

CHAPTER XIII

COSMOLOGICAL

Well, dear reader, Chapter XII was short, and I hope you found it sweet.

But remember, this is an essay on Child Consciousness, not a tract on Salvation. It isn't my fault that I am led at moments into exhortation.

Well, then, what about it? One fact now seems very clear--at any rate to me. We've got to pause. We haven't got to gird our loins with a new frenzy and our larynxes with a new Glory Song. Not a bit of it. Before you dash off to put salt on the tail of a new religion or of a new Leader of Men, dear reader, sit down quietly and pull yourself together. Say to yourself: "Come now, what is it all about?" And you'll realize, dear reader, that you're all in a fluster, inwardly. Then say to yourself: "Why am I in such a fluster?" And you'll see you've no reason at all to be so: except that it's rather exciting to be in a fluster, and it may seem rather stale eggs to be in no fluster at all about anything. And yet, dear little reader, once you consider it quietly, it's so much nicer not to be in a fluster. It's so much nicer not to feel one's deeper innards storming like the Bay of Biscay. It is so much better to get up and say to the waters of one's

own troubled spirit: Peace, be still ...! And they will be still ... perhaps.

And then one realizes that all the wild storms of anxiety and frenzy were only so much breaking of eggs. It isn't our business to live anybody's life, or to die anybody's death, except our own. Nor to save anybody's soul, nor to put anybody in the right; nor yet in the wrong, which is more the point to-day. But to be still, and to ignore the false fine frenzy of the seething world. To turn away, now, each one into the stillness and solitude of his own soul. And there to remain in the quiet with the Holy Ghost which is to each man his own true soul.

This is the way out of the vicious circle. Not to rush round on the periphery, like a rabbit in a ring, trying to break through. But to retreat to the very center, and there to be filled with a new strange stability, polarized in unfathomable richness with the center of centers. We are so silly, trying to invent devices and machines for flying off from the surface of the earth. Instead of realizing that for us the deep satisfaction lies not in escaping, but in getting into the perfect circuit of the earth's terrestrial magnetism. Not in breaking away. What is the good of trying to break away from one's own? What is the good of a tree desiring to fly like a bird in the sky, when a bird is rooted in the earth as surely as a tree is? Nay, the bird is only the topmost leaf of the tree, fluttering in the high air, but attached as close to the tree as any other leaf. Mr.

Einstein's Theory of Relativity does not supersede the Newtonian Law of Gravitation or of Inertia. It only says, "Beware! The Law of Inertia is not the simple ideal proposition you would like to make of it. It is a vast complexity. Gravitation is not one elemental uncouth force. It is a strange, infinitely complex, subtle aggregate of forces." And yet, however much it may waggle, a stone does fall to earth if you drop it.

We should like, vulgarly, to rejoice and say that the new Theory of Relativity releases us from the old obligation of centrality. It does no such thing. It only makes the old centrality much more strange, subtle, complex, and vital. It only robs us of the nice old ideal simplicity. Which ideal simplicity and logicalness has become such a fish-bone stuck in our throats.

The universe is once more in the mental melting-pot. And you can melt it down as long as you like, and mutter all the jargon and abracadabra, aldeboronti fosco fornio of science that mental monkey-tricks can teach you, you won't get anything in the end but a formula and a lie. The atom? Why, the moment you discover the atom it will explode under your nose. The moment you discover the ether it will evaporate. The moment you get down to the real basis of anything, it will dissolve into a thousand problematic constituents. And the more problems you solve, the more will spring up with their fingers at their nose, making a fool of you.

There is only one clue to the universe. And that is the individual soul within the individual being. That outer universe of suns and moons and atoms is a secondary affair. It is the death-result of living individuals. There is a great polarity in life itself. Life itself is dual. And the duality is life and death. And death is not just shadow or mystery. It is the negative reality of life. It is what we call Matter and Force, among other things.

Life is individual, always was individual and always will be. Life consists of living individuals, and always did so consist, in the beginning of everything. There never was any universe, any cosmos, of which the first reality was anything but living, incorporate individuals. I don't say the individuals were exactly like you and me. And they were never wildly different.

And therefore it is time for the idealist and the scientist--they are one and the same, really--to stop his monkey-jargon about the atom and the origin of life and the mechanical clue to the universe. There isn't any such thing. I might as well say: "Then they took the cart, and rubbed it all over with grease. Then they sprayed it with white wine, and spun round the right wheel five hundred revolutions to the minute and the left wheel, in the opposite direction, seven hundred and seventy-seven revolutions to the minute. Then a burning torch was applied to each axle. And lo, the footboard of the cart began to swell, and suddenly as the cart groaned and writhed, the horse was born, and lay panting between the shafts." The whole scientific theory

of the universe is not worth such a tale: that the cart conceived and gave birth to the horse.

