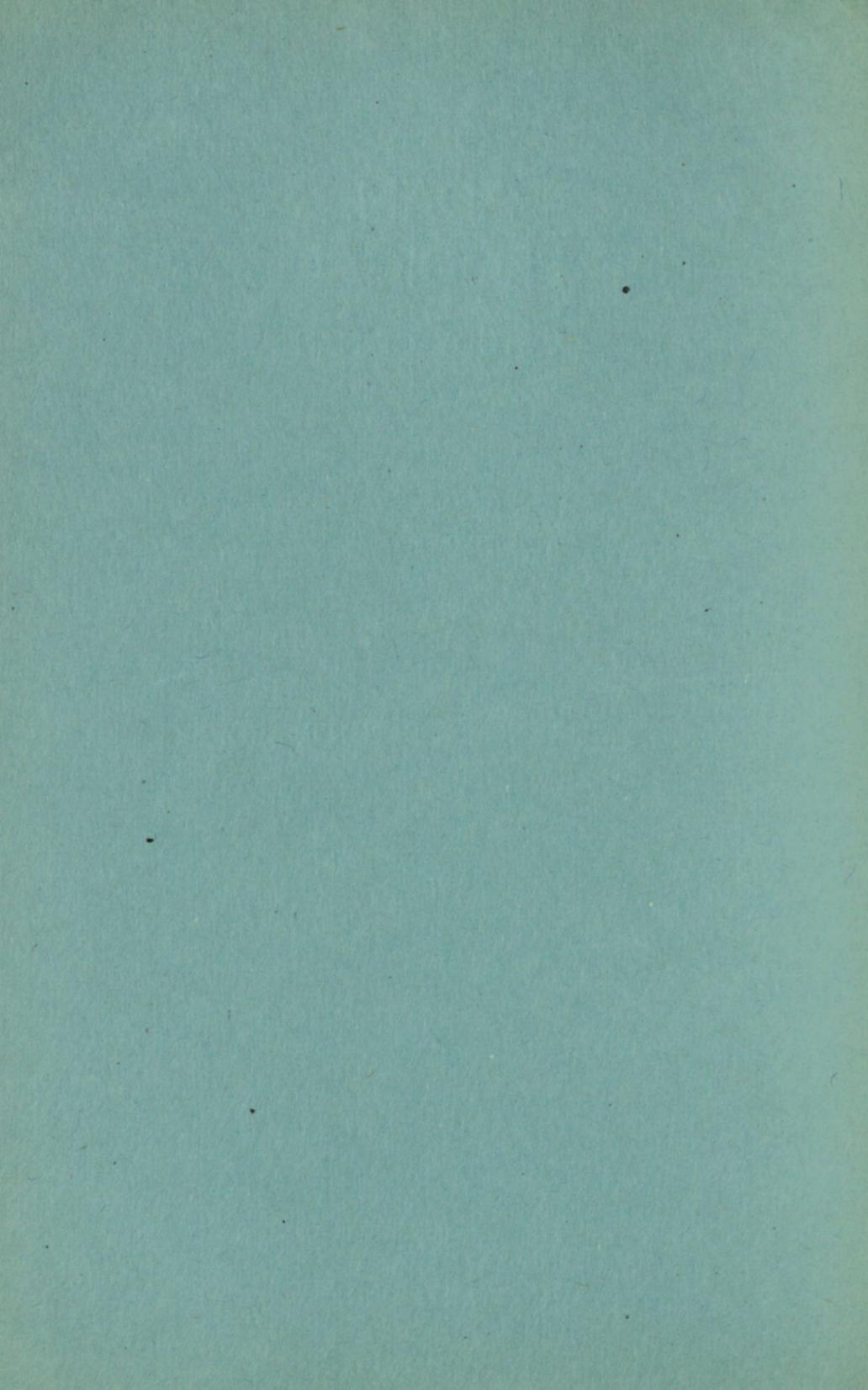


· ADAM,  
THE PRODIGAL SON

A STUDY OF MAN

LAURENCE J. BENDIT, M.D.

TWO SHILLINGS



# ADAM, THE PRODIGAL SON

A STUDY OF MAN

BY

LAURENCE J. BENDIT, M.D.

*"Father-Mother spin a Web, whose upper end is fastened to Spirit, the Light of the One Darkness, and the lower one to its shadowy end, Matter, and this Web is the Universe, spun out of the Two Substances made in One, which is Svabhavat."*—Stanzas of Dzyan, III, 10.

*"Man is a rope connecting animal and beyond-man—a rope over an abyss.*

*"Dangerous over, dangerous on-the-way, dangerous looking back and making a stand.*

*"What is great in man is that he is a bridge and not a goal: what can be loved in man is that he is a transition and a destruction. . . .*

*"I love him who liveth to perceive, and who is longing for perception in order that some day beyond-man may live. And thus he willeteth his own destruction."*—Nietzsche, "Zarathushtra," Section 4.

*"Manas maketh Man."*—Anon.

I want to thank E. L. Gardner and my wife for much help in clarifying and constructing this essay.—L.J.B.

## THE BLAVATSKY LECTURE

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of the Theosophical Society in England,  
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# ADAM, THE PRODIGAL SON

A STUDY OF MAN

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In this, the Blavatsky Lecture, I offer no apology for using technical words or phrases. It is a lecture addressed primarily to students and I feel myself justified in assuming that they are familiar with the more or less classical phraseology which has come into common use in the literature of the Theosophical movement. There are, in any case, no English equivalents for some of the Sanskrit words which exactly describe the matter in question. In the same way, I offer no apology for seeming to take a great deal for granted. From the strictly scientific point of view, it is absurd that I should go ahead and assume that the cosmogony of "The Secret Doctrine" is anything else but a magnificent fantasy. It may be, of course, that it is, and that we are all accepting a scheme of things which is nothing else than illusion, and that the universe is in fact something entirely other than we think it is: we really know very little about the mysteries of time and space, and perhaps the things which we put one after another on the track of time are actually going on simultaneously, superimposed on one another at different levels of the universe. But there *is* truth in the way we look at things, else, as philosophers tell us, we should not be able to look at them that way. The essential thing, however, is to realise that the scheme as we have it is only a glimpse of the real Truth, distorted at that by our own personalities. We need therefore to remember that all we know and all we work by has a pragmatic value, but no more. In ages to come, we shall, I hope, be able to look back with a smile from the standpoint of a more adult mind on such childish efforts as we nowadays produce and, like children, think of as of world-shaking importance. But for the present the speculative mind use such material, and in such form, as he has it. Speculation about the past is largely a matter of whether

or not one feels that the historical and legendary stories are reasonably likely to be true. About the future, however, man has not yet reached the point where his previsionary powers have developed as much as his ability to look back. This point will doubtless be achieved in time. But that time is not yet. Hence, forecasts must be taken lightly and in no sense as dogmatic prophecy. But it is an interesting experiment to study the sequence of history, out of the past and through the present, trying to follow its curve along probable lines into the future. Hence this lecture.

“The Secret Doctrine,” one of the oldest of the books published since the Theosophical movement was established last century, is perhaps also one of the most up-to-date. It has about it a scriptural quality which makes it endure. It is a mine of information which not only seems, but is, inexhaustible. For, like any really great writing, or for that matter, any work of art which touches the fringes of Reality, it may be studied over and over again and, if one will allow it to happen, one’s mind is opened up anew to perceive something hitherto unknown to it. At least, such is my own experience, and it is not because of the wonders—or, as some would have us believe, conjuring tricks—which H. P. Blavatsky performed “*pour épater le bourgeois,*” but because of her ability to write such stuff as she has put into her books, that one must pay tribute to her as a great woman. That alone should give her a place among the philosophers and wise men of the ages, even though to-day she is usually looked upon as a crank, if not a charlatan.

