

*Meditation on the  
Sixth Major Arcanum of the Tarot*

THE LOVER  
L'AMOUREUX

She seizes him and kisses him,  
And with impudent face she says to him:  
I had to offer sacrifices,  
And today I have paid my vows.  
So now I have come out to meet you.  
To seek you eagerly, and I have found you.  
(Proverbs vii. 13-15)

I, Wisdom, dwell in prudence,  
And I possess knowledge and discretion. . .  
I love those who love me.  
And those who seek me find me.  
(Proverbs viii, 12, 17)

Set me as a seal upon your heart.  
As a ring upon your arm;  
For love is strong as death. . .  
Its flashes are flashes of fire,  
A flame of the Eternal.  
(Song of Songs viii, 6-7)

## LETTER VI



## THE LOVER

Dear Unknown Friend,

Here the whole composition of the sixth Card is translated from the visual language of the Tarot into that of the poetry of Solomon. For there a dark-haired woman with an impudent face clad in a red robe seizes the shoulder of the young man whilst another, with fair hair and dressed in a blue mantle, makes appeal to his heart with a chaste gesture of her left hand. At the same time, above, a winged infant archer, standing out against a white sphere emitting red, yellow and blue flames, is about to let fly an arrow directed at the other shoulder of the young man. Does one not hear, in contemplating the sixth Card of the Tarot, a voice which says: "I have found you", and another which says: "Those who seek

me find me"? Does one not recognise the voice of sensuality and the voice of the heart, and likewise the flashes of fire from above of which king Solomon speaks?

The central theme of the sixth Arcanum is therefore that of the practice of the vow of *chastity*, just as the fifth Arcanum had *poverty* as its theme and the fourth *obedience*. The sixth Arcanum is at the same time the summary of the two preceding Arcana—chastity being the fruit of obedience and poverty. It summarises the three vows or methods of spiritual discipline in contrasting them with the three trials or temptations opposed to these vows. The choice before which the young man of the sixth Arcanum finds himself placed is of greater significance than that between vice and virtue. It is a matter here of choice between on the one hand the way of obedience, poverty and chastity and on the other hand the way of power, richness and debauchery. The *practical* teaching of the Arcanum "The Lover" is to do with the three vows and the three corresponding temptations. For this is the *practical* doctrine of the hexagram or sexternary.

The three vows are, in essence, memories of paradise, where man was united with God (obedience), where he possessed everything at once (poverty), and where his companion was at one and the same time his wife, his friend, his sister and his mother (chastity). For the real presence of God necessarily entails the action of prostrating oneself in the face of Him "who is more me than I myself am"—and here lies the root and source of the vow of obedience; the vision of the forces, substances and essences of the world in the guise of the "garden of divine symbols" (the garden of Eden) signifies the possession of everything without choosing, without laying hold of, or without appropriating any particular thing isolated from the whole—and here lies the root and source of the vow of poverty; lastly, total communion between two, between one and another, which comprises the entire range of all possible relationships of spirit, soul and body between two polarised beings necessarily constitutes the absolute wholeness of spiritual, psychic and physical being, in love—and here lies the root and source of the vow of chastity.

One is chaste only when one loves with the totality of one's being. Chastity is not wholeness of being in indifference, but rather in the love which is "strong as death and whose flashes are flashes of fire, the flame of the Eternal". It is *living unity*. It is three—spirit, soul and body—which are *one*, and the other three—spirit, soul and body—which are *one*: and three and three make *six*, and six is *two*, and two is one.

This is the formula of chastity in love. It is the formula of *Adam-Eve*. And it is this which is the principle of chastity, the living memory of paradise.

And the celibacy of monks and nuns? How does the formula of chastity "Adam-Eve" apply here?

Love is strong as death. i.e. death does not destroy it. Death can neither let one forget nor let one cease to hope. Those of us—we human souls of today—who bear within ourselves the flame of the memory of Eden cannot forget it, nor can we cease to hope for it. And if human souls come into the world with the imprint of this memory, and also with the impression of knowing that the meeting with

the other will not take place for them in this life here below, they will then live this life & if *widowed*, in so far as they *remember*, and as if *engaged*, in so far as they *hope*. Now, all true monks are widowers and fiances, and all true nuns are widows and fiancees, in the depths of their hearts. The true celibate bears witness to the eternity of love, just as the miracle of true marriage bears witness to its reality.

