

THE MIRACLE OF BIRTH

A Clairvoyant Study of Prenatal Life

by **GEOFFREY HODSON**

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TO MY GODCHILD HEATHER
AND HER PARENTS WITHOUT WHOM THIS BOOK COULD NOT HAVE BEEN
WRITTEN

"Uplift the women of your race till all are seen as queens, and to such queens let every man be as a king, that each may honour each, seeing the other's royalty. Let every home, however small, become a court, every son a knight, every child a page. Let all treat all with chivalry, honouring in each their royal parentage, their kingly birth; for there is royal blood in every man; all are the children of the King."

"The Brotherhood of Angels and of Men."

Contents	
	Introduction by C.V.Pink
	Author's Preface
Part 1	
Chapter 1	Man
Chapter 2	A Theory concerning the Creative Function
Part 2	<<<<<The Building of the Bodies>>>>>
Chapter 3	The Mental Body at the Fourth Month
Chapter 4	The Emotional Body at the Fourth Month
Chapter 5	The Work of the Nature-Spirits observed
Chapter 6	The Etheric and Dense Bodies at the Fifth Month
Chapter 7	The Sixth Month
Chapter 8	The Eight Month
Chapter 9	Our Lady
Chapter 10	The Eight Month [continued]
Chapter 11	The Hour before Birth

INTRODUCTION

At the time when the crying need for the reduction of maternal and infant mortality is at last receiving some attention the publication of this book is most opportune.

Socrates taught that "the beginning is the most important part of any work, especially in dealing with anything young and tender". In our day Sir Frederick Truby King is pointing out that if racial health is to be improved the first eighteen months (nine pre-natal, nine post-natal) are the most important. More and more is it being realised that the foundations of physical, emotional and mental health are laid before birth, and this book throws an interesting light on the laying of these foundations.

Studies such as these help towards the better understanding of the miracle of birth and so foster that respect for motherhood which is surely the mark of truly civilised communities. They are particularly stimulating to those of us who are actively engaged in work with mothers and babies.

It is to be noted that the book is a record of observations of one case only, and the difficulty of the technique is such that further researches will inevitably show errors in detail. This, however, in no way detracts from the value of the work.

When a clairvoyant takes his place beside other scientific investigators, as Mr. Hodson does, it is interesting to remind ourselves that it is not long since clairvoyance was popularly considered to be a black art.

It seems probable that advance in the practice of the healing art is now to be made along lines which take into consideration the life rather than the form which it inhabits. If this is so, the clairvoyant is likely to render valuable service in the near future by providing us with knowledge of the intricate workings of Nature, and so enabling us the better to understand and to co-operate with her.

I hope that it will not be long before Mr. Hodson publishes the results of further researches.

C.V.Pink,
London, 1929

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

This record of clairvoyant investigations is published in the hope of adding to the general knowledge of the subject of parenthood by a study of it from the theosophic point of view.

One of the many events which are occurring at the present period of transition from the old civilisation to the new is the emergence of a new racial type. According to theosophic teachings it is the men and women of this new type who will form the pioneers and builders of the new civilisation. Theosophy teaches that the process of evolution is a dual one; it consists of an unfolding of life and consciousness on the one hand, and a gradual growth towards a standard of perfection of matter and form on the other. Ideally these two complementary developments should keep pace with

one another, so that the unfolding consciousness may find suitable matter for the building of the vehicles into which it will incarnate.

If this view be accepted and applied to human life, it will at once be seen to be of the utmost importance that the bodies of the children of the new age should be built of the finest material, and should be conceived, born and nurtured under the most favourable conditions which it is possible to provide.

The duty and responsibility of all who undertake the office of parenthood is therefore very heavy. Pure, sensitive, refined and healthy bodies are needed for the advanced egos who are to lead and guide humanity in the building of the new civilisation. Such bodies can only be produced by parents who recognise their responsibility to the race. The parents of the children of the new age must be inspired by the highest spiritual ideals, and must recognise that man's power to create is a divine attribute.

The attempted clairvoyant study of the formation and development of the mental, emotional and physical bodies of man during the intra-uterine period concerning the results of which this book is written shows the immense importance of the mental and spiritual outlook of the parents.

Marriage and parenthood are indeed sacramental in their nature; motherhood is sacred and should be revered. Children should spring from unions inspired by the deepest and most unselfish love and the highest possible spiritual ideals, for thus, and thus alone, may the promise of a nobler humanity in the immediate future be fulfilled and the children of the new race be born.

PART ONE

CHAPTER 1

MAN

In order that the theosophic conception of the purpose and the processes of incarnation may be clearly understood, it is necessary to make a brief survey of the teachings of the Ancient Wisdom on this subject.

We live in an age in which it has been the custom in the West to regard man as the body. The soul is probably thought of as resembling a captive balloon which floats somewhere in the invisible above the head of the body. The general conception of those who think of the soul at all is that man *is* a body and *has* a soul. Theosophy reverses that statement, and says that man *is* a soul and *has* a body. As St. Paul expressed it: "If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body." The theosophical definition of man is "man is that being, in whatsoever part of the universe he finds himself, in whom highest spirit and lowest matter are united by intellect". The Ancient Wisdom of which modern Theosophy is the representative teaches that the true self of man lies deeply hidden behind veil after veil of matter of varying degrees of density.

The process of being born is extremely complex, for in addition to his physical body man is incarnated in other vehicles. The one through which his emotions are expressed may be called his emotional body, and the one through which his thoughts are expressed may be called his mental body. He himself, the real ego, dwells in a still higher and more subtle region in a vehicle which is called the causal body. The true soul of man therefore resides in the super-mental worlds, and at that level the divine attributes of Will, Wisdom, and Intelligence manifest in him far more freely than is possible in these lower worlds, where the density of matter hides them from our view.

The purpose of the evolution of man as also of the universe is that these three attributes of the Trinity shall shine forth with ever increasing splendour and power. The method of evolution is that of a successive series of births and deaths in the mental, emotional and physical worlds. [For detailed information on this subject the reader is referred to theosophical literature.]