It is no use trying to read “The Secret Doctrine” with the intellect. If one tries to do this, one finds chaos, repetition, polemic. But if one can, so to speak, skim the surface of the page without clamping the mind down and trying to follow every word and every argument, one discovers, after a while, that some leaven has been at work with the result that a familiar subject is suddenly seen in a new light. It is as a result of this way of reading that I have found myself seeing a panoramic view of the subject of this lecture, certain general principles rather than intricate details. It is as if one found oneself lifted out of the immediate environment and its many restrictions and difficulties, and placed above it. Thus it is seen in relation to what has gone before and what is to come, just as an airman sees around him a vast sweep of country, in

which he himself is just a dot, and in which even large and important buildings fade into the general landscape, and are thus seen in their true proportions.

The theme I propose to discuss to-day is Man: a subject of very topical interest, and invested with a certain poignancy, in view of the dangers and sufferings which have beset him, and from which he is as yet by no means free. But it is not of Adam Qadmon, the cosmic archetypal Man that I propose to speak, but of plain Adam, of the first chapter of Genesis, and of his wife Eve. In doing this, I am coupling him up with the hero of another myth, the Prodigal Son, for the two are in fact the same person at different stages of evolution. In the story of Eden, we have the earlier stages, when he first came to this earthly globe of ours, on the downward arc into incarnation. In the story of the Prodigal Son, we have him on the return journey towards his spiritual home, bringing with him the wealth of experience which he has gathered on that journey.

I will not attempt to go further than this, the story of Man on this earth of ours. Because, of course, Adam is the symbol of humanity in this particular part of the greater scheme with which we are ourselves concerned. He is only one aspect of the greater Adam which is Man in the planetary scheme as a whole, but whom we can only know by implication and not, at least, as yet, directly. The implication is there if we choose to look for it. And as we study the Man we know, we shall see how knowledge of him applies, on the basis of "as above, so below." We need only to see ourselves as a miniature replica of the cosmic scheme and the rest follows. That is one reason for opening the printed version of this lecture with a quotation from the Stanzas of Dzyan which refers directly to the Cosmos, even though Man is my subject: the idea put forward in this quotation is precisely applicable to our human selves, and gives us an admirable basis for discussion of the human being and his fundamental nature.

#### SOME THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The cosmogony of "The Secret Doctrine" is based on sources of incredible age. It tells of the sevenfold nature of the Universe, and gives us certain arithmetical correspondences to critical points in evolution. And though these technical matters may be dull and

only theoretical where actual living is concerned, it is worth while to remind ourselves of them before tucking them away in the back of our minds, to be used, or not, as we wish.

If we take the number 7, and divide it into two, the half-way point is at  $3\frac{1}{2}$ : that is, half-way between the end of the third and the fourth of the units which, added together, make 7.

Subdivide each of these units again, into seven, and we have each subdivision equal to one-seventh of one. The half-way point in the sevenfold scheme is half-way through the fourth seventh of the fourth unit. For the figure Seven, substitute the humanity of our globe, call each unit a rootrace, and each seventh subdivision a subrace and we shall see that the half-way mark comes in the fourth subrace of the fourth rootrace of this humanity.

Another mathematical point of interest is found if we divide seven into three, the first third of seven coming at two and one third, the second at four and two thirds. In terms of humanity, this would take us to the third subrace of the third rootrace and the fifth subrace of the fifth rootrace.

Now, if we take the scheme described to us in "The Secret Doctrine," we find that we are, it appears, in the fourth round of the fourth chain of the Planetary Scheme to which we belong. Moreover, we are on the fourth globe of this chain: that is, exactly half-way through the greater scheme of which the earth is a part.

Coming down to the fourth, the middle, globe of the chain, the earth, however, we find ourselves well on in the fifth subrace of the fifth rootrace: that is, considerably beyond the half-way point, and almost exactly at the two-thirds mark. This is a small matter where the larger scheme is concerned, but it is of considerably more weight where the earth itself is involved. Further, by a process of reflection of the lesser scheme into the greater, we can in some dim way anticipate, from what is taking place on earth, what will take place later on when the whole scheme of things has reached the two-thirds way on its own greater cycle.

#### HOMO SAPIENS

From the viewpoint of biology, Man is an animal akin to the apes. And he is doing all the things which an animal species does when it is on its way to becoming extinct. I am speaking here of such things as scattering himself over the face of the globe, varying

his habits in feeding and behaviour, not of the more obvious menace of destruction through war. Yet, instead of dying out, he seems on the contrary to be getting a firmer grip on physical life. And moreover, we have the backing of occultism to suggest to us that, rather than die out, man's power and vitality are likely to increase and develop as time goes on.

In short, man, though he inhabits an animal body, is somehow different from any other animal. He is, moreover, an arrogant creature, calling himself the lord of creation, and claiming the right to dominate and change the face of the earth, to over-rule Nature and bind her to his ends. Has he in fact any such right? I think he has not only the right, but also the duty—the *Dharma*, if you care for the Sanskrit term—to do so, even though he may not yet have realised the responsibilities which go with that rôle. He is a dynamic, positive creature, and, of all those in physical incarnation, the only one who has the power to disobey the Law: that is, the power of self-determination and free choice. This is conferred upon him by the development of *Manas*, the power to think for himself. For it is *Manas* which makes Man. His very name, "man"—and I take this from a perfectly orthodox dictionary—is derived from the same root as *Manas*, the thinking principle. And so, incidentally, is the name of *Manu*, the Ruler and Law-Giver of our race.

In order to understand this better, let us once more remind ourselves in what way man differs from the animal. Occult sources tell us that the prime factor in separating man from the animal is when the animal group-soul becomes individualised. At this point in its evolution, a seed is planted in the young soul, which represents an outpouring from the First Logos and is the focusing point of *Atma* or Will in that soul. It links the *Monad* more closely to the animal soul, by gathering round itself the three higher principles of *Atma*, *Buddhi* and *Manas* which are the permanent *Ego*. This plays into the animal soul and so makes it something different from the soul of the unindividualised animal.

Hitherto, one may consider the animal and earlier kingdoms of nature as having grown up out of the earth, as it were pushed from below. But now a new factor comes into existence which pulls upward, while the pull of the earth becomes that of gravity, trying to hold and drag the creature downwards, in the opposite direction.

It is as if man had his roots in the ground, firmly held there, while another force, that of the Sun seized hold of him and tried to uproot him by tugging at his upper end.

Hitherto, Mother Nature, the Earth, has been all that was needed. Now, however, the Father, the Sun, takes a hand. The body, derived from the earth, is set in opposition to the Spirit, derived from the Sun. In short, man exists in a state of tension between "Father-Mother," and is himself the microcosmic web "spun out of the two substances made in one which is Svabhavat," The latter word comes from roots which mean "self-being" or "state of being": which is precisely what man is to become: an entity existent in itself, individual, separate from its parent, unique in its own way.

#### THE HUMAN SOUL

The picture of Man as the Web is very suggestive of the nature of his soul or psyche. For the web is stretched between two poles, father and mother, positive and negative, Spirit and Matter, God and Nature, Sun and Earth. These poles, of course, are ultimately one, but for purposes of manifestation, have separated, since otherwise creation could not take place. If one has a magnet, electricity can only be generated when the poles are separated and there is a tense field between them. In the universe in general, this law seems to apply. And in the human being, the soul comes into existence only as a result of the same thing. The origin of the human soul is thus in duality. And no matter how we look at it, we shall find duality in it everywhere and all the time.

