

## CHAPTER III

### PLEXUSES, PLANES AND SO ON

The primal consciousness in man is pre-mental, and has nothing to do with cognition. It is the same as in the animals. And this pre-mental consciousness remains as long as we live the powerful root and body of our consciousness. The mind is but the last flower, the cul de sac.

The first seat of our primal consciousnesses the solar plexus, the great nerve-center situated behind the stomach. From this center we are first dynamically conscious. For the primal consciousness is always dynamic, and never, like mental consciousness, static. Thought, let us say what we will about its magic powers, is instrumental only, the soul's finest instrument for the business of living. Thought is just a means to action and living. But life and action take rise actually at the great centers of dynamic consciousness.

The solar plexus, the greatest and most important center of our dynamic consciousness, is a sympathetic center. At this main center of your first-mind we know as we can never mentally know. Primarily we know, each man, each living creature knows, profoundly and satisfactorily and without question, that I am I. This root of all knowledge and being is established in the solar plexus; it is dynamic, pre-mental knowledge, such as cannot be transferred into thought. Do

not ask me to transfer the pre-mental dynamic knowledge into thought. It cannot be done. The knowledge that I am I can never be thought: only known.

This being the very first term of our life-knowledge, a knowledge established physically and psychically the moment the two parent nuclei fused, at the moment of the conception, it remains integral as a piece of knowledge in every subsequent nucleus derived from this one original. But yet the original nucleus, formed from the two parent nuclei at our conception, remains always primal and central, and is always the original fount and home of the first and supreme knowledge that I am I. This original nucleus is embodied in the solar plexus.

But the original nucleus divides. The first division, as science knows, is a division of recoil. From the perfect oneing of the two parent nuclei in the egg-cell results a recoil or new assertion. That which was perfect one now divides again, and in the recoil becomes again two.

This second nucleus, the nucleus born of recoil, is the nuclear origin of all the great nuclei of the voluntary system, which are the nuclei of assertive individualism. And it remains central in the adult human body as it was in the egg-cell. In the adult human body the first nucleus of independence, first-born from the great original nucleus of our conception, lies always established in the lumbar ganglion. Here we have our positive center of independence, in a multifarious

universe.

At the solar plexus, the dynamic knowledge is this, that I am I. The solar plexus is the center of all the sympathetic system. The great prime knowledge is sympathetic in nature. I am I, in vital centrality. I am I, the vital center of all things. I am I, the clew to the whole. All is one with me. It is the one identity.

But at the lumbar ganglion, which is the center of separate identity, the knowledge is of a different mode, though the term is the same. At the lumbar ganglion I know that I am I, in distinction from a whole universe, which is not as I am. This is the first tremendous flash of knowledge of singleness and separate identity. I am I, not because I am at one with all the universe, but because I am other than all the universe. It is my distinction from all the rest of things which makes me myself. Because I am set utterly apart and distinguished from all that is the rest of the universe, therefore I am I. And this root of our knowledge in separateness lies rooted all the time in the lumbar ganglion. It is the second term of our dynamic psychic existence.

It is from the great sympathetic center of the solar plexus that the child rejoices in the mother and in its own blissful centrality, its unison with the as yet unknown universe. Look at the pictures of Madonna and Child, and you will even see it. It is from this center that it draws all things unto itself, winningly, drawing love for the soul, and actively drawing in milk. The same center controls the great

intake of love and of milk, of psychic and of physical nourishment.

And it is from the great voluntary center of the lumbar ganglion that the child asserts its distinction from the mother, the single identity of its own existence, and its power over its surroundings. From this center issues the violent little pride and lustiness which kicks with glee, or crows with tiny exultance in its own being, or which claws the breast with a savage little rapacity, and an incipient masterfulness of which every mother is aware. This incipient mastery, this sheer joy of a young thing in its own single existence, the marvelous playfulness of early youth, and the roguish mockery of the mother's love, as well as the bursts of temper and rage, all belong to infancy. And all this flashes spontaneously, must flash spontaneously from the first great center of independence, the powerful lumbar ganglion, great dynamic center of all the voluntary system, of all the spirit of pride and joy in independent existence. And it is from this center too that the milk is urged away down the infant bowels, urged away towards excretion. The motion is the same, but here it applies to the material, not to the vital relation. It is from the lumbar ganglion that the dynamic vibrations are emitted which thrill from the stomach and bowels, and promote the excremental function of digestion. It is the solar plexus which controls the assimilatory function in digestion.