Man is the Prodigal Son of the parable. Every man goes forth from his spiritual home outwards and downwards into the depth of the material universe, clothing himself in body after body until the densest is reached. "And he would fain have been filled with the husks that the swine did eat." Finally, after many hundreds of such incarnations, he begins to learn the lesson of the unreality and impermanence of all physical pleasures. A yearning for a more permanent and lasting joy and peace is born within him. Then it is that he says: "I will arise and go to my Father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight: I am no more worthy to be called thy son." He learns that "paradise" can only be "regained" when he has freed himself from the shackles of desire with which he has chained himself to earth. One by one he must strike them from his limbs; he must master every weakness of the flesh, conquer and purify every desire, control and perfect every thought.

The light of the true man, the immortal ego, then begins to shine through the vehicles. Some of the power, peace and bliss which are characteristic of his true home in the higher worlds begins to be realised and experienced in the lower. He begins in fact to tread the "pathway of return" which shall lead him to complete emancipation from every earthly sorrow, from every physical limitation, into eternal happiness and peace. Finally he shall be welcomed at his journey's end, his task completed and every human lesson learnt. He shall stand by the side of his Father "perfect as his Father in heaven is perfect."

No need hath such to live as ye name life;
That which began in him when he began
Is finished : he hath wrought the purpose through
Of what did make him Man.

Never shall yearnings torture him, nor sins
Stain him, nor ache of earthly joys and woes
Invade his safe eternal peace; nor deaths
And lives recur. He goes

Unto Nirvana. He is one with Life,
Yet lives not. He is blest, ceasing to be.
OM, MANI PADME, OM! the Dewdrop slips
Into the shining sea.

From: "Light of Asia", Book the Eighth.

CHAPTER 2

A THEORY CONCERNING THE CREATIVE FUNCTION

The bi-sexual method of reproduction has proved throughout the ages to be a potent source of suffering to mankind, and the student might almost be forgiven for asking whether the beneficial results which are obtained by its employment are sufficiently valuable to balance the evils to which it gives rise. A deeper study of the subject from the theosophical point of view shows us, however, that it is not the method which causes the many evils associated with the creative function, but rather its misuse, which is the source of so very many human ills.

These evils are so prominent at the present time that it would appear to be of the utmost importance that our attitude towards the whole question of sex should be drastically changed. An endeavour should be made to remove the ugliness, viciousness and impurity which have become associated with the creative function.

The power to create is one of the most divine attributes which man possesses. In his exercise of that power, he enacts microcosmically the great macrocosmic drama of creation. The fusion of the male and female organisms is a physical reflection of the union of the first and third aspects of the Logos from which the second proceeds. It is a sacramental enactment of the great drama of the creation of the universe. When it is performed with the motive of pure and mutual love the two halves of God, as represented in man and woman, are united.

Ideally, this fusion should occur on all the planes of nature on which man manifests. As the evolution of the individual proceeds, the level of that fusion should be gradually raised higher and higher. In the savage it is largely physical and emotional. In the civilised man the mental world is included, and a measure of mental union is attained. The developed man, who has begun to reach intuitional consciousness, should aim at, and attain, a fusion on the spiritual plane as well as on all the levels below. When the ideal union is achieved, the two sets of human principles become mutually attuned, vibrate synchronously, and are blended into one.

When organs of opposite polarity are united a descent of power occurs. The measure and quality of that power depends upon the level of consciousness at which unity has been achieved. In man the descent of power produces an expansion of consciousness which may be realised in the same measure as that in which the union has been spiritual rather than physical in its nature and motive. In order that the greatest possible advantage may be taken of this fact, the consciousness must be directed away from the physical plane towards the spiritual. The highest level of power will then be released, the greatest possible expansion of consciousness will

be attained, and the best conditions provided for the building of the bodies for the ego who is coming into incarnation.

At the present stage of human knowledge and development it cannot be denied that the bi-sexual method of reproduction is a source of great difficulty to the whole human race. If, however, we accept the idea that mental and spiritual fusion should accompany physical union, we see that it may have been instituted in order to assist humanity to gain expansion of consciousness and a realisation of unity by actual experience of it in the frequently repeated procreative act.

The abuse of sex was almost inevitable, and must have been foreseen. In spite of the widespread misery which such abuse has produced, the method has played a great part in the development of the race, and will no doubt play an even greater part when its higher possibilities have been realised.

Clairvoyant research suggests that the principle, by which the perfect synchronisation of an oppositely polarised pair releases energy from higher planes, operates throughout the whole of nature. The life behind the vegetable form, for example, receives a distinct thrill from the planetary life forces which descend into it every time fertilisation occurs. That response quickens its evolution whenever it is experienced. The more highly developed and sensitive of the flowers of the present day are already beginning to respond in increasing measure to the stimulus of that descent of power. In future root-races, as in later rounds, [See "First Principles of Theosophy," by C. Jinarajadasa] the power of response in the vegetable and other kingdoms of nature, will naturally tend to become greater and more self-conscious.

The acceptance of this theory of sex places man in a position of grave responsibility as regards the use and misuse of the creative power. Man alone, in all the kingdoms of nature, is self-conscious and self-directing in the exercise of the reproductive function. The misuse, through ignorance of its underlying spiritual significance, of the great forces involved in the procreative act produces results which are indeed serious both for the individual and for the race. Health, physical, mental and moral, is impaired. Deterioration of spiritual, mental and physical capacity results. The *fine edge* of all the human faculties is blunted. The keenness, accuracy, penetration and genius which should characterise the mental power of the evolving god which is man, is gradually displaced by mediocrity and mental sloth.

The new bodies produced by those who habitually misuse their creative power fail miserably to provide fit temples for the indwelling god who is to be incarnated within them. The psychic atmosphere of the home and of the area in which such practices occur affects not only the growing children, who are extremely sensitive to such invisible influences, but all who come within reach of their unclean emanations.