If we have a tense field, however, it only remains *potentially* creative unless something happens to disturb it. In a magnetic field, the lines of force have to be cut by a wire before electricity is generated, whereas a tuned violin-string only produces sound when it is played on by a bow. In the case of the human being, the disturbing factor is the outside or objective world which, playing into the field of the soul or psyche, generates something new. This thing is consciousness, or, to be more specific, self-consciousness: the ability to think of and to know, not only the world around him for what it is, as not-self, but also himself. A cat watching a mouse, a dog questing for things in the street, is certainly conscious of his surroundings. But man has to learn to add to this the ability to know and observe himself acting in that world.

It is the power to be objective which makes him such a tremendous force. It is as if a man, hitherto sitting on a rock, to all intents and purposes a part of it, separated himself from it by getting down on to the ground, and then found that he was in a position to roll the rock around and put it where he wanted it. By separation, he has obtained a purchase and a power over it which he had not got before. The mind which can separate itself off from its environment and, so to speak, to make a space between itself and the world in which it lives, has taken the first step towards the mastery of that world.

But he does something else at the same time. For within himself, at the point where the not-self impinges on the tense string which is his psyche, there becomes established, by degrees, awareness of himself as something separate from the environment, and which gives him the power to call himself "I." The animal may be said to live and evolve under very much the same circumstances as the human being, with the outside world striking on him and giving him experience. But, because his soul is not tensed between the spiritual principle in him and the material, physical world, I-ness, or *Ahamkara*, does not result. It is *Ahamkara*, the first person singular, which is the instrument which gives man his power. It is, in fact, that part of him which, separating itself from the mass of rock of which it was a part, now has the ability to push the rock around.

Adam delves and produces far finer fruits than did Nature, unaided; Eve spins and makes garments which keep man comfortable, safe and warm in any climate, and so gives him the freedom to roam the globe unaffected by climate, in a way which no animal can. This, and all the other achievements of man are the result of the application of *Ahamkara* to the world about him. But *Ahamkara* belongs, not to the infancy but to the adolescence of men. Its time is not yet, while Adam lives in Eden.

#### THE AGE OF EARTH: THE GARDEN OF EDEN

We can divide the development of Man into three stages: infancy, adolescence, and adulthood. The passage from one stage to the next is critical and is a time of great disturbance and stress. "The Secret Doctrine" chronology tells us of great changes which took place in the first half of the third rootrace, while we ourselves

are in the corresponding point, rather beyond the middle of the fifth rootrace, and again the world is in chaos which, while it makes some despair, is a sign of great hope to others. Each of these critical phases suggests from an evolutionary viewpoint the gaining by man of new power, but also of new responsibility. Let us now consider these stages, as given us in "The Secret Doctrine." But let us also remember that we can check the validity of what we are told about them if we take enough trouble to study our own children. For, as we know, every child goes through a brief recapitulation of the evolution of the physical body in the womb: the body goes through phases recalling the anatomical form of earlier animal kingdoms before it becomes properly vertebrate, mammalian, and then human. Similarly, from the moment of birth, the baby runs through the stages representing the earlier human evolution at the psychological level.

The individualised Monad, with the three foci, Atma, Buddhi and Manas, which are the active principles through which it manifests in matter as we understand it, wrapped up in the auric envelope or causal body, arrives on the earth from interplanetary space or *pralaya* with the purpose of incarnating there. This is brought about when groups of beings belonging to earlier and therefore more developed humanities have prepared the prototypes of the necessary vehicles into which the Ego is to incarnate. The prototype, in engineering, is the first model of a machine, carefully made by hand, and tested out thoroughly before being mass-produced for general use. This is very much what had to be done before the human Monads produced in very large numbers the bodies which were to become theirs. This work was done by the hierarchies of Eitris. We are especially concerned with those we speak of as the Barhishad Pitris, who created the etheric double by casting off from themselves a *chhaya* or shadow of the vehicle they themselves used. At this stage man is mindless, and remains so for quite some time, during which, in the first two rootraces and the earlier part of the third, he reproduces, first by fission, like an amoeba, then by budding, like slightly higher protozoa, until he ultimately developed a hermaphrodite sexual form. The sexual stage as we have it now is a later product still, as we shall see.

This pre-mental stage of man is clearly that of Adam in a state of innocence and ignorance, in the Garden of Eden. He has no mind, is therefore incapable of knowing self from not-self, and the

world in which he lives is one, whether it be inside or outside him. Ahamkara, or separate self-hood, is not yet born. We see this stage in the baby, about whom the introspections of psycho-analysis tell us quite truly that he is not in a state where he knows any difference between, say, a thunderstorm outside the house and the rumblings of his own intestines.

Adam in the Garden is, as we know, in direct contact with God—his Monad: nothing has intervened between his body and this Monad. He does exactly what he is told, and has no wish to do otherwise. Life is perfectly happy, guided by Divine Kings—actually incarnated Barhishad Pitris, who finished their human evolution in a previous chain. It is, indeed a Golden Age, a Tirnanog, a spiritual nursery where man did not need to work, where, as there was no self to be ambitious, or to disobey, there was neither strife nor conflict, nor could there be selfishness. This went on until somewhere about the middle of the third rootrace, and may be called the *Age of Earth*.

It is worth noting, in parenthesis, that despite his childish state, Adam is said, in Genesis, to have set to work to name the animals and creatures around him, which were created after, not before him—i.e., in the reverse of the order which biologists give us. This reminds us of two things: firstly that, according to occult tradition, Man was the originator of animal forms, from the lowest to the highest, and the animals derive from him, not he from them. This, it is true, takes into account the humanity of earlier rounds. In this round, man took over the work of the previous hierarchies, which had reached as far as the reptilia, and on the earth, developed the mammalian kingdom. This means that man in previous ages used forms which now belong to the animal kingdom. He was in a sense a pitri to them, then passed on, leaving the lower mammalia behind him and evolving for himself the kind of form he now uses on the physical level. Thus Genesis seems to telescope two stories, or rather, the story of a greater cycle with that of a lesser one. But there is further significance in man naming the creatures. For by so doing, he makes his mark on them. It is traditional that if you know that name of a person or creature, you have in some sense got his measure, and therefore power over him. Man thus sets his seal upon Nature from the first.

## ADOLESCENCE

We come now to the stage where man begins to develop self-consciousness. That is, he evolves the peculiar characteristics which belong to him as a human being. This, we are told, takes place in the middle of the third subrace of the third rootrace. And of how it was brought about, both Genesis and "The Secret Doctrine" give us an account.

Genesis tells us that the change which resulted in man being thrown out of the Garden took place while he was still in that Garden. While Adam was asleep, that is, in a state of unconsciousness, God split Adam into two, producing Eve. Adam, hitherto androgyne, and hence more or less asleep, becomes man and woman, both of them awake and alive to things about them.

This allegory is indeed a very true one. For where the forces and energies within an object are perfectly balanced, that object is in a sense inert. It is like a "sleeping" top. Upset the balance, and at once things begin to happen. We have an analogy in the chemical tables, where there are a number of elements which have no chemical activity whatever. They just exist, and never combine with any other. Upset them by knocking out an electron, and at once they change into chemically active elements, which can "mate" with others and produce compounds and molecules—i.e., a higher order of chemical life. Again, put it differently: if an object has in it perfectly balanced negative and positive charges of electricity, that body is to all intents and purposes not charged at all. But if one separates off the charges, so that that body has in it either a positive or a negative charge, then it becomes electrically active.