So, in the first division of the egg-cell is set up the first plane of psychic and physical life, remaining radically the same throughout the

whole existence of the individual. The two original nuclei of the egg-cell remain the same two original nuclei within the corpus of the adult individual. Their psychic and their physical dynamic is the same in the solar plexus and lumbar ganglion as in the two nuclei of the egg-cell. The first great division in the egg remains always the same, the unchanging great division in the psychic and the physical structure; the unchanging great division in knowledge and function. It is a division into polarized duality, psychical and physical, of the human being. It is the great vertical division of the egg-cell, and of the nature of man.

Then, this division having taken place, there is a new thrill of conjunction or collision between the divided nuclei, and at once the second birth takes place. The two nuclei now split horizontally. There is a horizontal division across the whole egg-cell, and the nuclei are now four, two above, and two below. But those below retain their original nature, those above are new in nature. And those above correspond again to those below.

In the developed child, the great horizontal division of the egg-cell, resulting in four nuclei, this remains the same. The horizontal division-wall is the diaphragm. The two upper nuclei are the two great nerve-centers, the cardiac plexus and the thoracic ganglion. We have again a sympathetic center primal in activity and knowledge, and a corresponding voluntary center. In the center of the breast, the cardiac plexus acts as the great sympathetic mode of new dynamic

activity, new dynamic consciousness. And near the spine, by the wall of the shoulders, the thoracic ganglion acts as the powerful voluntary center of separateness and power, in the same vertical line as the lumbar ganglion, but horizontally so different.

Now we must change our whole feeling. We must put off the deep way of understanding which belongs to the lower body of our nature, and transfer ourselves into the upper plane, where being and functioning are different.

At the cardiac plexus, there in the center of the breast, we have now a new great sun of knowledge and being. Here there is no more of self. Here there is no longer the dark, exultant knowledge that I am I. A change has come. Here I know no more of myself. Here I am not. Here I only know the delightful revelation that you are you. The wonder is no longer within me, my own dark, centrifugal, exultant self. The wonder is without me. The wonder is outside me. And I can no longer exult and know myself the dark, central sun of the universe. Now I look with wonder, with tenderness, with joyful yearning towards that which is outside me, beyond me, not me. Behold, that which was once negative has now become the only positive. The other being is now the great positive reality, I myself am as nothing. Positivity has changed places.

If we want to see the portrayed look, then we must turn to the North, to the fair, wondering, blue-eyed infants of the Northern masters.

They seem so frail, so innocent and wondering, touching outwards to the mystery. They are not the same as the Southern child, nor the opposite. Their whole life mystery is different. Instead of consummating all things within themselves, as the dark little Southern infants do, the Northern Jesus-children reach out delicate little hands of wondering innocence towards delicate, flower-reverential mothers. Compare a Botticelli Madonna, with all her wounded and abnegating sensuality, with a Hans Memling Madonna, whose soul is pure and only reverential. Beyond me is the mystery and the glory, says the Northern mother: let me have no self, let me only seek that which is all-pure, all-wonderful. But the Southern mother says: This is mine, this is mine, this is my child, my wonder, my master, my lord, my scourge, my own.