These conditions are increased in intensity by the presence of certain elementals, [Evolving intelligences inhabiting the super-physical worlds, who form part of a fifth the elemental kingdom of nature. See "First Principles of Theosophy" by C. Jinarajadasa.] who bathe in this atmosphere, which is exceedingly pleasant and stimulating to them. They in their turn increase its range, density, and power to affect the thoughts, feelings and lives of others. The significance of this fact will be more

easily appreciated when we consider in a later chapter the processes by which the subtler vehicles and the physical body of the child are built.

Serious as are the effects of misuse of the creative power which result from ignorance, those which result from a continuance of that misuse after knowledge has been acquired are almost infinitely greater. It is, therefore, of the utmost importance to the evolution of the individual, the progress of the race, and to the building of the new civilisation, that the ideal of sexual purity should be accepted and applied by all those who have the interests of the race at heart. Union which is an expression of the purest love may ennoble and exalt the lives and consciousness of those who attain to self-control and the purest expression of their mutual affection. Union which is a mere gratification of animal passion serves but to degrade both body and mind. It sullies the ideal of pure and gracious womanhood, which should reach its highest physical expression in motherhood.

Every woman is an expression and a representative of the feminine aspect of the deity. At childbirth the mother enacts her part in the everlasting drama of creation. The child whom she brings forth is her microcosmic universe. Parenthood therefore is indeed a sacrament and not lightly to be profaned.

As knowledge grows, as self-control is practised, and as love increases in grandeur, in selflessness and in beauty, that ideal will once more rule the lives of men and women. A fair race will then be born which will far outshine even the immortal beauty of the ancient Greeks. The knowledge and power of the later races will have been added to the beauty of the Grecian, and with it will form the essential Trinity from which alone a perfect humanity and a perfect civilisation may be evolved.

PART TWO

THE BUILDING OF THE BODIES

The information contained in the following chapters has been gained by the employment of clairvoyance [See "[Clairvoyance](#)", by C. W. Leadbeater.] as a means of research. An attempt was made to examine clairvoyantly the various bodies at different stages in the process of incarnation beginning at the fourth month.

CHAPTER 3

THE MENTAL BODY AT THE FOURTH MONTH

At the fourth month the new mental body was seen to be almost colourless, vague in outline, and roughly ovoid in shape. A certain opalescence which suggested colour was visible on the surface. The interior revealed the existence of very delicate shades of pale yellow, green, rose and blue, with violet round the upper part of the periphery. The shades were so delicate as to be rather suggestions than definite colours fore-shadowing's of the characteristics of the mental body which was being built.

The particles of which the whole mental body was composed were in a state of rapid motion, and there was as yet but little appearance of organised force centres [See "The Chakras", by C. W. Leadbeater, and "[The Etheric Double](#)", "[The Astral Body](#)" and "[The Mental Body](#)", by A. E. Powell.] at the surface. Within there was a shadowy likeness of a human form in which the centres or embryo chakrams were to be seen. Those in the head were quite well advanced, particularly the "Brahmarandra", into the region of which force appeared to be pouring continually as through a hole in the top of the head. The embryo throat, heart, solar plexus and muladhara centres could also be seen. Only the head centres showed any great activity, and even they did not as yet appear to be performing their definite functions as chakrams. The ego was working hard on its body all the time, pouring down force upon it and charging its atoms with specific vibratory power.

In the case of an advanced ego a considerable amount of conscious knowledge is employed in this process. The developed man has a very clear idea of the kind of body he requires and generally shows a strong determination to obtain it.

The general appearance of the embryo mental body in the case under investigation was that of an opalescent ovoid bubble with a hole in the top. Down this passage there was a constant interplay of force which looked like a stream of brilliantly coloured particles of light. In the middle of this "bubble" was the shadowy human form, and the descending stream passed into the top of the head.

The causal body, the vehicle in which the incarnating consciousness or ego permanently resides, was much larger than the new mental one, which it appeared partly to include within itself, as if the upper half of the mental coincided with the lower half of the causal. The egoic influence was seen to descend into the upper end of the mental body as described above.

The whole phenomenon was surrounded by dazzling and blazing light which increased in intensity towards the centre of the causal body. The down-poured force kept the atoms of the mental body in constant motion, and as it struck the matter of which the mental body was composed, it formed a vortex into and through which the rest of this matter was continually being drawn. This movement, however, did not affect the general shape, which remained ovoid, as previously described. Although the human form was visible within the ovoid it must not be thought of as hollow, but rather as a solid though translucent mass of rapidly moving matter.

Every atom of the body passed through the vortex and the down-flowing stream which produced it, was magnetised by it, glowed more brightly, and then gradually became less brilliant as it flowed away into the other portions of the mental body. The colours in the down-poured stream seemed to vary, and this suggested that the ego was consciously building in definite faculties and was magnetising his mental body with specific vibrations.

There was a continuous interaction between the growing mental body of the child and that of the mother. The connection between them had the effect of giving stability and cohesiveness to the new body, while the brilliance and freshness of the aura of the child imparted an added brightness to that of the mother. It was

interesting to compare the relative fixity and rigidity of the older mental body with the supremely elastic and fluidic condition of the new one.

Outside the area of this activity certain angels [See my books "[The Kingdom of Faerie](#)", "The Brotherhood of Angels and of Men", "[The Angelic Hosts](#)."] were to be seen. One angel worked at the mental level and appeared to be in charge of the building of the three bodies, and another, of a somewhat subordinate character, worked at the emotional level. The mental deva appeared to be exerting a protective influence, allowing only certain rates of vibration to reach the new mental body from the external world. He seemed to possess a complete knowledge of those influences which are the result of earlier incarnations which were modifying the growth and formation of the new mental, emotional and physical bodies.

Some of the past personalities of the incarnating ego were visible in the aura of the angel. One appeared to have been that of a man of the Elizabethan period, and it would seem that the new life was to be a continuation of the work and development of that incarnation. Grouped around this image of a previous physical body in the angel's aura were numbers of other forms of men and women of the same period, who apparently represented those with whom karmic ties had been formed. Some of them smiled, some frowned, and some were indifferent. Their attitudes and expressions probably showed the karmic relationships between them and the ego whose descent into incarnation was being studied. At the level of the causal body there was another great angel assisting in the incarnation, to whom the whole of the past lives and of the karma of the ego was known. He handed down to his brother at the lower mental level the particular section of karma which was to be worked out in the coming life.