I do not believe one-fifth of what science can tell me about the sun.

I do not believe for one second that the moon is a dead world splashed off from our globe. I do not believe that the stars came flying off from the sun like drops of water when you spin your wet hanky. I have believed it for twenty years, because it seemed so ideally plausible. Now I don't accept any ideal plausibilities at all.

I look at the moon and the stars, and I know I don't believe anything that I am told about them. Except that I like their names, Aldebaran and Cassiopeia, and so on.

I have tried, and even brought myself to believe in a clue to the outer universe. And in the process I have swallowed such a lot of jargon that I would rather listen now to a negro witch-doctor than to Science. There is nothing in the world that is true except empiric discoveries which work in actual appliances. I know that the sun is hot. But I won't be told that the sun is a ball of blazing gas which spins round and fizzes. No, thank you.

At length, for my part, I know that life, and life only is the clue to the universe. And that the living individual is the clue to life. And that it always was so, and always will be so.

When the living individual dies, then is the realm of death

established. Then you get Matter and Elements and atoms and forces and sun and moon and earth and stars and so forth. In short, the outer universe, the Cosmos. The Cosmos is nothing but the aggregate of the dead bodies and dead energies of bygone individuals. The dead bodies decompose as we know into earth, air, and water, heat and radiant energy and free electricity and innumerable other scientific facts. The dead souls likewise decompose--or else they don't decompose. But if they do decompose, then it is not into any elements of Matter and physical energy. They decompose into some psychic reality, and into some potential will. They reënter into the living psyche of living individuals. The living soul partakes of the dead souls, as the living breast partakes of the outer air, and the blood partakes of the sun. The soul, the individuality, never resolves itself through death into physical constituents. The dead soul remains always soul, and always retains its individual quality. And it does not disappear, but reënters into the soul of the living, of some living individual or individuals. And there it continues its part in life, as a death-witness and a life-agent. But it does not, ordinarily, have any separate existence there, but is incorporate in the living individual soul. But in some extraordinary cases, the dead soul may really act separately in a living individual.

How this all is, and what are the laws of the relation between life and death, the living and the dead, I don't know. But that this relation exists, and exists in a manner as I describe it, for my own part I know. And I am fully aware that once we direct our living

attention this way, instead of to the absurdity of the atom, then we have a whole living universe of knowledge before us. The universe of life and death, of which we, whose business it is to live and to die, know nothing. Whilst concerning the universe of Force and Matter we pile up theories and make staggering and disastrous discoveries of machinery and poison-gas, all of which we were much better without.

It is life we have to live by, not machines and ideals. And life means nothing else, even, but the spontaneous living soul which is our central reality. The spontaneous, living, individual soul, this is the clue, and the only clue. All the rest is derived.

How it is contrived that the individual soul in the living sways the very sun in its centrality, I do not know. But it is so. It is the peculiar dynamic polarity of the living soul in every weed or bug or beast, each one separately and individually polarized with the great returning pole of the sun, that maintains the sun alive. For I take it that the sun is the great sympathetic center of our inanimate universe. I take it that the sun breathes in the effluence of all that fades and dies. Across space fly the innumerable vibrations which are the basis of all matter. They fly, breathed out from the dying and the dead, from all that which is passing away, even in the living. These vibrations, these elements pass away across space, and are breathed back again. The sun itself is invisible as the soul. The sun itself is the soul of the inanimate universe, the aggregate clue to the substantial death, if we may call it so. The sun is the great active

pole of the sympathetic death-activity. To the sun fly the vibrations or the molecules in the great sympathy-mode of death, and in the sun they are renewed, they turn again as the great gift back again from the sympathetic death-center towards life, towards the living. But it is not even the dead which really sustain the sun. It is the dynamic relation between the solar plexus of individuals and the sun's core, a perfect circuit. The sun is materially composed of all the effluence of the dead. But the quick of the sun is polarized with the living, the sun's quick is polarized in dynamic relation with the quick of life in all living things, that is, with the solar plexus in mankind. A direct dynamic connection between my solar plexus and the sun.

Likewise, as the sun is the great fiery, vivifying pole of the inanimate universe, the moon is the other pole, cold and keen and vivifying, corresponding in some way to a voluntary pole. We live between the polarized circuit of sun and moon. And the moon is polarized with the lumbar ganglion, primarily, in man. Sun and moon are dynamically polarized to our actual tissue, they affect this tissue all the time.

