spirit belongs to all the three kingdoms of nature. In the mineral kingdom it is called Stannar, or Trughat; in the vegetable kingdom, Jaffas; and it forms in connection with the vital force of the vegetable kingdom, the Primum Ens, which possesses the highest medicinal properties. . . . In the animal kingdom, this semi-material body is called Evestrum, and in human beings it is called the Sidereal Man. Each living being is connected with the Macrocosmos and Microcosmos by means of this intermediate element or Soul, belonging to the **Mysterium [Page 16] Magnum** from whence it has been received, and whose form and qualities are determined by the quality and quantity of the spiritual and material elements". . . . From this we may infer that the "Elementals", properly speaking, are the "Soul-forms" of the elements they inhabit — the activities and energies of the World-Soul differentiated into forms, endowed with more or less consciousness, and capacities for "feeling", and hours of enjoyment, or pain. But these, never, or rarely, entering any more deeply into dense matter than enabled so to do by their aerial invisible bodies, do not appear upon our gross physical plane otherwise than as forces, energies, or influences. Their Soul-forms are the intermediate link between matter and spirit, resembling the Soul-forms of animals and men, which also form this intermediate link. The difference being that the souls of animals and men have enveloped themselves in a casing of dense matter for the purposes of existence upon the more external planes of life. Consequently, after the death of the external bodies of men and animals, there remain astral remnants which undergo gradual disintegration in the astral atmospheres. These have been termed "Elementaries" ; *i.e.*, "the astral corpses of the dead; the etherial counterpart of the once living person, which will sooner or later be decomposed into its astral elements, as the physical body is dissolved into the elements to which it belongs. The Elementaries of good people have little cohesion and evaporate soon; those of wicked people may exist a longtime; those of suicides, etc., have a life and consciousness of their own as long as a division of principles has not taken place. These are the most dangerous".

In the introduction to "Isis Unveiled", we find the following definition of Elemental Spirits: —

"The creatures evolved in the four kingdoms of earth, air, fire, and water, and called by the Kabalists gnomes, sylphs, salamanders, and undines. They may be termed the forces of nature, and will either operate effects as the servile agents of general law, or may be employed by the disembodied spirits — whether pure or impure — and by living adepts of magic and sorcery, to produce desired phenomenal results. *Such* beings never become men". (But there are classes of elemental spirits who do become men, as we shall see further on.)

"Under the general designation of fairies and fays, these spirits of the elements appear in the myth, fable, tradition, and poetry of all nations, ancient and modern. Their names are legion — peris, devs, djins, sylvans, satyrs, fawns, elves, dwarfs, trolls, kobolds, brownies, stromkarls, undines, nixies, salamanders, goblins, banshees, kelpies, paxies, moss people, good people, good neighbours, wild women, men of peace, white ladies, and many more. They have been seen, feared, blessed, banned, and invoked in every quarter of the globe and in every age. These elementals are the principal agents of disembodied but never visible spirits at séances, and the [Page 17] producers of all the phenomena except the 'subjective' ". — ("Isis", preface xxix., vol. 1).

"In the Jewish Kabala the nature spirits were known under the general name of *Shedim*, and divided into four classes. The Persians called them *devs*; the Greeks indistinctly designated them as *demons*; the Egyptians knew them as '*afrites*'. The Ancient Mexicans, says Kaiser, believed in numerous spirit-abodes, into one of which the shades of innocent-children were placed until final disposal; into another, situated in the Sun, ascended the valiant souls of heroes; while the hideous spectres of incorrigible sinners were sentenced to wander and despair in subterranean caves, held in the bonds of the earth-atmosphere, unwilling and unable to liberate themselves. They passed their time in communicating with mortals, and frightening those who could see them. Some of the African tribes know them as Yowahoos".—("Isis," page 313, volume 1).