Under such auspices and guardianship the mental incarnation proceeded. The subordinate devas rather resembled the fire-tender of some huge camp fire which they continually fed with fresh material. This new matter joined in the circulation of the mental body previously described, and, eventually passing through the vortex, became specialised by the ego.

At this early stage in the process of incarnation the ego did not appear to have entered completely into the mental body, although he was already very actively employed in its construction. The shadowy form within it was to some extent, however, an expression of and a vehicle for his consciousness, and he was gradually beginning to use it as such.

CHAPTER 4

THE EMOTIONAL BODY AT THE FOURTH MONTH

The work of the angel in charge at the emotional level consisted largely in obtaining the best possible vehicle under the karmic and environmental circumstances. A knowledge of the karmic situation, so far as it affected the emotional body, was handed down to him [I use the masculine for convenience only; angels are a-sexual] by the angels at the mental levels. A certain latitude was allowed, however, and the angel took advantage of every favourable pre-natal circumstance and of every beneficial influence surrounding the incarnations to modify the effect of past lives

and to improve the emotional body. This angel did not appear to do any actual building himself. That, as we shall see later, was the work of the lesser nature-spirits.

The angel brooded over the growing astral body with a decidedly maternal attitude, and sheltered it as far as possible from all adverse influences. He allowed his own magnetism to play freely upon the growing form, and shared with it as far as possible his own vivid life forces. Sometimes, for example, he enfolded the little astral body within himself, closing his aura about it and bending down his head as if to hold it for a time completely enveloped on every side.

This angel approached his work in a scientific attitude of mind, and, although he found great joy in it and felt tenderness towards the child, his mental attitude was that of one deliberately applying certain forces in order to produce a clearly defined result. When the environment provided definite spiritual energy, as, for example, during attendance by the mother at a church service or other spiritual meeting, he absorbed as much of that energy as possible. He then held the growing astral body within himself in the manner described above, so that the energy played upon and into it, magnetising it and modifying any adverse karmic tendencies. A condition of more facile response to the higher, and of less, therefore, to the lower vibrations was thereby produced.

In one case which was examined both parents had practised a regular system of daily meditation for many years. This was found to be of immeasurable value, and the angel took the fullest possible advantage of it.

In the thickly populated parts of great cities the work of the angel largely consists in protecting the embryo and its astral body from adverse influences. In places where the psychic atmosphere is very deleterious the angel may call one or more of his brethren to assist him in this work.

He is able to produce an indirect effect upon the etheric and dense physical bodies. Therefore he would be capable of minimising the results of an accident to the mother or of adverse environment at that level within the limits of the karma of the ego. In the case of a shock to the mother, for example, he would be able partly to insulate the embryo from the mother by the process of enfoldment previously described, thus minimising the effect of a too close interaction.

The main factor in all the angel's work, however, is the play and beat of his own vivid life force upon and through the vehicles with which he is concerned.

The astral body of a child appears to be included within that of the mother, and in the case from which these descriptions are taken, at the fifth month occupied a position corresponding to the space between the upper third of the thigh and the lower margin of the ribs. It appeared to lie obliquely, the axis being tilted across the body of the mother at an angle of about 45 degrees to the horizontal. The upper pole was on the left side. In appearance it was like a small ovoid about 12 inches in length, almost entirely white in colour, and glowing with a certain radiance. Within it was to be seen a vague and miniature human form which at this stage was only partially defined.

The stream of egoic life could be seen entering the astral body at the top and passing down into the centre of the head. It had not as yet descended below a point corresponding to the middle of the head, where it enlarged into a sphere. From this descended a tiny process resembling a rootlet, which by the fifth month had reached as far as the throat, where, in its turn, it appeared to open out, not into a sphere but into branches, of which three could be discerned. This process with its branches was golden and glowing, and, as it extended further into the body, a network was formed which gradually spread and became more closely enmeshed as the building of the body proceeded.

The central astral form was in spatial relationship with the dense physical and etheric bodies which it interpenetrated and surrounded. The astral and etheric permanent atoms were at this period within the first enlargement of the descending egoic life stream mentioned above, namely, in the centre of the head, at a point which was also the centre of the physical head of the embryo.

The mother's aura did not appear to interpenetrate that of the child very freely. Although there was a certain intermingling, the emotional body of the mother flowed around the outside of the child's, and was definitely increased in size by the presence of the growing form within it.

CHAPTER 5

THE WORK OF THE NATURE-SPIRITS OBSERVED AT THE FOURTH MONTH

The embryo was sharing in the mother's physical prana, which at this stage flowed generally through it without any clearly defined channels. The major portion was drawn from the mother's solar plexus to a corresponding point in the embryo, whence it passed freely over the whole form. There was, however, a slight concentration of prana in the head of the embryo, but the spleen centre was not active at this time. The presence of the embryo within the mother certainly made a demand upon her vitality. She was enabled, however, to absorb and assimilate a proportionately greater quantity.

The etheric nature-spirits also provided a certain amount of vitality, which the embryo received each time they deposited the etheric matter in the growing form. [For a detailed description of this process as it occurs in the vegetable kingdom, see my book, "[The Kingdom of Faerie](#)"] This they absorbed during the period in which they were gathering material. The process caused their tiny bodies to glow and expand, and the etheric double of the embryo also glowed in the region into which they discharged the particles and the vitality.

These building nature-spirits were visible within the womb at the astral level, from which they appeared to work. Sometimes they looked like flashes of opalescent light and sometimes glowing points of colour moving rapidly about and giving an impression of great activity. The flashes each had a brighter centre of perhaps one-sixteenth of an inch in diameter, surrounded by a tiny aura of brilliant colour about three times the diameter of the glowing centre. The building nature-spirits also absorbed matter from outside, assimilated it, and discharged it into the foetus. This

absorption occurred in the free space in and around the womb. They "caught" and absorbed the incoming matter which was drawn towards the foetus by and with the currents of force. It then passed through a process of assimilation analogous to that of digestion. When this process was complete the nature-spirits returned to the foetus, sank into it, and so deposited the new material.