The moon is, as it were, the pole of our particular terrestrial volition, in the universe. What holds the earth swinging in space is first, the great dynamic attraction to the sun, and then counterposing assertion of independence, singleness, which is polarized in the moon. The moon is the clue to our earth's individual identity, in the wide universe.

The moon is an immense magnetic center. It is quite wrong to say she is a dead snowy world with craters and so on. I should say she is composed of some very intense element, like phosphorus or radium, some element or elements which have very powerful chemical and kinetic activity, and magnetic activity, affecting us through space.

It is not the sun which we see in heaven. It is the rushing thither and the rushing thence of the vibrations expelled by death from the body of life, and returned back again to the body of life. Possibly even a dead soul makes its journey to the sun and back, before we receive it again in our breast. Just as the breath we breathe out flies to the sun and back, before we breathe it in again. And as the water that evaporates rises right to the sun, and returns here. What we see is the great golden rushing thither, from the death exhalation, towards the sun, as a great cloud of bees flying to swarm upon the invisible queen, circling round, and loosing again. This is what we see of the sun. The center is invisible for ever.

And of the moon the same. The moon has her back to us for ever. Not her face, as we like to think. The moon also pulls the water, as the sun does. But not in evaporation. The moon pulls by the magnetic force we call gravitation. Gravitation not being quite such a Newtonian simple apple as we are accustomed to find it, we are perhaps farther off from understanding the tides of the ocean than we were before the fruit of the tree fell to Sir Isaac's head. It is certainly not simple

little-things tumble-towards-big-things gravitation. In the moon's pull there is peculiar, quite special force exerted over those water-born substances, phosphorus, salt, and lime. The dynamic energy of salt water is something quite different from that of fresh water. And it is this dynamic energy which the sea gives off, and which connects it with the moon. And the moon is some strange coagulation of substance such as salt, phosphorus, soda. It certainly isn't a snowy cold world, like a world of our own gone cold. Nonsense. It is a globe of dynamic substance like radium or phosphorus, coagulated upon a certain vivid pole of energy, which pole of energy is directly polarized with our earth, in opposition with the sun.

The moon is born from the death of individuals. All things, in their oneing, their unification into the pure, universal oneness, evaporate and fly like an imitation breath towards the sun. Even the crumbling rocks breathe themselves off in this rocky death, to the sun of heaven, during the day.

But at the same time, during the night they breathe themselves off to the moon. If we come to think of it, light and dark are a question both of the third body, the intervening body, what we will call, by stretching a point, the individual. As we all know, apart from the existence of molecules of individual matter, there is neither light nor dark. A universe utterly without matter, we don't know whether it is light or dark. Even the pure space between the sun and moon, the blue space, we don't know whether, in itself, it is light or dark. We

can say it is light, we can say it is dark. But light and dark are terms which apply only to ourselves, the third, the intermediate, the substantial, the individual.

If we come to think of it, light and dark only mean whether we have our face or our back towards the sun. If we have our face to the sun, then we establish the circuit of cosmic or universal or material or infinite sympathy. These four adjectives, cosmic, universal, material, and infinite are almost interchangeable, and apply, as we see, to that realm of the non-individual existence which we call the realm of the substantial death. It is the universe which has resulted from the death of individuals. And to this universe alone belongs the quality of infinity: to the universe of death. Living individuals have no infinity save in this relation to the total death-substance and death-being, the summed-up cosmos.

Light and dark, these great wonders, are relative to us alone. These are two vast poles of the cosmic energy and of material existence. These are the vast poles of cosmic sympathy, which we call the sun, and the other white pole of cosmic volition, which we call the moon. To the sun belong the great forces of heat and radiant energy, to the moon belong the great forces of magnetism and electricity, radium-energy, and so on. The sun is not, in any sense, a material body. It is an invariable intense pole of cosmic energy, and what we see are the particles of our terrestrial decomposition flying thither and returning, as fine grains of iron would fly to an intense magnet,

or better, as the draught in a room veers towards the fire, attracted infallibly, as a moth towards a candle. The moth is drawn to the candle as the draught is drawn to the fire, in the absolute spell of the material polarity of fire. And air escapes again, hot and different, from the fire. So is the sun.

Fire, we say, is combustion. It is marvelous how science proceeds like witchcraft and alchemy, by means of an abracadabra which has no earthly sense. Pray, what is combustion? You can try and answer scientifically, till you are black in the face. All you can say is that it is that which happens when matter is raised to a certain temperature--and so forth and so forth. You might as well say, a word is that which happens when I open my mouth and squeeze my larynx and make various tricks with my throat muscles. All these explanations are so senseless. They describe the apparatus, and think they have described the event.

