

## CHAPTER II

### THE ETHERIC DOUBLE

It is now time to turn our attention to the subject of the structure of the Aura. There is no doubt about its being a composite phenomenon. There are three divisions of the Aura, not including the rather supposititious Ultra Aura mentioned a little later on, which are the subjects of our investigations. They will be called the *Etheric Double*, the *Inner Aura*, the *Outer Aura*.

The ETHERIC DOUBLE. — Immediately the Aura was observed, one prominent feature attracted attention, which at first was regarded as an optical illusion, but on further investigation proved to be a reality. The Etheric Double, as seen through various screens, is a dark band adjacent to, and following exactly the contour of the body, separating the latter from the cloud or true Aura. It is, as a rule, from one to three-sixteenths of an inch in width,

rarely more, and keeps the same breadth all round the body. It varies in size with different people, and also with the same person under altered conditions. Sometimes it is so conspicuous that it can be seen with the most transitory glance; at other times a very careful examination is necessary for its perception, while not infrequently a special screen is imperative for its detection. In some instances, where there is a difficulty in distinguishing it, the Aura proper apparently reaches right up to the body; but even then close observation will show a difference in structure, and the details can be brought out by the help of coloured screens. The screens employed in the following experiments were red, blue, and green, obtained from Messrs. Wratten and Wainwright, the same as employed for tricolour photography; and in addition to these a yellow screen was used. The blue is too dark, and can be replaced with advantage by a lighter one made of methyl blue. The red screen absorbs all the spectrum from near *D* downwards, transmitting only the red, orange, and yellow. The blue only allows the spectrum from *G* downwards to be visible,

while the green obliterates the whole of the spectrum except the part lying a little below *D* to about half way between *F* and *G*. The yellow screen cuts off the blue and violet. These results were obtained by means of a small pocket spectroscope, and are only roughly, but yet sufficiently accurate for our purpose.

For the following experiments any part of the body can be utilized, but perhaps the most convenient part is the arm or hand, as the investigation is necessarily a prolonged one, longer than a patient will care to remain uncovered. As soon as the patient has been arranged in a good position, it will be advisable for the observer to look at the light through a dark spectauranine screen for a minute, so that, if possible, he may perceive the Aura without the intervention of a light screen. The inability of seeing the Aura without using a light screen does not entirely debar the observer from performing the following experiments; but he must not expect to see the details to the same extent as if he were able to work without a screen. Of course, for these experiments it will be necessary to choose a

subject whose Etheric Double is as well marked as possible; but when once they have been performed, repetition will not be required, as it does not appear that any practicable benefit can be derived from them during the inspection of a patient.

EXPERIMENT 1.—Let the observer inspect the arm and hand of a patient held in front of a black background, through a blue screen. He will see the Etheric Double has a dark band without any striation or granules, adjacent to the body and quite distinct from the Aura proper.

EXPERIMENT 2. — Replace the black background by a white one, and regulate the light accurately, when the Etheric Double will appear as a dark line.

EXPERIMENT 3.—Employ a green instead of a blue screen. Against the black background the Etheric Double will be seen as a dark line, but not so clearly as when the blue screen was employed. The Aura is also visible, but not so distinctly.

EXPERIMENT 4.—When the same screens are used with the patient's arm before a white

background, the Etheric Double is dark in a subdued light.

EXPERIMENT 5.—If the yellow screen be employed, the Etheric Double still remains dark either against a black or a white background.

EXPERIMENT 6.—Frequently, when examined through a dark red screen, the Etheric Double will remain as a dark band round the body, similar to, but more marked than when screens of other colours are used. Occasionally it will appear, instead of a dark void space, finely granular with a tendency to striation. Even when lineated the appearance between it and the Inner Aura (to be described in the next chapter) is very unlike, both in texture and colour.

EXPERIMENT 7.—When the Etheric Double is inspected against a white background through a dark carmine screen, it will retain its dark hue. Through a light carmine screen with a properly adjusted light, it will become rose colour, quite distinct from the carmine shade the white background has taken. When carefully examined, it will appear finely lineated, and the striæ are the coloured part.



The use of coloured screens has been found absolutely requisite for the detection of certain constituents, as well as for the elucidation of some of the attributes of the Aura; so a few words about their action upon different colours will not be out of place, although at first sight they may appear elementary. Since all colours behave similarly, *red* alone will be considered in detail.