So it was with Adam and Eve, representing the masculine and feminine forces in Man. Adam-Eve slept and dreamed. Adam and Eve, as separate beings, woke up and looked around them. Before long, Eve, the femininely intuitive, met the Serpent and listened to what he told her to do, thereby starting man on a new step of his journey. Adam became the prodigal son, disobedient to the commands of his father, and left home.

Thus Genesis. "The Secret Doctrine" gives us a more detailed and explicit account, which it is worth relating to the Old Testament story. The Serpent is interesting because he aptly represents the factor which disturbs that which is only potentially creative, and

makes it actually so. He is the wire cutting and disturbing the magnetic field, with the result that electricity is generated, he is the bow which sets the violin string vibrating and producing sound. He is the factor which makes the sterile field become fruitful. But with his coming, peace and perfect happiness go, and strife and suffering are born.

He is therefore often related to Satan, the opposite and enemy of God, and hence with evil, a creature accursed and to be trodden under foot. But the secret tradition tells us that the name of Serpent or Dragon was given of old to the Lords of Wisdom, and was in fact a title calling for the greatest reverence. There is here a paradox. I suggest that the association with evil is a much later matter, and is a very relative thing, because evil is only so in so far as it holds us back on the evolutionary path. Gravity, which holds us down to the surface of the earth and prevents us from flying into the heights, is perhaps evil. But were it not for gravity, we should never have been on the surface of the earth in the first place, and so would never have either the urge or the possibility of rising from it.

It is in this sense, and this sense only, that the Serpent may be taken as evil. But I suggest that at the stage of human evolution depicted he stood for the Lords of the Flame, those Masters of Manas Who are said to have come to us from Venus to take charge of humanity and help it fulfil its dharma which, on this globe, is the establishment and mastery of the mind. He is also symbol of the Asura Pitris. The Barhishads had prepared the prototype of the etheric body and established man in it. Now came the stage of persuading him to incarnate in a dense physical body which, from the viewpoint of the consciousness working on a less solid level, was a prison-house. It was necessary for him to enter this body to achieve full incarnation, and the tremendous power which this would give him, but he had to be tempted into it. This the Asuras, Lords of Lower Manas, achieved, suggesting to man the pleasures of the physical world, giving him memory through which he could recall these pleasures, and the power to anticipate that, given the right conditions, these pleasures could be repeated. We are told that this temptation was no easy matter, and some there were, among the Monads, who refused to fall into it until long

after, when they came into incarnation in Atlantis, where they were also called Asuras in a different sense, and were the prime movers in the catastrophe which their actions led to.

One of the great means used by the Asuras was apparently the division of the sexes, already mentioned. For it is generally accepted that sexual satisfaction is one of the greatest and fullest experiences obtained by primitive man through the physical senses. Hence it is one of the things most likely to lure the human being in quest of such experience into the trap. One cannot but marvel at what may, without irreverence, be called the ingenuity of the Logos, in devising so variously fruitful a scheme as that of the division or polarisation of the energies in His world, as a means to hastening its evolution.

In man we see this division running parallel with the development of the lower mind and its consciousness of separate self-hood, and the two together are the thing which takes man out of his nursery and places him in the schoolroom of the outerworld, there to experiment, to create, to destroy, and ultimately to conquer. Indeed, this transition is a casting-out. Manas henceforth stands between man in his personality and his divine Monad. He is cut off, disinherited, he is thrown out of heaven.

But this separation between spirit and body is necessary to give the Monad a purchase on his body. Prior to it, we had the two united, like the man sitting on the rock. Now, the Monad has the power to use indirect leverage on the personality, Manas being the lever, and so can achieve its ends through it.

That is one way of looking at the problem. Approaching it from another angle, it is equally valid to put it that, as a result of the tension set up between the earth-nature of man, his body, and his Spiritual, or Solar nature, a magnetic field is set up, which is potentially creative. The disturbing factor which makes it actually create, is the effect both of the Asuras and of the Lords of the Flame. That which is created is the mind of man, with all that that implies.

Thus the "anger" of God, the "displeasure" of the Monad, the descent into Hell, the outward journey of the Prodigal, all of these are natural and essential phases in the evolutionary plan. The curse placed on Adam and Eve is in truth a blessing in disguise.

It is also worth noting that the name of the first-born of the polarised couple, Adam and Eve, was Cain, which is said to signify much the same thing as Ahamakara, or self-consciousness.

Man thus becomes a power in the world at the time when Manas becomes active, through the acquisition of the "coat of skin" or physical body—given him, be it noted, by God—which links him to the "shadowy end" of Spirit, which is matter, the Earth, thus creating the necessary field for action. We have thus an interrelated series of events taking place in man's history, all of them hinted at in the few verses of Genesis which we have considered. Traditionally, the transition is very rapid. And indeed, it probably took place in "the twinkling of an eye," a matter of a few millenia only, which, to a Deity whom "a thousand ages" are "like an evening gone," is negligible.

We then come to the weariness, the toil, the suffering, the danger of the next stage. The poles, the pairs of opposites, are separated, and up to the middle of the fourth root-race—which is the half-way point, let us remember, of this globe's occupation—they pull more and more against one another, the tension becomes greater and greater. It is like the tension between a thunder-cloud and the earth or another cloud, which mounts until a gigantic spark releases the charges, possibly devastating things which stand in its way. Man finds himself equipped with a dense body, he begins to know himself as a person who can affect others, and even subdue them to his ends and pleasures. He has a mind which he can learn to use to think out new ways of doing things. In short, he is in a very parlous position. And it is very doubtful even to-day whether, balanced as he is, on a knife-edge, he will continue his evolution on one side or the other. In other words, whether he will go forward or back. Indeed, if the legend is true, in the middle of the Atlantean period, calamity did occur, and it was only because there were still a handful of "just men" who kept aloof from the *débauche*, that mankind was saved. But as it was, the clock was put back thousands of years by the loss of the civilisation of Atlantis, and all the marvels of the technical achievement which we are told that civilisation had. Indeed, it is only now that we are once more reaching that same technical level—and with it, the danger-point. Perhaps that main peril has in fact passed with the defeat of Germany. But this defeat was made all the harder by the fact that man had to cope not only with the

immediate critical stage of evolution represented by the middle of the Atlantean age, but in addition had to deal with the burden of the karma of his earlier failure. And this time, he had to save himself, by his own efforts, and not by the intervention of the Hierarchy which in those earlier days could legitimately intervene and save the few by destroying the many in the great earthquakes and floods which overwhelmed Atlantis.

I cannot help but feel that many of the difficulties which beset us to-day are perhaps the direct aftermath of the Atlantean failure. Not only is sex—significantly enough—one of the major worries of many people but, apart even from vivid and dramatic climacterics of misery during the wars, we nowadays find ourselves tied down to the grindstone of the physical world in a thousand ways. Perhaps even the eternal domestic chores which are the bugbear of so many men and women to-day are actually a direct result of Atlantis and represent the karma of a wrong use of and relationship to the physical world.

So for our troubles and dangers. But what have we gained during the centuries of our adolescence? For it is the function of the Gods to make use of apparent evil that greater good may come out of it. It is just the same process as that of the gardener who grows better flowers and fruits if he has manure to put round their roots than if he has only clean earth to deal with, or who ruthlessly prunes and mutilates his plants to make them grow stronger.