There were hundreds of these tiny creatures at work, all of the same appearance and all using the same method. All the incoming matter did not, however, pass through them; some went directly into position as previously described, while other matter entered the area of the womb and remained there in suspension until such time as the nature-spirits assimilated it and built it into the foetus.

There was a distinct musical note discernible in the vicinity of the womb at the etheric and astral levels. It resembled a gentle hum, not unlike that heard near a hive of bees, and was emitted primarily from the permanent atom; but, as the entire etheric double of the embryo and the nature-spirits working upon it also vibrated at the same rate, the womb was filled with this etheric sound.

This vibration exerted both a formative and a protective influence. It was continually influencing the shape of the growing body and, at the same time, maintaining within its sphere of influence a condition into which only harmonious vibrations and "tuned" material could penetrate.

CHAPTER 6

THE ETHERIC AND DENSE BODIES AT THE FIFTH MONTH

By the time the fifth month had been reached definite progress was noticeable in all the processes described in the foregoing chapters. The consciousness of the ego was beginning to touch the emotional level and to influence directly the building of the emotional body. The construction and growth of the mental vehicle was sufficiently advanced to permit the ego to withdraw his attention from it.

The line of communication between the ego and the foetus had gradually become broader. At the fourth month this connection, which showed as a silvery-blue shaft of light, was approximately 1.5 inches in diameter, while at the fifth it had increased to 2.5 inches. On its descent from the higher worlds it entered the mother's body at the left side and slightly behind, at the point of the change from the thoracic to the lumbar vertebrae. It touched the upper and outer edge of the spleen chakram, and passed into the head of the foetus.

The shape of the physical body is decided by that of the etheric mould into which it is built by the nature-spirits. This mould is produced partly by the formative power of the "sound" vibration emitted by the zygote and permanent atom, [See Chapter V] and partly by the Lords of Karma, who model it according to the karma of the individual. It is endowed with a certain elemental life of its own, and is a precipitation in human form of the physical karma of the individual. It is passive in the sense that it is not able to initiate any action, but exerts a positive influence on the growth of the foetus.

One possible function of the etheric mould is to ensure a safe passage by the foetus through the repetitive evolutionary stages of the past to the human form of today. The mould itself does not appear to go through those stages, although it assumes only gradually the fully developed child-appearance. It also performs an inhibitory function which enables it to prevent certain influences and conditions in the mother from affecting the foetus. In cases of shock to the mother, for example, it would act as a cushion or buffer. Such influences as are within the karma of the ego do pass through it, however, and it is modified by their passage, as is also the growth of the foetus.

The mould in the case examined was situated within the womb and looked like the outline of a baby picked out in white light. It was built of etheric matter which, at the outer surface, was compressed into a covering or "skin." The general effect was that of a shimmering white baby bathed in moonlight with a slightly uneven degree of luminosity. The features were faintly to be seen, but were not yet clearly defined.

The building of the physical body was seen proceeding within the womb. Many streams of force converged upon it, and there was an intense activity of the building nature-spirits at the physical, etheric and astral levels. The foetus appeared to act as a magnet, towards which the particles of matter were seen to be continually attracted. These particles could be followed clairvoyantly in their passage to the point where they aggregated and "settled" themselves into position in the body. Currents of force set up by the primary emission of the "sound" vibrations referred to later appeared to have an attractive influence upon this matter, and drew it into different parts of the body according to its type and vibratory rate.

The ego was also affecting this matter through the shaft of light previously described. Egoic force was seen to be playing continually down the shaft, implanting its own specific vibration upon the incoming particles. This matter, drawn from all sides, rushed towards the mother's body, was caught in the currents of force immediately surrounding the foetus, and was drawn by them into position in the growing body. One such current attached itself to the etheric double of the observer, with the result that such etheric matter in his body as corresponded to the rate of vibration of that particular current was drawn into the body of the embryo.

The end of the shaft from the ego to the mother formed an astro-etheric "heart" within the foetus at a point roughly corresponding to the solar plexus. Much of the vital energy of the body was also concentrated in this centre, from which it was distributed to serve as a stimulus to physical cell growth, to vitalise the body and to increase the original attractive force which was drawing etheric matter into the womb.

At the moment of fertilisation a flash of light descends from the highest spiritual level of the ego into the spermatozoon, gives it its creative impulse and energy, and provides the power for the processes described above.

The attractive force is released and begins to operate from the moment that an entity is formed by the combination of the positive and negative forces of the spermatozoon and ovum. The combination of these two forces under special conditions, e.g., with biological energy or impetus behind them, induces a flow of

force from the astral plane. Immediately this condition arises, in cases in which an ego is to incarnate, the physical permanent atom, a storehouse of physical experiences from past lives, is attached to the zygote. From that moment the attractive force comes into operation. It belongs to the vibratory order of sound, and "calls" the nature-spirits of different degrees, as different types of vibration are emitted.

It also provides an etheric insulation within which the building operations can take place, as previously described. When it impinges upon the surrounding matter it impresses its own rate of vibration upon it, and so prepares it for assimilation by the nature-spirits. The flow of force from the astral to the etheric increases with the growth of the foetus, so that the sphere of influence of the attractive force gradually extends to the full size of the womb.

As the growth continues, and specialised organs are about to be built, new series of vibrations are added to the existing ones, and a new type of nature-spirit and of matter is attracted.

CHAPTER 7

THE SIXTH MONTH

As the seventh month was approached considerable increase of activity at all levels was noticed. All the processes previously observed were being speeded up, and the ego was putting down more of his own vital energy into his bodies.

The focus of the egoic consciousness had moved down through the mental body into the astral, which it shortly left to become established in the etheric. By this time the astral body was capable of serving the ego in a considerable measure as a vehicle for the receipt of impacts from the astral plane. The play of vibration and consciousness through it was producing clearly defined organic function, and the chakrams were beginning to be visible.

The ego himself became more alive and responsive to external impacts on his own plane. It became much more easy to contact him and to obtain a measure of response. The favourable progress of the building and growth of the new vehicles appeared to leave the ego freer to contact life on the causal plane.

