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The Human Aura

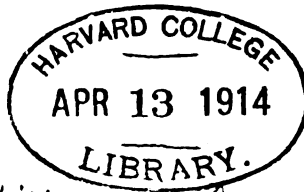
A Brief Explication of
**Dr. Kilner's Discovery of Means for
Observing the Human
Atmosphere**

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THE Fellow Craft, by virtue of the degree he holds, is permitted to extend his research into the hidden mysteries of nature and science; in fact he is expected to make the liberal arts and sciences his study, that he may the better be enabled to discharge his duty as a Mason and estimate the wonderful works of the Almighty. To the majority of Masons this has no practical meaning and is passed over simply as an empty phrase of the ritual. I fear me much that even the question of: "What and Who is God?" very rarely, if ever enters the mind of the Speculative Mason. And yet it is an interesting question, even though there is no likelihood that it ever will be answered by mortal man. That is, perhaps, the reason why it appeals to so few.

If it were not for the discovery every day, so to speak, of new mysteries, laws and conditions in nature by scientists, inventors and other searchers for truth, God the Creator and Great Architect of the Universe would soon be forgotten altogether. Even as it is, small credit is given to Him, praise and admiration generally being bestowed upon the cleverness and ingenuity of man's mind, which, after all is only a faint reflection (in part) of the infinite wisdom of the Almighty.

We know so little of the marvelous mechanism of the Universe that, when by chance a new discovery is made we are astounded, indeed, but only for a little while. The interest taken in it soon fades away, wonderment ceases and the discovery passes into every day life as a matter of fact which requires no further thought or consideration.

Take, for instance, the electrical spark. But a few years ago its powers, although known to man to be of enormous value, lay unharnessed and unused. Today science has put a bridle on this energy and has forced it into service for locomotion, lighting, picture motion, for transmission of sound and of messages by wire as well as by ethereal waves, etc. It is even made to reveal the framework of man's body and his internal organs by means of the Roentgen ray.

I remember well how, in the earlier period of the nineties, when Professor *Roentgen* had made his wonderful discovery, even scientists scoffed at the idea. The possibility of seeing and even photographing the bones of the living body was ridiculed. It was in

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February, 1895, that the X-rays were found. In April of that same year I published in London the first number of the Archives of Skiagraphy, now the Archives of the Roentgen Ray. In order to meet the charge that the photographs (radiograms) obtained by the aid of *Crook's* tube, were genuine and not faked, I had the original negative glass plates mounted on wood-blocks and used them, instead of half-tones, for printing the illustrations by a process then known as "colotype." Doubting persons were thus enabled to examine the prints as well as the negatives for any traces of faking or "retouching." In this manner, definite proof was given to the world of the reality of X-ray technic. Doubts soon disappeared and Roentgenology has become an important branch of physical science and is today a powerful adjuvant to modern surgery.

And so it is with every discovery. Mankind is forever in the dark as to the wonderful mysteries contained in nature, until a fortunate fellow-being finds and points out something new and startling, and successfully brings it to the attention of the masses. We require a guiding hand in all our doings.

This refers to the life of the individual as well as to that of nations and the world at large. Our whole life is a continuous course of object lessons, a progressive school, as it were. We are forever learning new things, that is, we absorb knowledge from what we see, hear, read or otherwise experience. We hold fast in our mind that which appeals to our taste or to our capacity of understanding, and make it a part of our knowledge. Things which we are unable to grasp we pass by, perhaps with wonderment, or we laugh at them or consider them a joke or sheer nonsense.

Take, for instance, the claim advanced by certain individuals,— "clairvoyants,"—that they are able to see an aura around the human body. How few people have taken this claim seriously! Occultists, theosophists, profess to possess this power also. It comes to them by virtue of faith in their religious cult and tenets. We shrug our shoulders, perhaps pity the "poor deluded creatures," and dismiss the subject from further thought.