I think we may sum these gains up under two headings: subjective and objective. On the subjective side, we have gained separate selfhood: knowledge of our own identity as distinct from the mass-consciousness of pre-human levels. We have been born, as men, out of the womb of Mother Nature, and exist as independent beings. We have, it is true, gone against the instinctive dictates of Nature in doing this, and have thereby landed ourselves in much trouble. But, as one writer has put it, the first truly human act was indeed an act of disobedience: of defying Nature and asserting himself.

It is often stated that Ahamkara, or the sense of separateness, is a thing to be outgrown and discarded as one follows the path of spirituality. As I do not know the subtleties of the Sanskrit, I may be using the term in the wrong way if I say that I think, on the contrary, that Ahamkara, when once achieved, remains a most precious possession, and is, in fact, a characteristic of the gods, if

not of God Himself. Provided, that is, that, like all the earlier phases and acquisitions of consciousness, it becomes integrated with, and, to use the technical term, subsumed into, something higher and greater. It is probably true to say that the Logos of our System himself is and remains an individual, making his universe according to His own pattern and conception, different from that of other Logoi of the same standing in the Macrocosm. Ahamkara is, I believe, the first step of man toward godhood, even though, in its early stages, it shows itself as aggressiveness and self-seeking.

The other thing which man has done is to develop his power of logical and rational thinking. This too is his dharma, on this globe. For if one considers correspondences, the fourth principle of Man, Manas, is naturally the predominant thing on the fourth globe of the fourth round, of the fourth chain of the Earth System. True, Manas is by no means fully developed yet, and cannot be until the end of the chain. But already it has gone a long way.

For Manas is a function which always seems to go in two reciprocal directions at once, and represents the apogee of the manifestation of the pairs of opposites. We see only too well what happens when one of these pairs takes possession of the field, as it did in Atlantis. What took place then was not only a physical calamity, but also a complete mental breakdown, a psychosis or insanity, of the human race. We have seen the same thing recently in Germany, where a whole, highly intellectual nation, underwent a process of mental disintegration exactly comparable to that of the unfortunate people who inhabit our mental hospitals. But Manas working harmoniously is a magnificent thing, balancing and synthesising the opposites, just as an artist balances and synthesises light and shade to produce a true picture of an object.

This is so important a matter that I feel that it needs a little more elaboration.

#### MANAS

If we consider our mental processes, we shall readily see how they are always couched in terms of duality. It is probably true to say that this is not so where the animal is concerned: he is all-absorbed in whatever task is occupying him at the time, and is concerned only with the immediate moment. This applies

equally to those beasts which store food for the winter, and otherwise seem to anticipate events, because here the intelligent anticipation is probably done for them by the Deva kingdom, while all that the animal itself has to do is to follow the instinctive urge shaped for it by the deva in charge of his group-soul. It lives entirely in the present, and its mental processes—if we except the most highly domesticated animals, who overlap on to the human range—are concerned only with the immediate moment. We see something of this in a small baby, too: he is all-happy, or all-angry, or all-asleep, at any moment. This is the all-or-none state of consciousness which is characteristic of the primitive, and, being basic, is called technically, protopathic, or archetypal.

When man begins to think, however, he draws contrasts, and makes divisions. Our language is probably the best example of this process, where every word has an opposite and complementary: good, evil; light, dark; high, low; black, white; spirit, matter; and so on indefinitely. And the intelligent, thinking person, recognises grades and shades between the two extremes, where these opposites mingle. We may be happy, except for something of which we are aware at the same time, which destroys the perfection of that happiness; a thing may be part good, part evil; and so on. Everywhere we look the same thing applies.

The interesting fact now emerges, that we do not know one side of these pairs without taking the other into account also. We only know the future by reference to the past, we can only understand light by the shadows thrown up when that light is obstructed and interfered with. We can only know spirit if we know matter as well, we can only know God if we know the Devil too.

We now come to a further significant point: we can only know the world outside ourselves—the objective world—as we learn to know ourselves—the subjective world. And to know a thing means the ability to stand back and look at it, so to speak, from outside. In other words, one needs to make a space in one's mind between the thing observed and that which is observed. We thus have a trinity created: that given us in the *Bhagavad Gita* as the Knower, the knowing and the known. And here we have the relationship-pattern already outlined in terms of the two poles and the potentially creative field between the poles.

As before, however, we need another field to cut across this one in order to produce something new. This field is surely that

between the Spirit and the body of man, in which is Manas. And indeed it is the point of intersection of these two fields which is significant. We can recognise in it the symbol of the Cross, with the "Son of Man" in its centre—i.e., the human, as distinct from the divine, aspect of the mystical Christ—while in another symbol we see the significance of the angle of the Masonic square.

What then is it that we find at this point of intersection? At the present stage of man's development, we have the dual function of awareness and Ahamkara or sense of self-identity, which is consciousness in the strict etymological sense; or, if we prefer to use this word in a less restricted and exact way, self-consciousness. And this works ever in two ways, the one inward, toward self-awareness, the other outward, toward awareness of the outer world.

This is taking the matter on the horizontal axis of the cross, so to speak. One can take it also on the vertical axis, where one pole is the earth-body, the other the solar or heavenly part of man, that which we call Spirit. Here the duality lies in the eternal conflict between the animal part of man and his spiritual nature.

We have, too, the duality of the conscious and the unconscious aspects of mind, in which the unconscious process tries ever to balance the conscious, and is therefore always working in the opposite direction to the conscious. This is a point about which much will be found in the literature of analytical psychology and which we need not discuss here, except to bear in mind that there is no mental process which has not, somewhere, its shadow, equal and opposite in power and quality.

But how, it may be asked, is it possible for a man to know that which he identifies with himself—i.e., the mind—from outside? Clearly, only by objectivising this mind to himself. That is, by shifting his focus of consciousness to a higher level from which he can observe it.<sup>6</sup> This is the whole crux of what we call spiritual progress.

Returning to the symbol of the cross, we find that as evolution progresses, the level of the point of intersection between the subject-object relationship and the spirit-body relationship changes. This depends on the development of the individual himself. For what I have rather glibly termed Spirit is not a fixed quantity, as I see it, but represents that part of man which is not yet active and in manifestation in himself, but which will be so as time and evolution go on.

This is an important matter to have clear because otherwise we may imagine man as a static being where consciousness is concerned. In fact, evolution is continuous, and change of focus of consciousness is an essential characteristic of growth. If the change is along the evolutionary track, this is spiritual progress, if against it, it is regression—and hence evil.

#### A DEFINITION OF "SPIRIT"

Spirit, in the sense in which I am using the term, represents that which lies just ahead of the part of man which is within the field of his normal activity. In the case of man to-day, he is active up to and including the mental level. The materialist is chiefly active in the lower mental level, if he is intelligent. To him Higher Manas is a transcendental level, that is, one which is still to be incorporated into his normal field. This level is, to him spiritual. If, however, we go back to the more or less animal level, where Lower Manas is still rather beyond the usual reach, then Lower Manas is spiritual. Similarly, if we go to the other end of the human scale, and consider such as have reached the Arhat or Asekha levels, to them nothing is spiritual except Atma, or that which lies beyond Atma: the rest lies within their normal range of conscious activity.

This use of the word spiritual may seem strange and contradictory when we think of the older theosophical terminology. I suggest that it is not so in fact, because, whatever the level is called spiritual, this level represents a certain manifestation of the Will or Atma, working on the individual personality to draw the consciousness of that personality up to a new level hitherto untouched, or at most, touched only in rare moments of special experience.