The particular ego whose incarnation was being watched was one of some distinction, beauty of character, and strength of will. The human form, idealised to the highest degree, was discernible at the causal level. The face and the eyes were radiant and glorious in their expression, luminous with love and gentleness, yet glowing with power. The causal form as recorded in my physical brain was not so much that of a full human form as of a beautiful face and eyes, the countenance, as it were, of "the God within."

The closer contact which I was able to obtain with the ego at this stage made it possible for me to share in some degree in the conditions which accompanied the new incarnation. The main impression was similar to that of one who awakens from a long and marvellously refreshing sleep, and feels completely restored and full of

the most radiant freshness, vitality and power. The ego who had thus awakened seemed to have stretched himself to his full stature as he stood eagerly on the threshold of his new cycle of incarnation; his whole atmosphere was that of morning, of some marvellous sunrise in spring. Great hopes were entertained of this birth. Plans had been matured in the long silence of the heavenly rest. The consciousness was aglow with great schemes of work and wonderful means of self-expression, like that of an artist when he first begins a new picture which shall express to the full the whole of his artistic aspirations.

The phenomenon of the multiplicity of the powers of consciousness at the causal level was frequently made apparent during the investigations. The fact of my own contact with it in no way affected the concentration of force which was being directed towards the building of the new bodies.

The shaft of light previously referred to as connecting the ego with the embryo was seen to arise at a point within the causal body corresponding to the solar plexus of the human form. Then it passed like a funnel-shaped shaft of light into the mental body, which it entered at the top, and having passed right through entered in a similar manner the astral body and, finally, the physical embryo.

At six and a half months the width of this shaft was about 6 inches on the mental and astral levels and 4 inches at the etheric and dense physical. The egoic life and power flashed up and down this shaft, which, in addition to forming a line of communication between the ego and the physical body, also served to keep the four personal vehicles in perfect alignment with each other.

The limitations of the brain consciousness prevented me from translating the exact relationship of the four bodies to each other and the course taken by the shaft. The vehicles might be represented in diagram as threaded on the shaft of light, which could be thought of as passing in turn through the top and out of the bottom of each vehicle, and into the one below, until the physical was reached. This may be diagrammatically true, but is not actually so, for, although the bodies did appear to occupy positions one above the other, there was also a certain superimposition of the higher on the lower, as if the upper half of the one occupied the lower half of the one next above. Perhaps this is not an exactly true three-dimensional statement of the facts. It is the nearest to which I can attain in the brain consciousness. When observing this phenomenon with the sight and consciousness of the higher planes, however, my comprehension of it appeared to be quite complete.

The passage of this shaft of light through the mental body, now almost full-grown, maintained the process of magnetisation within it. The whole mental vehicle was much larger and more brilliantly luminous than was the case a month before. It was by this time about 4 feet high. Innumerable highly coloured minute particles in continuous and active motion both within and at the surface produced a shimmering opalescence. The appearance of the surface of the mental body was not unlike that of snow seen under the rays of strong sunlight when the crystals are producing prismatic effects. It was definitely denser in construction than it was a month before. The coloured particles were more evenly distributed, and the body was more homogeneous.

The human form within was well defined, and the mental man was beginning to show a distinct measure of self-consciousness. The same wonderful atmosphere of freshness and pristine purity observed at the causal level was also a marked characteristic at the mental.

As the seventh month was approached the greatest part of the activity of the ego was concentrated upon the astral body. The method employed was similar to that described in connection with the mental, though here the matter was far less responsive. There was the appearance of a circular opening at the top of the astral body, the edge of which was clearly formed like the central corolla of a flower, and a suggestion of petals lying flat around it on the periphery of the astral body and following its ovoid shape was clearly to be seen.

The shaft of light entered through this circular opening which would appear to be an embryo Brahmada chakram. Looking down on this from above, the appearance of a large marigold was seen. The core of the shaft passed through the central heart of the "flower," which was approximately 2 inches in diameter, while that of the complete flower was at least 6 inches. The petals curved downwards and inwards towards the centre, and passed in the shape of an elongated stem through the top of the head of the astral double into its centre, where there was a point of great luminosity which glowed with a golden yellow light.

From this point the descending force gave off four cruciform rays which followed the lines of the sutures of the physical skull. The main stream of egoic force passed still further down through the throat chakram, where there was a concentration of force, into the heart and solar plexus. These three force centres were visible in embryo.

At this stage the ego was still playing upon the astral body from above rather than from within it. There was as yet little or no self-consciousness in it, as there was beginning to be at the mental level.

The astral body by this time occupied a space from the shoulder to the knee of the mother, and was almost upright, with a slight inclination from the left shoulder to the right knee. The mother's aura was still proportionately extended to include this. The distinction and separation between the two auras were still noticeable.

The astral "child" was in a state of dreamy sleepiness, the various changes of consciousness appearing in the astral body as faint changes of colour which passed over and through it. The "child" was occasionally aroused from this state of consciousness by the impulses from the ego and stirred slightly like a sleeper who is being partially awakened. The general effect upon the astral body of these dreamy activities of the budding astral consciousness resembled that of the slowly changing colours of the sky during a sunset. This was heightened by the appearance of the astral double itself, which shone with that swimming luminosity which the sun presents when low down on the horizon.

The physical embryo seemed to serve as a fulcrum or anchor for the ego. The direct contact between the two had a stabilising effect upon the subtler bodies, keeping them "in line" and under the control of the ego. The physical embryo felt the action of the force from the higher planes as a continuous impulse towards movement.

The physical, etheric and astral consciousnesses were a unit at this stage of development, such external and internal awareness as that unit possessed being largely at the astral level.

At the physical level the stream of force which represented the consciousness of the ego was concentrated upon and in the head of the foetus, whence it passed down the spine, showing itself as a pale yellow or almost white light. It was interesting to observe the difference between this and the connecting shaft of egoic power or life-force which passed from the astral body into the head, descended through the throat and heart, and finally terminated at the solar plexus. This latter stream, which was clearly visible in the foetus, flowed with the cerebro-spinal currents as far as the embryo atlas vertebrae, through which they both descended. Below this level, however, the two streams followed different directions.