But now comes Dr. *Walter Kilner*, of London, and tells us that the human body is surrounded by an atmosphere, just like the earth and the other heavenly bodies which we call stars, and just like everything else in nature that has a body, whether animate or inanimate. And he tells us that everybody can see it, and that it is

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not necessary to be a clairvoyant, or an occultist, or a theosophist to perceive it. All we have to do is to use certain mechanical means, or, let us say, certain chemical screens or filters, such as he has devised, follow his instructions, and the hitherto invisible will be revealed to our corporeal eye.

In fact, we shall find that to see this aura or atmosphere is simply a matter of training our visual organs to adapt themselves to certain wave-lengths of light which lie beyond the ultra-violet rays and for that reason have thus far escaped the notice of the people at large, being only apparent to a few (clairvoyant, if you wish to use the expression) persons whose eyes are constructed by nature so as to be able to accomodate themselves to these vibrations.

Dr. *Kilner's* book reminds me of the man who, whilst walking along the street, suddenly espies an airship sailing through the sky. He stands still, gazes up into space and watches the progress of the areonaut. Soon a crowd gathers around him and all are craning their necks in the direction in which he is looking. You happen to join the throng and ask: "What is to be seen?" "An airship," says the small boy. "Where? I cannot see it." "Just look a little to the right of the top of that flagstaff on the hotel over yonder." You stare for a moment or two, and--there it is for certain. Your eyes have found the proper accomodation.

Dr. *Kilner* says: Look through this little glass filter for the space of 30 to 45 seconds and then look at that person in front of you and the aura will become visible to your eyes. If you are quick of perception, you will find it. If you are slow, it will take some time and require more practical instruction, but you are pretty sure to discover it.

Now, what is the *aura* or the atmosphere of the human body? What does it consist of? What does it look like? What it is, and of what it consists, we are as yet not in a position to say. The study of this phenomenon is still too young to enable us to give a definition of it. We do not pretend to know whence or how this auric force emanates from the body. All we know at present is that it exists and we can give a description of it.

The aura appears like a subtle haze that surrounds the whole human frame. It varies in size, density and color in each individual, and is also influenced by the physical condition of its owner, that is to say by health and disease, by normal and abnormal conditions, and also by the degree of mental development.

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In bright (mentally) and healthy persons the aura is of a bluish tint, very much like the vapor that rises from a burning cigarette lying on an ash-tray. In the majority of cases, however, it is rather gray than blue, and in dull people of the white race it has a muddy, grayish tint. In the colored races it is more of a chocolate color.

We can judge of the mentality of a person by the color of the aura. The higher the development of the mental faculties and the more brilliant the psychical qualities, the closer approaches the color of the aura to the blue of the ether in the sky. Perhaps as "auralogy" develops and our knowledge of this force becomes more definite, the study of the aura will be employed as an aid in diagnosing character, mental endowments, and thus fitness for certain positions in the business world. Why not?

In India and other oriental countries, where the occult has been the theme of study for centuries, the aura has always played an important rôle. These Eastern people have cultivated the human mind in a different direction from the Caucasian races, who have ever striven to turn more to the practical, materialistic side of life. See how far the hypnotic power has been developed in India, where even the common street fakir can exercise a power over the visual organs of his audience without direct control of each individual, a power which is not as yet understood by the western peoples.

But they, on the other hand, cannot comprehend our development of the physical powers of nature for practical use, such as steam and electricity. They cannot understand the transmission of the voice over the telephone, or that of light over the wire, or the workings of the telegraph or the *Marconi* instruments. But, then, how many white men are there who understand any of these mysteries? We simply accept as facts what by practical demonstration we perceive to exist, and trouble little or nothing about the mechanical construction.

In like manner as the instruments and mechanical contrivances just mentioned have become accessories to and paraphernalia of modern business, will, no doubt, the aura be employed by progressive man for his convenience and necessities. If, in the early Christian era, the aura was perceived in holy persons and depicted as a halo surrounding the head of the saint, or even the whole body, as may be observed in many pictures of Christ, so the aura of the human

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body may yet become the distinguishing badge of the wearer. In criminology it should play an important part for pointing out mental defects and moral inferiority.