Of the ideas of Proclus on this subject it is said in "Isis Unveiled" : —

"He held that the four elements are all filled with 'demons', maintaining with Aristotle that the Universe is full, and that there is no void in nature. The demons of earth, air, fire, and water, are of an elastic, ethereal, semi-corporeal essence. It is these classes which officiate as intermediate agents between the gods and men. Although lower in intelligence than the sixth order of the higher demons, these beings preside directly over the elements and organic life. They direct the growth, the inflorescence, the properties, and various changes of plants. They are the personified ideas or virtues shed from the heavenly *ule* into the inorganic matter; and, as the vegetable kingdom is one remove higher than the mineral, these emanations from the celestial gods take form in the plant, and become *its soul*. It is that which Aristotle's doctrine terms the 'form' in the three principles of natural bodies, classified by him as *privation*, matter, and form. His philosophy teaches that besides the original matter, another principle is necessary to complete the triune nature of every particle, and this is 'form'; an invisible, but still, in an ontological sense of the word, a substantial being, really distinct from matter proper. This, in an animal or a plant, besides the bones, the flesh, the nerves, the brains, and the blood, in the former; and besides the pulpy matter, tissues, fibres, and juice in the latter, which blood and juice, by circulating through the veins and fibres, nourishes all parts of both animal and plant; and besides the animal spirits, which are the principles of motion, and the chemical energy which is transformed into vital force in the green leaf, there must be a substantial form, which Aristotle called in the horse, the *horse's soul*; and Proclus, the *demon* of every mineral, plant, or animal, and the mediaeval philosophers, the *elementary spirits* of the

four kingdoms". — ("Isis," page 312, vol. 1)

"According to the ancient doctrines, the soulless elemental spirits were evolved by the ceaseless motion inherent in the astral light. Light is [Page 18] force, and the latter is produced by *will*. As this will proceeds from an intelligence which cannot err, for it has nothing of the material organs of human thought in it, being the superfine pure emanation of the highest divinity itself — (Plato's 'Father') — it proceeds from the beginning of time, according to immutable laws, to evolve the elementary fabric requisite for subsequent generations of what we term human races. All of the latter, whether belonging to this planet or to some other of the myriads in space, have their earthly bodies evolved in the matrix out of the bodies of a certain class of these elemental beings which have passed away in the invisible worlds". — ("Isis," page 285, Vol.1.)

Speaking of Pythagoras, Iamblichus, and other Greek philosophers, "Isis" says: —

"The universal ether was not, in their eyes, simply a something stretching, tenantless, throughout the expanse of heaven; it was a boundless ocean peopled, like our familiar seas, with monstrous and minor creatures, and having in its every molecule the germs of life. Like the finny tribes which swarm in our oceans and smaller bodies of water, each kind having its 'habitat' in some spot to which it is curiously adapted; some friendly and some inimical to man; some pleasant and some frightful to behold; some seeking the refuge of quiet nooks and land-locked harbours, and some traversing great areas of water, the various races of the elemental spirits were believed by them to inhabit the different portions of the great ethereal ocean, and to be exactly adapted to their respective conditions " (page 284, Vol. 1)

"Lowest in the scale of being are those invisible creatures called by the Kabalists the 'elementary'. There are three distinct classes of these. The highest, in intelligence and cunning, are the so-called terrestrial spirits, the 'larvae', or shadows of those who have lived on earth, have refused all spiritual light, remained and died deeply immersed in the mire of matter, and from whose sinful souls the immortal spirit has gradually separated. The second class is composed of invisible antitypes of men 'to be' born. No form can come into objective existence — from the highest to the lowest — before the abstract idea of this form, or as Aristotle would call it, the privation of this form — is called forth. . . . These models, as yet devoid of immortal spirits, are 'Elementals' properly speaking, 'psychic embryos' — which, when their time arrives, die out of the invisible world, and are born into this visible one as human infants, receiving *in transitu* that divine breath called spirit, which completes the perfect man. This class cannot communicate objectively with man.

"The third class of Elementals proper, which never evolve into human beings, but occupy, as it were, a specific step of the ladder of being, and, by comparison with the others, may properly be called nature-spirits, or cosmic agents of nature, each being confined to its own element, and never [Page 19] transgressing the bounds of others. These are what Tertullian called 'the princes of the powers of the air'.

"This class is believed to possess but one of the three attributes of man. They have neither immortal souls nor tangible bodies; only astral forms, which partake, in a distinguishing degree, of the element to which they belong, and also of the Ether. They are a combination of sublimated matter and a rudimental mind. Some are changeless, but still have no separate individuality, acting collectively so to say. Others,

of certain elements and species, change form under a fixed law which Kabalists explain. The most solid of their bodies is ordinarily just immaterial enough to escape perception by our physical eyesight, but not so unsubstantial but that they can be perfectly recognised by the inner or clairvoyant vision. They not only exist, and can all live in ether, but can handle and direct it for the production of physical effects, as readily as we can compress air or water for the same purpose by pneumatic or hydraulic apparatus; in which occupation they are readily helped by the 'human elementary'. More than this; they can so condense it as to make to themselves tangible bodies, which by their Protean powers they can cause to assume such likenesses as they choose, by taking as their models the portraits they find stamped in the memory of the persons present. It is not necessary that the sitter should be thinking at the moment of the one represented. His image may have faded away years before. The mind receives indelible impression even from chance acquaintance, or persons encountered but once" (pages 310-311, Vol. 1).