We thus have the picture of man as a being with his roots firmly fixed in the etheric, in touch with the dense physical—the latter a factor of great importance, which we shall discuss later on—and his upper end growing upward in consciousness, away from the physical. He is thus like a tree, and, like that tree, he needs firm roots in the soil as well as freedom to grow skyward, if he is to be healthy. In this sense he is like Nietzsche's rope across the abyss, dependent on two worlds and partaking of the nature of both, for his very existence.

Suppose we change the analogy somewhat, and for the rope we substitute a piece of elastic in the middle of which is a knot or a bead. If the elastic is stretched, the bead or knot moves further away from the ends. If this elastic is fixed at one end to the earth, and the other or spiritual end is gradually moved "upward" towards the higher levels of consciousness, then the bead, which represents the focus of Ahamkara, or self-consciousness, moves up proportionately. And it is probably true to say that this is the point of intersection between the subject-object relationship and the subjective spirit-body relationship. In other words, the point where the arms of the cross intersect.

This analogy will help us to understand the change of attitude towards the outer world of the person developing according to spiritual laws. Similarly, one can assess the change within the individual by watching how his attitude towards the outside world has altered.

This may seem to be a digression from the general theme of collective humanity. But, in fact, the general principle applies to collective Adam just as much as to any one of us. The fact that to-day humanity is socially conscious, that the selfish, grabbing individual—who, be it remembered, was the one who became a king or ruler in times not so very long past—is nowadays called rude names and looked upon as anti-social, denotes a vast change from the earlier phases of the stage of adolescence, when man first became self-conscious. The earlier self-consciousness was largely one of the lower mental level. The present state of man in general is on where other people enter into that self-consciousness, and this represents a shift towards the higher mental, to Buddhi-Manas, as against Kama-Manas. One of the dualities of Manas is precisely that of the analytical and concrete nature of Lower Manas as against the synthetic, abstract quality of Higher Manas.

Thus, to sum up: subjectively, Man has, during his adolescence, developed his sense of self-identity, Ahamkara. Around this as a nucleus, he has evolved lower Manas, Kama-Manas, which is the only foundation from which he can reach up into and develop higher, or Buddhi-Manas. And, as a result of his incarnation in the physical "coat of skin," he has given his manasic quality a fine edge and clarity of focus which otherwise he would not have had. It has also given him the ability to see things objectively, that is, as separate from himself, at the physical level. He thereby

obtains a leverage over these things and the power to alter his relationship to them. This quality of objectivity, beginning at the physical level, is one which he will require to carry with him all the way up the scale, and to apply both to himself and to the worlds in which he lives, at every level, until he is free of them through mastery of them. So far, only the foundation of this power is established, but it can be said to be already well and truly laid at the physical level at least.

Parallel with subjective development, we have important objective achievements in which we can distinguish three stages. First, there was the application of the rational process of thought to the physical world, directly, when Man used his hands and limbs to change physical conditions to his own convenience. One can postulate him, for instance, as carrying stones and breaking off branches to make himself a house. In the second stage, which is one, by the way, touched by some of the more intelligent apes, he applied the strength of his body indirectly, by using tools—levers, spades, and so on up to every type of tool which he drives by his own bodily power. He thereby extends this power far beyond the scope of anything he could do directly, but it is still his own physical muscles which are the source of energy. This applies equally to instruments used to enhance his powers of observation and perception through the lenses: i.e., microscopes, telescopes and the like.

Then we have a third stage which is when man begins to harness the forces of nature to his own ends. The main development of this is a very recent matter—some century or two only, if we except the abortive Atlantean phase. For until then, man may have used animals, and, to some small extent, water and wind power, in a limited sphere. But since the Lords of the Flame, very appositely named, came to the Earth, man has used fire, not only for his own comfort, but as the great agent for modifying his environment. Through fire he learned to cook food, to make pottery and bricks and glass, to work metals, and all the thousand things which ancient civilisation shows us that man has done from very early times. We can call the adolescent state *The Age of Fire or of Mind*.

#### TRANSITION

Of recent years a startling change has been noticeable: one which marks an entirely new departure in the history of man, if we do not count the legend of Atlantis as history. (And in any

case we can legitimately consider that both the consciousness of man and his technical powers were set back together when Atlantis was overwhelmed.) This change is remarkable outwardly in the development of transport and what is to-day called "telecommunication." For whatever the older civilisations of historical times had, they lacked mechanically driven vehicles, and all the means of rapid communication which are our daily habit to-day. They also lacked the means of wholesale slaughter of one another which the invention of explosives has placed at our disposal. Fortunately, there is also a decided change of consciousness also. For the net effect of mechanisation has been to make the world smaller: no part of the globe is inaccessible within a matter of hours or days, while communication of news and exchange of information between the antipodes has become rather more rapid by means of electrical waves than the carriage of the same words by the relatively slow passage of sound through air, across a room. On the negative side, too, the earth is gradually being reduced to a place where no part of it will be out of range of destructive projectiles. Thus we find ourselves realising ever more fully the oneness of the peoples of the globe and the need for every part to take into its reckoning the happiness and welfare of the rest, if only in the interests of its own safety and well-being.

But already, before this fact was forced on us by recent events, thinkers of all kinds were realising the moral duties of man to man. This was reflected in such statements as the magnificently idealistic, if not very practicable Declaration of Independence of the United States, and other documents since, as well as in the many movements towards social betterment and security. These, looked upon as revolutionary at the time they were first mooted, have since become part of our daily routine. This shows, I think, the entry into a new phase of human consciousness.

Put in terms of the principles of man, it means the crossing of the bridge between the lower, separative, aspect of *Manas*, to the higher, synthetic aspect of it which is so intimately linked with and vivified by *Buddhi*. *Buddhi* is the unifying principle, the consciousness of which gives us those rare moments—rare, that is, for ordinary man, at his present stage—of conscious union when the whole universe is seen at once and as part of oneself—or conversely, oneself as co-extensive with the universe; which is the same thing, looked at from the opposite end.

## COMING OF AGE

One can only, at this point, surmise what this third stage will signify in terms of consciousness and evolution. In any case, since we are only just about in the middle of the evolution of our system, anything beyond the middle point of the fourth round, globe, race, etc., can merely be a rehearsal, in general terms, of that which is only to become complete at the very end of the seventh Chain, round, globe, race. But this surmise can be to some extent backed up by what we know of those who are ahead of the average in their philosophical outlook. It would be invidious to name any one in particular, but it must be clear that, among our statesmen, philosophers, scientists, artists, the greatest show us a vision beyond that of the man in the street, representing Adam and his wife, the mean of collective humanity.

Two principle characteristics appear to emerge in these. One is the sense of the indivisibility of mankind, and hence, of the universality of its problems. They realise that anything happening, at any point on the globe, is not a purely local effect, but that ripples from that thing spread to regions farthest from its focus. Thus, the hunger or the misery of any section of the community is a sore affecting the whole body corporate of humanity. Similarly, a forward step or progress made by any one man is of benefit to the whole. We see this nowhere more clearly than to-day, when food shortages in Europe affect the whole world, where the problem of one nation is seen as a potential source of danger not only to Europe, but to the globe itself. In a book otherwise rather inadequate, the writer points out to us how the effects of scientific development in the West have already profoundly affected the whole of humanity, and are likely to affect it in ever greater degree. For such things as motor transport, aircraft, wireless, are no longer to be found only in teeming Europe and America, but are revolutionising the whole mode of thought and social existence in the remotest parts of the world. Another writer, for instance, tells us that where camel caravans used to take weeks to travel from the Mediterranean to Turkestan and other places in the heart of Asia, motor lorries to-day do the journey in a matter of a few days, while aircraft can do the same trip in hours, bringing the almost legendary cities of Somarkand and Tashkent within the scope of week-end tourists.