The size of the aura is governed by sex and age as well as by physical conditions of the body.

In boys, immature girls and in the adult male, its area hardly ever extends beyond a distance of 3 to 4 inches from the frame. In woman it may be traced to 24 or 30 inches. Woman enjoys a higher psychical development, and that, no doubt, accounts for the superiority of her aura. As in size, so also in tint the female aura excels.

Cold, heat, perspiration, air-waves, such as drafts or gusts of wind, do not seem to influence the aura in any manner or form. The faint luminosity surrounding the body is as steady as the cold light of the moon. I have observed the aura in the same person when the body was simply streaming with perspiration in a hot room, and again when the skin was cold as marble, but there was no difference either in the size, color or appearance of the aura.

In some persons the aura is intersected by peculiar radiations streaming from certain portions of the body. They appear like sheaves or bundles of light issuing from the body into space like the faint rays of a searchlight visible at a great distance on the horizon. I call to mind a particular instance. When giving a demonstration before several medical men, one of the doctors present said to me: "This is the second time I have come to a demonstration and, although I have seen much of what you are pointing out, I still have grave doubts as to the actual existence of the aura. I cannot as yet make up my mind to accept it as a physiological fact. I am still tempted to place what I have seen in the category of optical illusions produced by the use of the colored screens. But if you can answer me one question to my satisfaction, I will capitulate and dismiss the feeling of uncertainty."

I said: "Ask the question."

Doctor: "Have you noticed anything unusual in the aura of this person?"

Answer: "Yes, I have observed a band of light about two inches in width."

Doctor: "So have I. Indicate its location."

Answer: "It emanates from the right hip to the middle of the

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right forearm." (The subject was standing in front of us in a darkened room before a black background with arms akimbo upon the hips. Of course the model was stripped.)

Doctor: "That settles it. I have been watching this phenomenon for quite a while (and he pointed it out with his finger to the other observers, who then noticed it also.) But why have you not drawn our attention to it before?"

Answer: "I was waiting for you to find it yourselves. What I am anxious to avoid is to be charged with resorting to suggestion, —hypnotic suggestion."

Doctor: "Well, I can trust my eyes now after this demonstration. The aura is a concrete fact. There is no illusion about it. I have observed it also in a black cat walking about a room which I had covered with black all around and in which I could not see the cat itself at all, but I could follow the aura moving about distinctly. However, I was inclined to attribute it to electricity rather than to any other force. Now I am certain it was the aura."

Let me say here that the aura is not a luminous body in itself. You cannot see the aura in an absolutely dark room. But it is capable of illumination. A certain amount of light must be admitted. It is best to filter the light into the room through a very dark blue or green blind in the window, or a dark blue or green mantle over a Welsbach gas lamp or an electrical bulb. After a little practice I have found it just as easy to see the aura in broad daylight, however, as in a specially prepared room, and I have taught others to do the same.

According to Dr. *Kilner's* instructions the observation room should be arranged as follows:

(1) A room with *one* window only, pointing to the north if possible, is preferable, so as to admit light from one direction only.

(2) A double roller-blind made of very dark blue or green material, such as is commonly employed for roller-blinds. These blinds should be so arranged that one pulls down from the top and the other pulls up from the sill of the window. They should overlap each other all the way, thus allowing of absolute control and regulation of light.

(3) A dead black background 7 feet high and 6 feet in width. I have found black flannelette the most serviceable material for this purpose. It reflects no light and is cheap in the bargain.