The blood could be seen pulsing with the heart-beats of the physical embryo, which also appeared to possess a dim feeling of warmth and drowsy comfort. Quickening occurs when the conscious egoic impulse, having passed through the mental and astral bodies, first touches the physical embryo. The physical incarnation may be said to begin at that moment, for it is then that the ego has his first conscious contact with his new physical body.

CHAPTER 8

THE EIGHTH MONTH

The next observation was made at the eighth month, when a greatly increased activity and a fuller expression of the egoic life force on all three planes was noticed. The ego himself was directing a much greater measure of his consciousness towards the physical plane. By this time he had established a focus or centre of his consciousness within the new personality, so that he himself was far less "extra" to it than he had been during the preceding eight months. This seemed to have a more limiting effect upon him than is found to be the case even after the personality has reached adult life.

In other words, the ego appeared to put more of himself into his personality at this period of one month before birth than at any other time during the incarnation. In spite of this fact, however, great freedom of egoic consciousness and of action remained at the causal level.

The shaft of light was by this time about 1 foot in width as it left the causal body, and the glorified human form of the God within could be seen gazing down it with great intensity towards the physical body of the child.

The egoic consciousness was firmly established in both the mental and astral bodies, and had penetrated through the lowest astral levels into the etheric body, upon which its powers were by this time freely playing.

The mental and astral bodies appeared to be completed, and seemed to resemble each other closely. Both presented the appearance of iridescent pearly whiteness at the surface and were surrounded by emanations and radiations of the same colour.

The atoms of which they were composed were in still more rapid vibration, and a continuous internal motion was observed within them both.

The shaft of light from the ego was seen to pass into the large funnel-shaped depression at the top of the mental body, to enter the head of the mental double at the position of the anterior fontanelle, and then to become enlarged to enclose and include the whole head. The mental body itself had become more elongated in shape and was about 5 feet high, the central human form having "grown" to about 3 feet.

Although this body appeared to be completely built, it did not possess external knowledge of its environment, nor was it capable of being used as a separate vehicle. As previously stated, the focus of consciousness was at this time at the astro-etheric level, merely passing through and vivifying the mental body.

Proportionate progress had been made at the astral level where the body had grown until it reached from the mother's shoulder to a point half-way between her knee and her ankle.

The astral angel was associating himself very closely with the body. At the particular time when the observation was being made, he appeared behind the mother with half of the new astral body enclosed within his aura, from which it protruded like a large many-coloured egg.

His consciousness was in a state of fixed concentration upon his charge. He was taking the greatest possible care of it, breeding over it and protecting it from external influences. His whole attitude was that of one who was producing a most delicate work of art; something so rare, so precious and so wonderful that the greatest effort, the utmost care and even reverence, must be used in bringing it to perfection.

He was assisting the mother in a somewhat similar way. His beautiful aura covered her as with a cloak or mantle thrown over her from behind. This was of a lovely blue, and covered both angel and mother with a cape-like auric garment, the hood of which passed over the deva and produced in him a remarkable resemblance to Our Lady. A luminous blue sheen beautified the upper portion of his aura, as if he wore a blue cloak of living light.

CHAPTER 9

OUR LADY

The change in the angel's appearance observed at the eighth month was found to be produced by a descent of power from the higher worlds, which passed through the angel into the mother and child. An endeavour to discover its source took me into a level of consciousness usually somewhat beyond my reach, and in those spiritual realms in which I was awakened by its influence the presence of that personification of the feminine principle in divinity, which was recognised among earlier peoples as Isis, Venus and Ishtar, and in more modern times as the Virgin Mary, was revealed. Even to my inexperienced and imperfect vision a measure of Her glorious beauty and perfection was apparent.

She is radiant and beautiful beyond description, and shone forth as the incarnation of perfect womanhood, the apotheosis of beauty, love, tenderness. The glory of divinity is all about her. A glowing happiness, an ecstasy of spiritual joy, shines through Her wondrous eyes.

In spite of the intensity of Her exaltation Her gaze is soft and tender, and in some way full of the happy laughter of children and the deep and calm contentment of maturity.

Her splendid aura of soft yet brilliant hues forms a shining halo of glory all about Her, veiling and yet revealing Her immortal loveliness. Deep blue, silvery white, rose, golden yellow, and the soft green of young leaves in spring flow continually throughout Her lovely auric robes in wave on wave of colour and of living light. And ever and anon Her rich deep blue pervades the whole, lit up by stars and bright gleams of silvery hue.

The guardian angels are Her servants and Her messengers. Through them She had been present from the very first, guarding both mother and child. Her peace, Her love and deep compassion enfolded them, drawn forth by the approaching sacrament of motherhood, the mystery of birth. Now that the time of delivery was approaching She came so near that Her angel servants resembled Her as more and more of Her life force and consciousness became manifested in and through them. Day by day She drew nearer, until the presentation took place in Her actual Presence.

In addition to the help which Her Presence gives to the egos of both mother and child at all levels, and the harmonising and calming influences which it exhales, She watches closely the mental and emotional changes of the mother, entering with her into all the experiences through which she passes, even sharing her pains. At the same time she helps to increase those expansions of consciousness which come in some degree to every mother during the period of her sacrificial act.

These expansions mean growth both to the individual and to the race. Our Lady is looking to the race of the future when marriage and parenthood will be exalted among men, when they will take their due and proper places in the lives of men as spiritual sacraments, by means of which alone a race may be born pure as She is pure, and displaying a measure of Her divine perfection. Then bodies will be produced which shall be fit temples for the evolving God who comes to dwell within them.

As I meditated upon, and strove to touch, the fringe of Her mighty consciousness, I realised that She works continually to impress these great ideals upon humanity. She is one with all the women of the human race upon this planet, voluntarily absorbs into Herself their sufferings, shares with them the pangs of travail and of birth, endures the coarseness and brutality of the soul-deadening life of the unfortunates. All these She receives into Herself that She may the more closely share with Her sisters on earth Her own divine compassion, Her strength, Her perfect purity, Her living presence, and bless them with the blessing of the Mother of the world.