Evidently, such a change must bring about the destruction of a great deal that is old. The Fordson tractor and the motor lorry are rapidly doing away with lovely things like horse-drawn ploughs and wains, ancient, classical outlines of great beauty; electric trams run through Baghdad of the Califs, and before long even mysterious Tibet may become a landing-ground for aircraft from all parts of the world. Life, from being simple and leisurely, is being mechanised, and we are being forced to live and move faster and faster. We become increasingly enslaved by the ubiquitous Gadget, and find ourselves lost when these gadgets fail us. More and more, too, we depend on the ability to press a button and to leave it to natural forces, canalised and organised, to do work for us. Only recently, an aircraft, to all intents and purposes carried a load of men from America to Britain and back again all by itself, after the pilot in charge had, so to speak, "dialled the number" of the place where he wanted to go. Similarly, machines which seem almost endowed with intelligence, do our calculations, sort out materials, and so on, far better than the unaided human brain. Some writers have shown us their idea of what may happen if the gadget takes charge and man is made to live his life in terms of the machine. It is a grim picture.

We have to ask ourselves how much of all this is to be regretted, and how real is the danger to humanity. In one sense, there is a real loss of beautiful things. But what housewife would want to do away with her vacuum-cleaner and go back to the old ways of house-cleaning because they are traditional and ancient? Very few, I am sure, and those only the ones who refuse to let the dead bury the dead. On the other hand, what is the danger? A very real one, were it not for the new consciousness which is at least dawning. For, especially now, since atomic nuclear energy has been released to the use of man—and I use the word "released" advisedly, because I myself implicitly believe in an inner guidance of mankind, not by non-human gods, but by the elder members of the human family itself—the danger that man may destroy himself is increased a thousandfold.

Another characteristic of the élite of humanity is that by one approach or another, they are coming also to realise that man has a power of self-direction, of choice as to which road he will take, and hence, of whether or not he will live, as a race, or die. This power of choice is a characteristic of the human being which the

animal does not possess and is a sign of the action of Atma, or the true Will.

People to-day speak freely of self-awareness, they realise the conflicts in themselves between positive and negative elements. And they are learning that they have somewhere in themselves the ability to resolve those conflicts. At one time, it seemed that such resolution lay in avoiding one side or the other of a dilemma. Men fled from the world and the temptations of the flesh into monasteries and wild places, if they did not repudiate spiritual aspirations and give themselves over to libertinism. But to-day people are increasingly coming to see that man must live, "from heaven above and from earth beneath," to be complete, healthy and whole—that is, holy, or spiritual in the real sense. The poles, the pairs of opposites, are being perceived for what they are, that is, complementary halves of one whole.

It is as futile, from the human point of view, to be "so spiritual" that one loses touch with daily life as to turn one's back on spiritual urges and live for the flesh alone. Divinity is the ultimate goal of man, and the gods include both the Spirit and "its shadowy end, Matter," in themselves—else they would not be perfect, all-embracing.

It is interesting also to note how the relations between the sexes are changing, albeit against resistance. For one finds to-day, especially in the West, but I believe also in other parts of the world, how men and women are coming together in a level co-operation. True, women, after their emancipation, have gone through a phase where they tried to make themselves into men, and failed to do so, or else where they have tried to claim both the privilege of equality with men in all things, while reserving also the privileges they used to have as women, so as to get the best of both worlds. But this is only a transitory phase. And increasingly, the tendency is for each sex to find its level. This involves a very large overlap in common abilities and interests, while each side keeps certain intrinsic characteristics which are natural to itself.

It is worth noting here, in parenthesis, that a very full survey of the intellectual abilities of children in Britain, covering all social strata, showed that the average intelligence of boys and girls was almost exactly the same. But—and this accords with the findings of biology in the plant and animal kingdoms—there was a greater tendency of the male to deviate from the average. In other words,

while Adam and Eve are equal, where intelligence is concerned, there are more geniuses, but also more idiots, among their sons than among their daughters.

Another notable phenomenon is that intelligent people to-day are learning that no matter what body a person may inhabit, he is in fact bisexual. Every man has feminine traits, every woman has masculine characteristics. And, moreover, if one assesses the personalities of the most creative people, one usually finds they are people in whom the characteristics are most evenly matched. Many men, vigorous and masculine, and in no sense effeminate, are subjectively very feminine in their sensitiveness and intuition, while many an excellent mother and wife has a positive and masculine soul. It is as if the most creative person were, so to speak, self-fertilising, and able to produce his mental children by a process of generation between the two aspects of his own mind.

This bears out the idea put forward, notably, by Edward Carpenter, among English writers, of the coming into existence of what he called an intermediate sex, Uranian, or, borrowing the word from the German, Urning. These people seem to be manifesting in increasing numbers to-day, and it is a sign of the times, and of a forward move not of decadence, despite the casualties it produces. For, in terms of reincarnation, it points to the fact that the Uranian type are people who are profoundly influenced by the experience of past lives, in bodies of a sex different from that of the present life—that is, of memory stored in the causal body, in the Ego, not the transient personality. And if there are also a number of them who are homosexual, one must regard this as due to karma bringing them into difficult circumstances as children. There, by virtue of the very fact that they are so evenly balanced between the sexes, it takes relatively little psychological mishandling to turn them over on to the homosexual side rather than to keep them where they belong. For, of course, the proper alignment of the sexual characteristics should accord with the sex of the body: a man should have his feminine side in the subjective mind, the converse for the woman, while functioning adequately in heterosexual manner in the objective world, and in his relations to others.

The polarised opposites, widest apart in the middle of the fourth rootrace, are once more drawing together.

## THE AGE OF WILL AND NUCLEAR ENERGY

Man, at the threshold of his adulthood, is once more in a critical state, in which, thanks to his command of nuclear atomic energy, he is, it would seem, likely to destroy himself for good. Or he may move forward into a new phase of evolution, in which the only thing destroyed is the negative past. It is true that much that is beautiful, traditional, and ancient must be carried away in the changes which are in train, and instead of these ancient and lovely things we see ourselves given noisy, smelly, mass-produced machines, and we find that our lives become increasingly dependent on them: if we lack them, for any reason, we miss them and, as we say, waste time which might be better spent.

But to these things there is a positive side. For one needs to ask oneself what is the true purpose of Adam, what is his dharma on the earth. The answer according to the secret teaching sums up the matter in saying that his is the stage where Mind has to be developed. Moreover, that, Man being in possession of a dense physical body, he is given thereby not only a burdensome weight to carry around with him and to tend, but also a focus of paramount value in developing that mind. For it is only at the physical level that man is in direct contact with the objective world, in a particularly unyielding and absolute fashion. Mathematicians and astronomers have, by now, shown us pretty conclusively that the space-time continuum, which is the physical world, exists whether man is there or not, and goes its own way according to its own rhythms, guided by an Intelligence which, whatever else it is, is not that of a human being. And man is, so to speak, cogged into that world, by means of his body. Hence he has the means to develop objective standards of measurement and comparison which, not being based on his own state of mind, but on the relation of object to object outside his mind, are in a sense absolute. Without these standards, the evolution of Mind and then its transcendence would be rendered very much more difficult even than it is.