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At the beginning of the observation the lower blind is pulled up about half way, or more, leaving a clear line of sky above. The subject to be examined is now placed in front of the black background, which must be opposite to the window about 8 or 10 feet away. The observer stands close up to the window and gazes for one-half to three-quarters of a minute (30-45 seconds)—not more—through the dark green glass filter which contains a solution of dicyanin (a certain coal-tar preparation) into the bright light of the sky, pulls down the upper blind over the lower until the room is well darkened and turns toward the subject. Care must be had not to allow any white light rays to enter the eyes whilst darkening the room. This can be easily avoided by keeping the dark filter in front of the eyes until the upper blind has been pulled down.

Now put away the dark filter and gaze through the light green filter at the body in front of the black background about 8 feet away. After a few seconds the observer will notice that the body has lost the sharp definition of outlines. It seems to gradually melt away into space. The outstretched hand looks as if it were covered with a large glove, like that of a catcher in a baseball game. The interstices between the outstretched fingers show a cloudy effect, faintly luminous. This becomes more strongly pronounced when the hand is slowly moved upward and downward.

If now both hands are moved upwards and the finger-tips made to rest upon the top of the head (both arms should be bare) two triangular spaces between the head and the forearms and the shoulders and upper arms will be formed. These spaces will have the appearance as if they were filled with a slightly luminous, smoky haze or atmosphere. This is the aura. It can also be observed around the outer edge of the arms, especially around the elbows.

The light green filter may be dispensed with altogether after it has been used for about three minutes. The eyes in the majority of the cases are by that time sufficiently sensitized to receive the impressions of the short light waves which radiate from the aura. Moreover, they are then thoroughly accustomed to the darkened room and the surroundings. Many people do not require the light dicyanin screen at all.

I take occasion here to warn the observer not to use the green glass filters, especially the dark green, longer or more often than I have indicated above. The object in using them is to partially

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and temporarily paralyze the rods and cones of the retina. An unduly prolonged sensitization disturbs the vision almost completely for the time being, and small or no results at all will be obtained by over-sensitization. Should the observer find that he has transgressed this rule, let him rest his eyes upon the black background for quite a while, but without straining them. Gradually the optic nerves will tone down again to normal conditions.

If you are not successful in your first attempt, do not become disheartened; rest the eyes for at least 30 minutes before you resort again to the use of the dark green filter. Failure, in the majority of the cases, is due to over-exertion and to straining of the visual organs; also to excitement and to expectation of seeing lustrous emanations of light proceeding from the body. Do not look for searchlights or fireworks. The aura is only a hazy film that surrounds the body, not unlike the nebulae in certain constellations of stars, for instance in Orion; only more modified, more rarified, fainter.

The following procedure will act as a good path-finder. Let the subject stretch out a hand with fingers spread apart as far as possible. Now let another person with hand extended in a similar fashion, put the finger-tips close to the tips of the opposing hand and withdraw them slowly to a distance of from 5 to 8 inches in a horizontal direction, returning them again in the same slow, measured manner, but repeatedly. The fingers of the two hands will appear as if elongated, as if the hands were pulling molasses candy.

You can do this with your own hands, by standing with your back towards the light and withdrawing and approaching the outstretched spread fingers of the two hands. The fingers draw out like candles until the limit of the overlapping auras of the opposing fingers is reached, when the connecting lines suddenly snap off like India rubber bands. One can almost hear it.

These sheaves of light may be drawn from the elbow, the nose, the chin, the ears, etc. I call this experiment the first regular step in the observation of the aura. I have seen rays drawn out from the elbow to the length of 24 inches before they snapped off, in the presence of a dozen of observers who simultaneously breathed a long-drawn "Ah" when the snap came. When once the eye reacts to this phenomenon, the rest of the observation becomes easy.

Other requisites for successful observations are an open mind, freedom from prejudice and avoidance of over-anxiety and of ner-

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vous anticipation of pyrotechnics. One sensitization of the eyes lasts from two to four weeks. I have used the dark green filter but very seldom and then only for 5 to 10 seconds, and have had people come to a second demonstration two weeks after the first, quite able to see the aura distinctly even in broad daylight, without having recourse to either the dark or light green filter between times. To me it seems to be a matter of education of the sense of vision rather than of a sensitization of the retinal region.