From the cardiac plexus the child goes forth in bliss. It seeks the revelation of the unknown. It wonderingly seeks the mother. It opens its small hands and spreads its small fingers to touch her. And bliss, bliss, bliss, it meets the wonder in mid-air and in mid-space it finds the loveliness of the mother's face. It opens and shuts its little fingers with bliss, it laughs the wonderful, selfless laugh of pure baby-bliss, in the first ecstasy of finding all its treasure, groping upon it and finding it in the dark. It opens wide, child-wide eyes to see, to see. But it cannot see. It is puzzled, it wrinkles its face. But when the mother puts her face quite near, and laughs and coos, then the baby trembles with an ecstasy of love. The glamour, the wonder, the treasure beyond. The great uplift of rapture. All this

surges from that first center of the breast, the sun of the breast,  
the cardiac plexus.

And from the same center acts the great function of the heart and  
breath. Ah, the aspiration, the aspiration, like a hope, like a  
yearning constant and unfailing with which we take in breath. When we  
breathe, when we take in breath, it is not as when we take in food.  
When we breathe in we aspire, we yearn towards the heaven of air and  
light. And when the heart dilates to draw in the stream of dark blood,  
it opens its arms as to a beloved. It dilates with reverent joy, as a  
host opening his doors to an honored guest, whom he delights to serve:  
opening his doors to the wonder which comes to him from beyond, and  
without which he were nothing.

So it is that our heart dilates, our lungs expand. They are bidden by  
that great and mysterious impulse from the cardiac plexus, which bids  
them seek the mystery and the fulfillment of the beyond. They seek the  
beyond, the air of the sky, the hot blood from the dark under-world.  
And so we live.

And then, they relax, they contract. They are driven by the opposite  
motion from the powerful voluntary center of the thoracic ganglion..  
That which was drawn in, was invited, is now relinquished, allowed to  
go forth, negatively. Not positively dismissed, but relinquished.

There is a wonderful complementary duality between the voluntary and



the sympathetic activity on the same plane. But between the two planes, upper and lower, there is a further dualism, still more startling, perhaps. Between the dark, glowing first term of knowledge at the solar plexus: I am I, all is one in me; and the first term of volitional knowledge: I am myself, and these others are not as I am;--there is a world of difference. But when the world changes again, and on the upper plane we realize the wonder of other things, the difference is almost shattering. The thoracic ganglion is a ganglion of power. When the child in its delicate bliss seeks the mother and finds her and is added on to her, then it fulfills itself in the great upper sympathetic mode. But then it relinquishes her. It ceases to be aware of her. And if she tries to force its love to play upon her again, like light revealing her to herself, then the child turns away. Or it will lie, and look at her with the strange, odd, curious look of knowledge, like a little imp who is spying her out. This is the curious look that many mothers cannot bear. Involuntarily it arouses a sort of hate in them--the look of scrutinizing curiosity, apart, and as it were studying, balancing them up. Yet it is a look which comes into every child's eyes. It is the reaction of the great voluntary plexus between the shoulders. The mother is suddenly set apart, as an object of curiosity, coldly, sometimes dreamily, sometimes puzzled, sometimes mockingly observed.

Again, if a mother neglect her child, it cries, it weeps for her love and attention. Its pitiful lament is one of the forms of compulsion from the upper center. This insistence on pity, on love, is quite

different from the rageous weeping, which is compulsion from the lower center, below the diaphragm. Again, some children just drop everything they can lay hands on over the edge of their crib, or their table.

They drop everything out of sight. And then they look up with a curious look of negative triumph. This is again a form of recoil from the upper center, the obliteration of the thing which is outside. And here a child is acting quite differently from the child who joyously smashes. The desire to smash comes from the lower centers.

We can quite well recognize the will exerted from the lower center. We call it headstrong temper and masterfulness. But the peculiar will of the upper center--the sort of nervous, critical objectivity, the deliberate forcing of sympathy, the play upon pity and tenderness, the plaintive bullying of love, or the benevolent bullying of love--these we don't care to recognize. They are the extravagance of spiritual will. But in its true harmony the thoracic ganglion is a center of happier activity: of real, eager curiosity, of the delightful desire to pick things to pieces, and the desire to put them together again, the desire to "find out," and the desire to invent: all this arises on the upper plane, at the volitional center of the thoracic ganglion.