"If Spiritualists are anxious to keep strictly dogmatic in their notions of the Spirit-World, they must not set *scientists* to investigate their phenomena in the true experimental spirit. The attempt would most surely result in a partial re-discovery of the magic of old — that of Moses and Paracelsus. Under the deceptive beauty of some of their apparitions, they might find some day the sylphs and fair undines of the Rosicrucians playing in the currents of *psychic* and *odic* force".

"Already Mr. Crookes, who fully credits the *being*, feels that under the fair skin of Katie, covering a simulacrum of heart borrowed partially from the medium and the circle, there is NO SOUL !. And the learned authors of the "Unseen Universe", abandoning their "electro-biological" theory, begin to perceive in the universal ether the *possibility* that it is a photographic album of *En-Soph* the Boundless". (Isis, page 67, Vol. 1)

" We are far from believing that all the spirits that communicate at circles are of the classes called 'Elemental' and 'Elementary' . " Many, especially among those who control the medium subjectively to speak, write, and otherwise act in various ways, are human, disembodied spirits. Whether the majority of such spirits are good or *bad*, largely depends on the private morality of the medium, much on the circle present, and a[Page 20] great deal on the intensity and object of their purpose. . . . But in any case, human spirits can *never* materialize themselves in *propria persona*, &c. [By which it is, doubtless, meant that the *full* individually is not present: the higher principles, the *true spirit*, having ascended to its appropriate house, from which there is no attraction to earth. That which materialises would be an elemental, or elementals moulding their fluidic forms in the likeness of the departed human being; or, on the other hand, considering and revivifying, the atomic remnants of the sidereal encasement, or astral body, still left undissipated in the soul-world] (page 67, Vol.1).

In "Art Magic" we find the following pertinent remarks, page 322: "There are some features of mediumship, especially amongst those persons known as 'physical force mediums', which long since should have awakened the attention of philosophical spiritualists to the fact that there were influences kindred only with animal natures at work somewhere, and unless the agency of certain classes of Elemental Spirits was admitted into the category of occasional control, humanity has at times assumed darker shades than we should be willing to assign to it. Unfortunately in discussing these subjects, there are many barriers to the attainment of truth on this subject. Courtesy and compassion alike protest against pointing to illustrations in our own time, whilst prejudice and ignorance intervene to stifle inquiry respecting phenomena, which a long lapse of time has left us free to investigate".

"The judges whose ignorance and superstition disgraced the Witchcraft trials of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, found a solvent for all occult, or even suspicious circumstances, in the control of 'Satan and his imps'. The modern Spiritualists, with few exceptions, are equally stubborn in attributing everything that transpires in Spiritualistic circles, even to the wilful *cunningly contrived preparations for deception* on the part of pretended media, to the influence of disembodied human spirits — good, bad, or indifferent; but the author's own experience, confirmed by the assurances of wise-teaching spirits, impels him to assert that the tendencies to exhibit animal proclivities, whether mental, passionate, or phenomenal, are most generally produced by Elementals."

"The rapport with this realm of beings is generally due to certain proclivities in the individual; or, when whole communities are affected, the cause proceeds from revolutionary movements in the realms of astral fluid; these continually affect the Elementals, who, in combination with low undeveloped spirits of humanity (Elementaries), avail themselves of magnetic epidemics to obsess susceptible individuals, and sympathetically affect communities."

In the introduction to "Isis Unveiled", we find the following definition of Elementary Spirits: —

" Properly, the disembodied *souls* of the depraved: these souls, having at some time prior to death, separated from themselves their divine spirits, [Page 21] and so lost their chance of immortality. Eliphas Levi and some other Kabalists make little distinction between Elementary Spirits, who have been men, and those beings which people the elements and are the blind forces of nature. Once divorced from their bodies, these souls (also called "astral bodies") of purely materialistic persons, are irresistibly attracted to the earth, where they live a temporary and finite life amid elements congenial to their gross natures. From having never, during their, natural lives, cultivated this spirituality, but subordinated it to the material and gross, they are now unfitted for the lofty career of the pure, disembodied being, for whom the atmosphere of earth is stifling and mephitic, and whose attractions are all away from it. After a more or less prolonged period of time these material souls will begin to disintegrate, and finally, like a column of mist, be dissolved, atom by atom, in the surrounding elements." — (Preface xxx., Vol. 1).