I saw also that She shares in all the joys of the first love; that all the happiness of true affection between man and maid finds an echo in Her heart, and that She adds to it from the boundless ocean of Her own perfected love and ardent joy. She seeks to increase, to bless, to enrich and to purify all that wondrous depth of love to which a woman's heart can give birth. All the lusts to which it is too often perverted She knows and seeks to transform, receiving the poison into Her own heart that it may be changed into a potion of true love, and sent forth as a power for the uplifting of the women of the world, the exaltation of human love, and the purification of the sacrament of parenthood.

Thus does She fulfil Her great part in the Plan, and take Her place in the Hierarchy of Those Who, having learned to live in the Eternal, yet voluntarily submit to the imprisonment of time.

CHAPTER 10

THE EIGHTH MONTH [continued]

To continue the account of the investigations of the progress of incarnation at the eighth month. The construction of the super-physical mechanism of consciousness was by this time complete as far as the head of the astral body was concerned, but it could not of course be operative any lower until the dense physical body was sufficiently developed.

The central shaft of light passed into the head at the anterior fontanelle, and the remainder of the shaft flowed over and through the rest of the physical body. When the core reached a position corresponding to the pineal gland it enlarged into a bulb which included both the pituitary and pineal glands.

The ventricles of the brain were practically collapsed at this stage, and the pituitary and pineal glands were completely formed. Indications of three lines of force were found within the bulb at the end of the descending shaft. Two of these entered the pituitary and pineal glands respectively, while the third flowed in the direction of the atlas vertebrae.

The etheric double of the pituitary body was shaped rather like a tulip bud, with the petals curving slightly outwards at the top to form an opening into which the current flowed. The shaft of light glowed rather more intensely within this ending, and the outline of the embryo ajna (brow) chakram was visible within the etheric double and somewhat resembled a hollow cane filled with pith, down which the stream of descending force was unable to pass. The point at which the chakram leaves the pituitary body was closed by the etheric wall or skin of the gland itself.

The pineal gland was in a similar condition, but the luminosity was greater and produced the effect of a pointed tongue of flame in which a little blue was visible. The etheric passage leading from these two centres to the anterior fontanelle was closed by the matter of the etheric double in a manner similar to that observed at the ajna (brow) chakram, though here the particles were in a more active condition, and the pith less dense, as though the egoic life magnetised it and produced a more rapid

rate of vibration. The particles within were insulated from the rest of the etheric double by the etheric wall of the passage.

The third stream of cerebro-spinal currents was not yet flowing freely down the spine.

From the base of the central bulb in the head numbers of tiny rootlets or branches extended downwards into the etheric double of the throat.

Force flowed through these and passed down the throat to the position of the heart, where there was another but much smaller bulbshaped enlargement similar to that in the head and occupying a space of approximately one quarter of the cubic content of the heart.

The astral chakrams were visible at this stage and were already relatively in juxtaposition with the four physical centres mentioned above, but only the pineal gland and Brahmara (crown) chakram seemed to be completely adjusted and connected. There was, however, no organic connection or flow of force at this stage. The etheric centres were within the magnetic field of the astral chakrams, but were not yet functioning as they do after birth.

CHAPTER 11

THE HOUR BEFORE BIRTH

A final observation of the case from which most of the matter contained in these descriptions was taken was made one and a half hours before birth. By that time the higher and lower mental angels appeared to have withdrawn from their association with the ego and his new bodies; their work had been carried to a conclusion, and their presence was no longer required.

The astral angel, too, had departed, but the thought form of Our Lady remained. It was no longer vivified by the consciousness of the astral building angel, but by that of Our Blessed Lady Herself. The Figure was now dissociated from both mother and child and stood on the left side, near the head of the bed, bending over the mother in an attitude of supreme tenderness and protection.

This Presence of the Lady Mary had the effect of preventing the mental and emotional bodies of the mother from vibrating in response to the pain, beyond the rate at which personal consciousness in the physical body could be maintained. The pain could not be reduced beyond a certain point, but its effect upon the subtler bodies was reduced to a minimum. Indeed, by Her Presence the personal consciousness of the mother was maintained in a state of equipoise and calm in spite of the acute physical suffering. Mother and child were embraced in an atmosphere of spiritual power and splendour which shone from Her august Presence; and She held them thus until delivery was complete.

On the inner planes the room was pervaded by an atmosphere of holiness and peace. Angel servants of Our Lady were present, and both mother and child were irradiated by Her love and Her blessing. As the moment of birth approached Her

form began to glow with increasing brilliance and to increase in size, as more of her consciousness was manifested in it and a greater measure of Her life and light and blessing descended upon the mother and child.

When the birth was over She withdrew. The Figure, however, disintegrated slowly, the process lasting perhaps from eight to ten hours.

After the angels had withdrawn and the process of birth had begun, egoic contact with the physical body was sensibly diminished, while immediately after birth it had practically disappeared. One assumes, therefore, that the fact of the higher vehicles of the child being enclosed within those of the mother and protected by the angels enabled the ego to obtain a far closer contact with his new physical body than he possesses after it is born.

This change was felt quite distinctly by the ego, who experienced a sense of loss, and realised his complete inability to function consciously in, or to affect, his new body. The connection between them was still visible immediately before birth, and the shaft could be traced as it passed through the anterior fontanelle. This shaft now consisted, however, far more of superphysical magnetic and pranic energies than of egoic consciousness, which at this time did not reach below the astral level. The physical and etheric bodies were incapable at this stage of transmitting the force of egoic consciousness.

After birth the ego must take up the task of learning gradually to obtain for himself what the presence of the angels and immersion in the aura of the mother had made possible for him during the intra-uterine period.

This last observation concludes my researches into this important subject. I recognise the necessity for much further investigation before the principles which this study suggests can be fully established and understood. The work is therefore limited and incomplete. I offer it in its present state in the hope that other students will take up the work of further research and investigation, and that I may myself again have the privilege of observing further cases at this most important period of life.