Yes, dear Unknown Friend, life is profound and its profundity is like an abyss of fathomless depth. Nietzsche *felt* this and knew how to express it in his "Song of the Night" (*Nachtlied* from *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, part iii, ch, 15):

*O Mensch, gib acht,  
Was spricht die tiefe Mitternacht —  
Ich schlief, ich schlief- aus tiefern Traum bin ich erwacht-  
Die Welt ist tie/, noch tiefer als der Tag gedacht.  
Tie/ is t ihr Weh.  
Die Lust — noch tie/er als das Herzeleid—  
Weh spricht — Vergeh,  
Doch alle Lust will Ewigkeit, will tiefe, tiefe Ewigkeit.*

O man! Take heed!  
What saith deep Midnight, indeed?  
I lay asleep, asleep—  
I waked from my deep dream—  
The world is deep,  
And deeper than ever day may deem.  
Deep is its woe—  
Joy—deeper yet than woe is she:  
Saith woe: Hence, go!  
Yet Joy would have Eternity—  
Profound, profound Eternity!  
(Friedrich Nietzsche. *Thus Spake Zarathustra*)\*

Thus, it is the same arrow—"the arrow of fire, of the flame of the Eternal"—which brings about true celibacy as well as true marriage. The heart of the monk is pierced—and this is why he is a monk—just as is the heart of the fiance on the eve of the wedding. Where is more truth or more beauty to be found? Who can say?

And charity, the love of one's neighbour. . . what is its relationship with the love whose prototype is given by the formula "Adam-Eve"?

We are surrounded by innumerable living and conscious beings—visible and invisible. But rather than knowing that they really exist and that they are as much live as we ourselves, it nevertheless appears to us that they have a *less real exist-*

\*Trsl. A. Tille, revised MM. Bozman. Everyman Library, 1958, p. 284-285

*tence* and that they are *less living* than we ourselves, for us it is WE who experience the full measure of the intensity of reality, whilst other beings seem, in comparison with ourselves, to be less real; their existence seems to be more of the nature of a shadow than full reality. Our thoughts tell us that this is an illusion, that beings around us are as real as we ourselves are, and that they live just as intensely as we do. Yet fine as it is to say these things, all the same we feel ourselves at the centre of reality, and we feel other beings to be removed from this centre. That one qualifies this illusion as "egocentricity", or "egoism", or "*abamkara*" (the illusion of self), or the "effect of the primordial Fall", does not matter; it does not alter the fact that we feel ourselves to be more real than others.

Now, to feel something as real in the measure of its full reality is to love. It is love which awakens us to the reality of ourselves, to the reality of others, to the reality of the world and to the reality of God. In so far as we love ourselves, we feel real. And we do not love—or we do not love as much as ourselves—other beings, who seem to us to be less real.

Now, two ways, two quite different methods exist which can free us from the illusion "me, living—you, shadow", and we have a choice. The one is to *extinguish* love of oneself and to become a "shadow amongst shadows". This is the equality of indifference. India offers us this method of liberation from *abamkara*, the illusion of self. This illusion is destroyed *by extending the indifference that one has for other beings to oneself*. Here one reduces oneself to the state of a shadow equal to the other surrounding shadows. *Maya*, the great illusion, is to believe that individual beings, me and you, should be something more than shadows—appearances without reality. The formula for realising this is therefore: "me, shadow—you, shadow".

The other way or method is that of *extending the love that one has for oneself to other beings*, in order to arrive at the realisation of the formula: "me, living—you, living". Here it is a matter of rendering other beings as real as oneself, i.e. of loving them as oneself. To be able to attain this, one has first to love one's *neighbour* as oneself. For love is not an abstract programme but, rather, it is *substance* and *intensity*. It is necessary therefore that one radiates the substance and intensity of love with regard to *one* individual being in order that one can begin to ray it out in all directions. "To be able to make gold one has to have gold," say the alchemists. The spiritual counterpart of this maxim is that in order to be able to love everyone one has to love or to have loved someone. This someone is one's "neighbour".

Who is one's neighbour, understood in the Hermetic sense, i.e. meaning at one and the same time in a mystical, gnostic, magical and metaphysical sense? It is the being nearest to one at or since the beginning; this is the sister-soul for all eternity; this is one's twin-soul, the soul together with whom one beheld the dawn of mankind.

The dawn of mankind: it is this which the Bible describes as paradise. Now,

this was at the stage of existence that God said: "It is not good that Adam should be alone" (Genesis ii, 18).

To be: this is to love. To be alone: this is to love oneself. Now, "it is not good (*tov*) that Adam should be alone" means to say: it is not good that man loves nobody but himself. This is why YHVH-Elohim said: I will make him a helper similar (corresponding) to him. And as Eve was part of Adam himself, he loved her as himself. Eve was therefore the "neighbour", the being nearest to Adam ("bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh"—Genesis ii, 23).

This is the origin of love, and it is common both to love which unites man and woman and to love of one's neighbour. In the beginning there was only one love and its source was one, since its principle was one.

All forms of love (charity, friendship, paternal love, maternal love, filial love, brotherly love) derive from the same unique primordial root of the fact of the couple Adam-Eve. For it is then that love—the *reality* of the other—issued forth and could subsequently branch out and diversify. It is the warmth of love of the first couple (and it does not matter if there was only one couple or if there were thousands of them—it is a question of the fact of the first qualitative issuing forth of love and not of the number of simultaneous or successive cases of this issuing forth) which is reflected in the love of parents for their children, reflected in turn in the love of children for their parents, reflected again in the love of children amongst themselves, reflected lastly in the love for all kinship of human beings and beyond immediate kinship, by analogy, for all that lives and breathes. . . Love once born as substance and intensity, tends to spread, ramify and diversify according to the forms of human relationships into which it enters. It is a cascading current which tends to fill and inundate all. This is why when there is true love between parents, the children love their parents, by analogy, and love each other; they love, by analogy—as their brothers and sisters by "psychological adoption"—their friends in school and in the neighbourhood; they love (always by analogy) their teachers, tutors, priests, etc., through reflection of the love that they have for their parents; and later they love their husbands and wives, as their parents once loved one another.