"After the death of the depraved and the wicked, arrives the critical moment. If during life the ultimate and desperate effort of the inner-self to reunite itself with the faintly-glimmering ray of its divine parent is neglected; if this ray is allowed to be more and more shut out by the thickening crust of matter, the soul, once freed from the body, follows its earthly attractions, and is magnetically drawn into and held within the dense fogs of the material atmosphere. Then it begins to sink lower and lower, until it finds itself, when returned to consciousness, in what the ancients termed Hades. The annihilation of such a soul is never instantaneous; it may last centuries perhaps; for nature never proceeds by jumps and starts, and the astral soul, being formed of elements, the law of evolution must bide its time. Then begins the fearful law of compensation, the *Yin-Youan* of the Buddhists. This class of spirits are called the Terrestrial, or *earthly* elementary, in contradistinction to the other classes." (They frequent séance rooms, &c.) — ("Isis," page 319, Vol. 1)

Of the danger of meddling in occult matters before understanding the elementals and elementaries, "Isis" says, in the case of a rash intruder :—

" The spirit of harmony and union will depart from the elements, disturbed by the imprudent hand; and the currents of blind forces will become immediately infested by numberless creatures of matter and instinct — the bad daemons of the theurgists, the devils of theology; the gnomes, salamanders, sylphs, and undines will assail the rash performer under multifarious aerial forms. Unable to invent anything, they will search your memory to its very depths; hence the nervous exhaustion and mental oppression of certain sensitive natures at spiritual circles. The Elementals will bring to light long-forgotten remembrances of the past; forms, images, sweet mementos, and familiar sentences, long since faded from our own remembrance, but vividly preserved in the inscrutable depths of our memory and on the astral tablets of the imperishable ' BOOK OF LIFE' ". — (Page 343, Vol. 1) [Page 22]

Paracelsus speaks of *Xeni Nephidei*: " Elemental spirits that give men occult powers over visible matter, and then feed on their brains, often causing thereby insanity".

"Man rules potentially over all lower existences than himself", says the author of "Art Magic" (page 333), but woe to him, who by seeking aid, counsel, or assistance, from lower grades of being, binds himself to them; henceforth he may rest assured they will become his parasites and associates, and as their instincts — like those of the animal kingdom — are strong in the particular direction of their nature, they are powerful to disturb, annoy, prompt to evil, and avail themselves of the contact induced by man's invitation to drag him down to their own level. The legendary idea of evil compacts between man and the 'Adversary' is not wholly mythical. Every wrong-doer signs that compact with spirits who have sympathy 'with his evil actions'.

"Except for the purposes of scientific investigation, or with a view of strengthening ourselves against the silent and mysterious promptings to evil that beset us on every side, we warn mere curiosity-seekers, or persons ambitious to attach the legions of an unknown world to their service, against any attempts to seek communion with Elemental spirits, or beings of any grade lower than man. *Beings below mortality can grant nothing that mortality ought to ask.* They can only serve man in some embryonic department of nature, and man must stoop to their state before they can thus reach him." ... " Knowledge is only good for us when we can apply it judiciously. Those who investigate for the sake of science, or with a view of enlarging the narrow boundaries of man's egotistical opinions, may venture much further into the realms of the unknown than curiosity-seekers, or persons who desire to apply the secrets of being to selfish purposes. It may be as well also for man to remember that he and his planet are not *the all* of being, and that, besides the revelations included in the stupendous outpouring called 'Modern Spiritualism', there are many problems yet to be solved in human life and planetary existences, which spiritualism does not cover, nor ignorance and prejudice dream of." . . . "Besides these considerations, we would warn man of the many subtle, though invisible, enemies which surround him, and, rather by the instinct of their embryotic natures than through *malice prepense*, seek to lay siege to the garrison of the human heart. We would advise him, moreover, that into that sacred entrenchment no power can enter, save by invitation of the soul itself. Angels may solicit, or demons may tempt, but none can compel the spirit within to action, unless it first surrenders the *will* to the investing power." — (" Art Magic," page 335).