Dr. *Kilner* states that the too free use of the dicyanin screens affects the eyes perceptibly. I found this to be the case when I first began to make observations. My eyes for days felt as if filled with onion fumes, causing them to smart and run with tears. But I am convinced that this was really due to eye strain, produced by gazing too eagerly and intently in a dark room at an object only faintly visible at a distance of about eight to nine feet. When I learned how to control my eyes with proper care, I experienced no further trouble.

When the dark green filter is used too much—for one to two minutes or more, the power of vision becomes dimmed to such a degree that nothing but gray patches are visible in the darkness, and it becomes difficult to discern even the form of the subject under observation. The effect is practically the same as if gazing into the bright light of the sun itself.

The aura can be divided into three distinct parts, viz: (1) The Etheric Double. (2) The Inner Aura. (3) The Outer Aura.

Dr. *Kilner* says that for the want of a better expression he has borrowed the term of Etheric Double from Occultism, for this part of the aura.

1. The *Etheric Double* consists of a faint dark grey, almost black envelope, which surrounds the whole frame. It appears like a crayon mark outlining the contour of the body when placed against a white or a background of a light tint. (The room in which I have given my demonstrations is stained with a light, soft-green, flat paint, which gives no reflection. This seems to give even better results than the white curtain recommended by Dr. *Kilner*.)

It is best observed between the fingers, if spread out, and lies about one-eighth of an inch from the skin. Between it and the skin is a clear, transparent space. Another part of the body where it may be observed to advantage is along the shoulder and neck, particularly if the observer stands about three to four feet to the rear

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of the subject. In this region the line recedes as much as a quarter of an inch, that is to say the clear, transparent space between the dark line and the skin is about a quarter of an inch wide, sometimes more, sometimes less, as it varies in each individual. The thickness and consistence of the line also varies in individual cases from a thirty-second to a sixteenth of an inch. The cause of this difference will, no doubt, become apparent as our knowledge of the aura itself progresses.

The *consistency* of the Etheric Double seems to be governed by the physical, hygienic condition of the body. I have seen it vary in the same individual at different times, although the aura itself was not affected. And again, I have seen persons who could widen or contract the space between the Etheric Double and the body at will by at least a sixteenth of an inch. The effect was very much the same as if puffing out and retracting the cheeks in slow movements.

This Etheric Double, practically speaking, disappears; or, shall I say, cannot be distinguished, when the subject is placed in front of a dark background.

2. The *Inner Aura* proceeds from the Etheric Double. It may be compared to a band of mist from 1 1-2 to 3 inches in width, which follows the contour of the body under normal conditions in an accurate outline. The width of this band depends on the individual, but may vary even in different parts of the body in the same individual. Its color, consistence and brightness are also individual properties.

Dr. *Kilner* has evolved a regular system by which the Inner Aura can be used as a guiding symptom in diagnosing diseased or pathological conditions. It seems to reflect the physical state of the anatomy like a mirror, and internal disorders, such as incipient tumors, fibroids, etc., may be discovered by reflex action in the Inner Aura. Of course, it goes without saying that it requires an experienced eye to find these flaws in the aura, But I will not go into details here, which interest principally the medical man. Dr. *Kilner* deals fully with the subject in his book, which was primarily written for the medical profession.

The beginner will find it a little difficult at first to find the Inner Aura and to distinguish it from the Outer Aura, of which I shall speak anon. But if he will use the carmine screen, he may be greatly aided in his efforts. There are two carmine screens in the

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outfit designed by Dr. *Kilner*. One is rose-colored, the other a deep carmine. The former is used in a semi-darkened room; the very deep one should be employed if there is a strong flow of daylight from the window. The observer must stand with the back to the window and the subject in front of a white background. Against this background the aura will have a grayish tint. When peering through the carmine screen the outlines of the Inner Aura will be sharply defined.