The physical body, moreover, belongs to the animal kingdom, not really to man. On this round man adopts and uses the more successful form of body created in earlier times. This belongs now to the animals: man borrows it from them and adapts it for his own human ends. But it serves not only as a fulcrum for his mental development, it is also a connecting link between himself and the tremendous storage-battery of energy which is the earth.

The earth contains enormous, inconceivable energy, coiled up in it. Every atom is a thing of tremendous power, as we have been made to realise. That energy is Fohat, the name given to Energy, undifferentiated, in the universe, coiled up and compressed in the physical plane, and only needing to be released to return to its pristine state, carrying with it all the forms we know as matter. But man is also a creature linked up with the opposite pole of the cosmic battery which, as far as he is concerned, is the Atmic level. He is thus like an electric light bulb connected across the poles of a battery, Kundalini being the negative, Atma the positive poles. The respective currents within the human frame are respectively Ida-Pingala and Sushumna. Mind is at once the connecting link and the resistant filament which prevents the unfettered flow of that current from pole to pole. \*In the early stages, that filament offers very high resistance and hence is a lamp of little brilliance. But as the mind develops, the current increases, and so does the light thrown out by the mental filament, which then becomes a thing of increasing power, and sheds its light ever further into the mysterious darkness of the unknown world, dispels the shadows of ignorance, and enlarges still further the scope of its activity.

But when one connects a lamp across the poles of a battery, it is not only the lamp which is affected, the battery too is changed. This gives us an analogy for the effect of man on the world in which he lives. Man is not an isolated phenomenon, a creature living on the face of the earth, a parasite, which were it removed would leave things where they were, or perhaps all the better for being rid of him. He is a power in the scheme, and one which increases as he develops himself and passes from the child-stage to that of the adult.

Obviously this is something of a truism. Man has brought about profound changes on the face of the world already. And he is by virtue of technical skill, acquired as a result of the development of Manas, likely step by step to be able to bring about changes undreamed of as yet. Not only has he narrowed the compass of his world so that it is everywhere coming within his reach. But in another direction, too, he is reaching to the very bottom of the physical world in his mastery of intra-atomic energy. The spreading of his influence is thus going on apace, and more and more he is taking it upon himself to interfere with the natural course of things. At least, so it seems.

For it is clear that Nature, unaided, is a very slow mover, and works along rigid and in some ways limited patterns from which deviations are matters of centuries, if not of millenia. If we take plants, for instance, the development of a new variety is brought about, when man and his inquisitive mind starts to work, in a fraction of the time which the strictly natural process would need. The same applies to animals; while the mineral kingdom, when man-handled, is altered both in physical and chemical state, almost in the twinkling of an eye, as man harnesses fire, electricity and other forms of radiant energy to the purpose.

#### GOD AND MAN

What does this all mean? And does it signify that man is forging a path of his own, contrary to the dictates of nature? I think not. It means, however, that man is, so to speak, gradually taking over the dominance of the deva kingdom, and it is a part of the divine plan that he should do so. In the first stage, that of childhood, Adam was himself a nursling of the devas—just as a baby is now. In the intermediate stage, we have man and nature seemingly in conflict, enemies. And certainly man treats nature and the deva's world shamefully, even now. In the third stage, however, it becomes his rôle to co-operate with the devas, but himself taking the initiative with them. It is for him to formulate and state to them what he wants to achieve, in metallurgy, in chemistry, in any of his many spheres of activity, and it is for the devas and elementals to carry out the plan on his behalf. Man has to understand how a thing can be achieved, that is, the laws governing the material worlds and what is possible within those laws. After that, however, these natural laws are operated by the agencies which are their very embodiment. And in so doing, new ground is being broken, things are being done which have not hitherto been done in the system. Man thus becomes the spear-head of the evolution of the Logos himself, and were it not for him, the Logos would not Himself be able to progress any further in this particular department of His Manifestation.

This may seem to some to be a shocking and arrogant statement. But it is not in fact giving man a cause for conceit. It is rather showing him his responsibility and his place in the scheme, now that he is achieving such immense power in the world that he can blow the globe to pieces, exterminate the life in vast tracts of

land, modify the course of nature in so many ways. He needs to see himself, not as the directing brain of the universe, but as the hand which must obey that Brain, but which, nevertheless, has to be the executive for it. His place is clear. He is called the Son of God and the son is the new creation of the father, and the one to carry on his work: the son, in a sense, represents the evolution of his father during a certain period of time, the means by which that father is able to open up new fields and to acquire fresh experience. It is thus perhaps not too much to say that if man fails him, God will have failed in His own incarnation, at any rate in the part of it with which we are ourselves concerned.

#### THE FUTURE

Thus one may forecast the future of this globe as one in which the human element becomes more and more preponderant. It is an appalling thought if we take this on a short term view. Man has littered the Matterhorn with sardine tins and orange peel. And as he goes farther and farther afield, we may anticipate that he will leave litter and rubbish in the remotest parts of the globe, ruining every landscape. Virgin nature will no longer be found. We have also the vision of man becoming more and more enslaved by his own mechanical and technical creations, unable to live simply, and requiring more and more elaborate machines to enable him to exist as he feels he should.

These things are true, but only up to a point. For we are at the cross-roads. We have the freedom to choose by an act of Will, whether or not this is to be a transition into the new age or not. We must not, however, be put off because there is always a lot of rubbish and waste surrounding a birth. We may look forward to the new phase, once the birth-pains are over, as being likely to bring us, not only into greater unity and harmony with our neighbours, but also with the other kingdoms of life, including that of the deva or nature world. Already the devas are only too anxious to co-operate with us in all forms of work. In ceremonial we work actively with them, invoking their aid. In art, the stage of conscious linking up with the "otherworldliness" of the devas is close, even if most of those who claim to be inspired by devas in their work are usually self-deceived. We can therefore look forward to emerging into an age where man and angel work together

in mutual understanding, and where man will no longer mutilate the beauties of nature out of ignorance and carelessness.

Similarly, the age of gadgets can become one where man will, by saving time and trouble in doing routine tasks, thereby enable himself to do other and more creative work for which, ordinarily, he has little time or energy. He will have more time for inner growth and contemplation.

The last of these also gives us hope where the machine is concerned. For strange as this may seem, two things become apparent. First, that whatever man is able to imagine, in any direction, he is at any rate potentially able to achieve in fact: were this not so, he could not imagine it. Second, that every machine he has made, whether for action or perception, represents a projection into the surrounding world of something which he can do within himself, unaided, when he learns how. He can levitate already, though only under certain conditions: for most of us it is still easier to levitate by taking an aircraft. He can see through solid objects by means of radar and X-ray: but clairvoyance will do the same if it is properly trained. He can move mountains and destroy cities with explosives: but if he learned how to use the forces in himself, he could do these things by a direct act of Will. And so on through the whole gamut of his life. One can thus foresee that as man develops his inner powers, he will find a new attitude towards the machines with which he has surrounded himself, seeing them as useful props and aids, but not as intrinsically necessary to him. As he gradually evolves from within his mind the powers nowadays conferred on mechanical devices, he will, in a sense, absorb his objective achievements into himself so that they become for ever part of himself.

This, it is true, is anticipating a long way the future of our race. but if the race develops along that line—if it chooses to do so, and I think it will, in view of the new attitude towards great problems which is making itself felt in the world to-day—it will lead him along the last miles of his road home. The Prodigal will have accomplished with success the long journey on which he embarked of his own free will and accord at the beginning of Time. On his return, he will, we may believe, be received once more into the fullness of union with his Father's household, as he brings with him the vast wealth of experience and power he has earned on his long pilgrimage in many lands.

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