From the "Theosophist " of July 1886, we make the following extract, bearing upon the subject of the loss of immortality by soul-death, and the dangers of Black Magic,[Page 23]

" It is necessary to say a few words as regards the real nature of soul-death, and the ultimate fate of a

black magician. The soul, as we have explained above, is an isolated drop in the ocean of cosmic life. This current of cosmic life is but the light and the aura of the Logos. Besides the Logos, there are innumerable other existences, both spiritual and astral, partaking of this life and living in it. These beings have special affinities with particular emotions of the human soul, and particular characteristics of the human mind. They have, of course, a definite individual existence of their own, which lasts up to the end of the Manwantara. There are three ways in which a soul may cease to retain its special individuality. Separated from its Logos, which is, as it were, its source, it may not acquire a strong and abiding individuality of its own, and may in course of time be reabsorbed into the current of universal life. This is real soul-death. It may also place itself *en rapport* with a spiritual or elemental existence by evoking it, and concentrating its attention and regard upon it for purposes of black magic and Tantric worship. In such a case it transfers its individuality to such existence and is sucked up into it, as it were. In such a case the black magician lives in such a being, and as such a being he continues until the end of Manwantara."

A good deal of highly interesting information on the subject of Elementals and Elementaries is to be found in the numbers of THE PATH for May, June, and July, of this year. A few of the points contained in these articles maybe mentioned here, but the reader is strongly recommended to study these articles, entitled "Conversations on Occultism", for himself. According to the writer:—

An Elemental is a centre of force, without intelligence, as we understand the word, without moral character or tendencies similar to ours, but capable of being directed in its movements by human thoughts, which may, consciously or not, give it any form, and endow it to a certain extent with what we call intelligence. We give them form by a species of thought which the mind does not register — involuntary and unconscious thought — "as one person might shape an Elemental so as to seem like an insect, and not be able to tell whether he had thought of such a thing or not". The Elemental world interpenetrates this one and Elementals are constantly being attracted to, or repelled from, human beings, taking the prevailing colour of their thoughts. Time and space, as we understand them, do not exist for Elementals. They can be seen clairvoyantly in the shapes they assume under different influences, and they do many of the phenomena of the *séance* room. Light and the concentrated attention of anyone make a disturbance in the magnetism of a room, interfering with their work in that respect. At *séances* Elementaries also are present; these are "shells," or half-dead human beings. The Elementaries are not all bad, however, but the worst are the strongest, because the most attracted [Page 24] to material life. They are all helped and galvanized into action by Elementals.

Contact with these beings has a deteriorating effect in all cases. Clairvoyants see in the astral light surrounding a person the images of people or events that have made an impression on that person's mind, and they frequently mistake these echoes and reflections for astral realities; only the trained seer can distinguish. The whole astral world is full of illusions.

Elementals have not got *being* such as mortals have. There are different classes for the different planes of nature. Each class is confined to its own plane, and many can never be recognised by men. The Elemental world is a strong factor in Karma. Formerly, when men were less selfish and more spiritual, the elementals were friendly. They have become unfriendly by reason of man's indifference to, and want of sympathy with, the rest of creation. Man has also coloured the astral world with his own selfish and brutal thoughts, and produced an atmosphere of evil which he himself breathes, When men shall cultivate feelings of brotherly affection for each other, and of sympathy with Nature, the Elementals will change

their present hostile attitude for one of helpfulness.

Elementals aid in the performance of phenomena produced by adepts. They also enter the sphere of unprotected persons, and especially of those who study occultism, thus precipitating the results of past Karma.

The adepts are reluctant to speak of elementals for two reasons. Because it is useless, as people could not understand the subject in their present state of intellectual and spiritual development; and because, if any knowledge of them were given, some persons might be able to come into contact with them to their own detriment and that of the world. In the present state of universal selfishness and self-seeking, the elementals would be employed to work evil, as they are in themselves colourless, taking their character from those who employ them. The adepts, therefore, keep back or hide the knowledge of these beings from men of science, and from the world in general. By and bye, however, material science will rediscover black magic, and then will come a war between the good and evil powers, and the evil powers will be overcome, as always happens in such cases. Eventually all about the Elementals will be known to men — when they have developed intellectually, morally, and spiritually sufficiently to have that knowledge without danger.

Elementals guard hidden treasures; they obey the adepts, however, who could command the use of untold wealth if they cared to draw upon these hidden deposits

N.B.—"Nizida" has quoted from "*Man: Fragments of Forgotten History*." The T.P.S. desires to say that while some of the statements contained in that work are correct, there is also in it a large admixture of error. Therefore, the T.P.S. does not recommend this work to the attention of students who have not yet learned enough to be able to separate the grain from the husk. The same may be said of "Art-Magic".