If the model should extend one arm horizontally over the adjoining black background and the other over the white background, the difference in the appearance of the Inner Aura against the two backgrounds will be quite startling.

If the background should be arranged in wavy folds from the top downwards and about three inches in width, the following experiment will prove of interest. Let the subject move the arm at full length very slowly up and down, direct your eye above the arm and follow the movement by gazing steadily along one of the folds in the curtain. You will now find on comparison that the fold disappears almost completely with the movement of the arm to a distance of about three inches above or below the outline of the arm. The deep recess in the fold naturally appears much blacker than the outer ridge, but where the Inner Aura begins to intervene, this deeper black becomes blurred; in fact almost obliterated. To make this experiment the eye should have been practiced with observation for at least half an hour, the room should be well lighted, and none of the glass filters should be used. The naked eye will spot it at a distance of about five feet.

To the artist, painter and sculptor, the aura ought to offer a fascinating phenomenon. I venture to say that its careful study must needs become a great aid in pronouncing with the brush the rotundity of the body, more than can now be observed in oil paintings generally, which to my eye at least, appear as a rule, too flat. I have always missed in portraits a certain something, which I have been unable to define, may I say the stereoscopic effect, until I began my studies of the aura. The aura, it seems to me, should supply this want.

3. The *Outer Aura* is possibly only an emanation or effluvium of the Inner Aura. It is a filmy extension which becomes extenu-

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ated until it is lost into space, like smoke or haze. But it has the same color as the Inner Aura.

I have already mentioned that in boys, immature girls and in the adult male the Outer Aura is scarcely visible and becomes a negligible quantity. In the adult female it is worthy of notice. It surrounds the form like a balloon of fairy haze, even to the extent of thirty inches.

The Aura cannot be seen through the clothing. At any rate the means at our hands under present conditions are inadequate to assist our vision in discovering it. That, perhaps, is an argument against the assumption that the aura is an effluvium of heat or moisture proceeding from the skin, for if it were it ought to be visible outside of the dress, since body-heat goes beyond the textile covering, and so does moisture also.

It is much more likely that the auric force emanates from the nervous system, for it assumes very peculiar and strongly marked shapes in persons afflicted with nervous affections or with skin diseases. For instance in cases of *Hysteria* the Inner Aura bulges out in the small of the back (the patient standing sideways) to the extent of 5 to 6 inches and becomes a landmark in diagnosis.

In *Epileptic* subjects it is almost entirely absent on the side of the head which is affected. Unmistakeable diagnosis.

In *Herpes Zoster* the Inner Aura disappears completely over the spot where the disease is located.

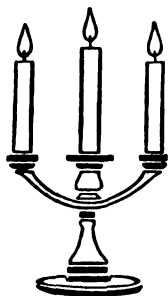
Whether the Inner and the Outer Aura are two forces differing from each other, has not as yet been determined. Certain it is, however, that the Inner Aura can be controlled by the will, that is to say, that its size, denseness and color can be influenced by the will power of its owner. I have seen the color changed from a bluish-gray into a rosy, even a crimson tint, by an effort of the will, although only for a short time.

Also rays of light can be shot out from any part of the body at will by almost any individual. If, for instance, the subject should hold out the elbow and the observer point a finger towards it at a distance of, say, sixteen inches, no connecting rays will be visible between the finger and the elbow until an effort of the will is made by one or both persons. The ray will then shoot forward and continue till recalled.

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This brief discussion is only a condensed resumé of Dr. *Kilner's* teachings, but I trust it conveys some idea of the importance of his findings. Aside from its usefulness to the medical man, who can apply it with ease and comfort as a reliable means in diagnosing disease, it should prove of interest to the Mason for the reasons stated above, and fascinate him who loves to explore mysterious and hidden forces of nature.

I will end with saying that the same peculiar luminosity may be observed around both the positive and negative poles of a horse-shoe magnet, if hung up before a black background.



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