Fire may be accompanied by combustion, but combustion is not necessarily accompanied by fire. All A is B, but all B is not A. And therefore fire, no matter how you jiggle, is not identical with combustion. Fire. FIRE. I insist on the absolute word. You may say that fire is a sum of various phenomena. I say it isn't. You might as well tell me a fly is a sum of wings and six legs and two bulging eyes. It is the fly which has the wings and legs, and not the legs and wings which somehow nab the fly into the middle of themselves. A fly is not a sum of various things. A fly is a fly, and the items of the

sum are still fly.

So with fire. Fire is an absolute unity in itself. It is a dynamic polar principle. Establish a certain polarity between the moon-principle and the sun-principle, between the positive and negative, or sympathetic and volitional dynamism in any piece of matter, and you have fire, you have the sun-phenomenon. It is the sudden flare into the one mode, the sun mode, the material sympathetic mode. Correspondingly, establish an opposite polarity between the sun-principle and the water-principle, and you have decomposition into water, or towards watery dissolution.

There are two sheer dynamic principles in our universe, the sun-principle and the moon-principle. And these principles are known to us in immediate contact as fire and water. The sun is not fire. But the principle of fire is the sun-principle. That is, fire is the sudden swoop towards the sun, of matter which is suddenly sun-polarized. Fire is the sudden sun-assertion, the release towards the one pole only. It is the sudden revelation of the cosmic One Polarity, One Identity.

But there is another pole. There is the moon. And there is another absolute and visible principle, the principle of water. The moon is not water. But it is the soul of water, the invisible clue to all the waters.

So that we begin to realize our visible universe as a vast dual polarity between sun and moon. Two vast poles in space, invisible in themselves, but visible owing to the circuit which swoops between them, round them, the circuit of the universe, established at the cosmic poles of the sun and moon. This then is the infinite, the positive infinite of the positive pole, the sun-pole, negative infinite of the negative pole, the moon-pole. And between the two infinities all existence takes place.

But wait. Existence is truly a matter of propagation between the two infinities. But it needs a third presence. Sun-principle and moon-principle, embracing through the æons, could never by themselves propagate one molecule of matter. The hailstone needs a grain of dust for its core. So does the universe. Midway between the two cosmic infinities lies the third, which is more than infinite. This is the Holy Ghost Life, individual life.

It is so easy to imagine that between them, the two infinities of the cosmos propagated life. But one single moment of pause and silence, one single moment of gathering the whole soul into knowledge, will tell us that it is a falsity. It was the living individual soul which, dying, flung into space the two wings of the infinite, the two poles of the sun and the moon. The sun and the moon are the two eternal death-results of the death of individuals. Matter, all matter, is the Life-born. And what we know as inert matter, this is only the result of death in individuals, it is the dead bodies of individuals

decomposed and resmelted between the hammer and anvil, fire and sand of the sun and the moon. When time began, the first individual died, the poles of the sun and moon were flung into space, and between the two, in a strange chaos and battle, the dead body was torn and melted and smelted, and rolled beneath the feet of the living. So the world was formed, always under the feet of the living.

And so we have a clue to gravitation. We, mankind, are all one family. In our individual bodies burns the positive quick of all things. But beneath our feet, in our own earth, lies the intense center of our human, individual death, our grave. The earth has one center, to which we are all polarized. The circuit of our life is balanced on the living soul within us, as the positive center, and on the earth's dark center, the center of our abiding and eternal and substantial death, our great negative center, away below. This is the circuit of our immediate individual existence. We stand upon our own grave, with our death fire, the sun, on our right hand, and our death-damp, the moon, on our left.

The earth's center is no accident. It is the great individual pole of us who die. It is the center of the first dead body. It is the first germ-cell of death, which germ-cell threw out the great nuclei of the sun and the moon. To this center of our earth we, as humans, are eternally polarized, as are our trees. Inevitably, we fall to earth. And the clue of us sinks to the earth's center, the clue of our death, of our weight. And the earth flings us out as wings to the sun and

moon: or as the death-germ dividing into two nuclei. So from the earth our radiance is flung to the sun, our marsh-fire to the moon, when we die.

We fall into the earth. But our rising was not from the earth. We rose from the earthless quick, the unfading life. And earth, sun, and moon are born only of our death. But it is only their polarized dynamic connection with us who live which sustains them all in their place and maintains them all in their own activities. The inanimate universe rests absolutely on the life-circuit of living creatures, is built upon the arch which spans the duality of living beings.