1st. Upon looking through a dark red screen all white objects will appear red, red objects become lighter in shade, and all other colours seem darker. This can be clearly seen, if in ordinary daylight a piece of white and a piece of black paper be placed side by side, and upon them be laid a strip of red paper of a moderate shade, half on the one and half on the other. When they are examined through a dark red screen, the red paper will be found to have lost nearly all its colour, and the contrast between it and the black paper will be increased, while it will approximate to the colour of the white paper.

2d. Keep the paper in the same position, and view them through the light red screen.

The red paper will then have a darker tint, but the contrast between it and the white paper will remain unaltered, each having gained more red colour in the same proportion. Theoretically, the red paper ought to show out more against the black, but the result depends upon the purity of the black. Should, however, the red paper have a very dark shade, the contrast between it and the black paper will remain unaltered, while that between the red and the white papers will be lessened. The reason is obvious, when we recollect that while daylight is composed of all the colours of the visible solar spectrum, an object appears white when it reflects the whole of these colours equally, but becomes coloured when it reflects only a certain portion of the spectrum, absorbing the remainder.

In the majority of cases the object is only capable of absorbing a limited quantity of light, so that it reflects, with its own coloured rays, more or less white light. The shade of the colour depends upon the proportion of these coloured rays to the white mixed with them, and is really a quantitative expression. If the white

light which is being reflected by the coloured object, has those rays, that are similar to the ones absorbed by the object, abstracted by any method, then the object will have a darker hue. This is what is effected by using a coloured screen.

As daylight is limited in quantity, a dark red screen will absorb the whole of it, with the exception of the red rays which are transmitted through it to the eyes. These rays are also limited in quantity. In the above experiment the white paper reflects practically all the daylight falling upon it, therefore it must also reflect the red rays. These are the only rays not absorbed by the red screen, therefore the white paper, when seen through the red screen, must appear as intense a red as possible. The red paper, if not too dark, reflects red rays, mixed with a large proportion of others, which are absorbed by the red screen. The main difference between the action of the red and the white papers, as seen through the red screen is that the former absorbs a portion of the white light which, had it been reflected (as it is by the white paper), would have been absorbed by



the screen, thus causing the red and white papers to appear alike. When a light red screen replaces the dark one, all the red rays will be transmitted with the addition of a large quantity of other rays of the spectrum, so that the red paper will have its colour deepened by being seen through this screen. It is necessary to bear in mind that this light red screen will act in precisely the same manner in a dim light as the dark one does in the bright. This fact must be remembered whilst choosing screens for the intensification of the Aura. When these experiments are repeated, the result may possibly not be exactly the same as stated, on account of different shades being used and of the purity of the colours together with the quantity of the light employed, but the principle will remain.

One other experiment is required. Look at a red hot coal, either in the dark or in the light, through a red screen of any shade, it will be seen that the red colour of the coal will be intensified, as it is self-luminous and thus colour is added to colour by absorption of the emitted white light. As has already been noticed, all colours, with the exception of red, will appear

either dark or even black when seen through a red screen, according as a part or the whole of the light is absorbed. Should the red screen be not sufficiently deep to absorb the whole of the intrinsic coloured rays reflected by the object, then this object will not merely be darkened, but will have its colour changed by the admixture of the red possessed by the screen.

By these experiments, it may fairly be concluded that the Etheric Double is quite transparent, and surrounds the body closely. When observed under favourable circumstances it is distinctly striated, with very delicate lines of a deeper hue than the surrounding and apparently homogeneous stroma. It seems very probable that the whole of the Etheric Double receives its tint from these coloured lines. The colour is a beautiful rose, which certainly contains more blue than there is in carmine. It is extremely difficult to understand how the rose tint can be seen against the white background when coloured by the carmine screen, and as yet no explanation has been forthcoming, unless it is self-luminous, but so slightly, that, under

ordinary circumstances, it is imperceptible. The granular appearance, mentioned in Experiment 6, is evidently due to imperfect differentiation, the surroundings not being quite favourable, as we have never been able to detect them against a white background.

Up to the present time, no attributes or changes in the Etheric Double have been found which are in any way likely to be a help in diagnosis. This being so, together with the frequent difficulty of its detection, we consider that the time that must of necessity be spent upon its differentiation will be more usefully employed in other ways, as the patient will naturally object to his inspection being prolonged beyond certain limits.