All this is clearly the inverse of Sigmund Freud's pansexual doctrine. For Freud it is "libido" or sexual desire which is the basis of all human psychological activity, which constitutes the motivating energy thereof, and which then becomes—through the process of sublimation or direction through channels other than the satisfaction of sexual desire—creative force: socially, artistically, in science and religion. However the whole of love, understood in the sense of the formula "Adam-Eve", is to sexual desire as white light containing the seven colours is to the colour red. "Adam-Eve" love includes the whole range of undifferentiated colours, whilst

Freud's libido is only a single colour isolated and separated from the whole. And this separation from the whole—and the *whole* is the principle of chastity—is exactly the inverse of chastity; it is the very principle of unchastity. For unchastity

is nothing other than the autonomy of carnal desire, so that the wholeness of the human being — in spirit, soul and body—is ruined. Sexual desire is only one aspect of love—the aspect reflected by that part of the physical and psychic organism which is the special domain of the "four-petalled lotus"—and it constitutes only *one-seventh* of the human psychic-physical organism. There are therefore *six more aspects*, whose significance is in no way less, and which Freud's doctrine ignores (or even denies their existence).

Just as Karl Marx, being impressed by the partial truth (reduced to its simplest basis) that it is first necessary to eat in order to be able to think, raised the economic interest to THE principle of man and the history of civilisation, so Sigmund Freud, being impressed by the partial truth that it is first necessary to be born in order to be able to eat and to think, and that sexual desire is necessary for birth, raised this latter to THE principle of man and the whole of human culture. As Marx saw *homo oeconomicus* (economic man) at the basis of *homo sapiens*, so Freud saw *homo sexualis* (sexual man) at the basis of *homo sapiens*.

Alfred Adler could not follow his master in the attribution of absolute primacy to sex—his experience on many occasions contradicting this doctrine. Thus this founder of another school of depth psychology was led to the discovery that it is the will-to-power which plays the leading role at the foundation of the human being. Adler then advanced the doctrine of *homo potestatis* — man motivated by the will-to-power —instead of the *homo sapiens* of eighteenth century science, the *homo oeconomicus* of Marx, and the *homo sexualis* of Freud.

However. Carl Gustav Jung, whilst admitting the partial truth of the doctrines of Freud and Adler, was led by his clinical experience to the discovery of a much deeper layer of the psyche than that studied by Freud and Adler. He had to admit the reality of a *religious* layer, which lies at a much greater depth than the layers of sex and of the will-to-power. Thus, thanks to the work of Jung, man is fundamentally *homo religiosus*, a religious being, though he may also be an economic entity, a sexual entity and an entity aspiring to power.

Now, Carl Gustav Jung re-established the principle of chastity in the domain of psychology—the other psychological schools mentioned being contrary to chastity, since they break down the unity of the spiritual, psychic and physical elements of the human being. He discovered the divine breath at the core of the human being.

At the same time the work of Jung constitutes the inauguration of a new method in the domain of psychology. It is the method of exploration of psychic layers in succession — corresponding to the layers of archaeology, palaeontology and geology. And just as archaeology, palaeontology and geology regard the layers with which they have to do as archives of the past (as time become space), so does the depth psychology of the school of Jung treat psychic layers as the living past of the soul, which is as distant as the layer in question is deep. The measure of depth here is at the same time that of the history of the soul's past, going back beyond the threshold of birth. One can well discuss whether the layers are collective or indi-

vidual. whether their continuance is due to heredity or reincarnation — but one can no longer deny the reality of these layers or their value as a key to the psychic history of man and mankind. More than that: one can no longer deny the fact that if the psychic domain, *nothing dies* and that the whole past *lives present* in the diverse layers of the depths of consciousness — the "unconscious" or sub-consciousness—of the soul. Palaeontological and geological layers contain only the imprints and fossils of the now dead past; psychic layers, in contrast, constitute a living witness to the actual past. They are the past which continues to live. They are *memory* — not intellectual, but psychically *substantial*— of the actual past. For this reason nothing perishes and nothing is lost in the domain of the psyche; *essential* history, i.e. *real* joy and suffering, real religions and revelations of the past, continue to live in us, and it is in we ourselves that the key to the essential history of mankind is to be found.

Now, it is in we ourselves that there is to be found the "Edenic" layer, or that of paradise and the Fall, of which an account is found in the book of Genesis of Moses. Do you doubt the essential truth of this account? Descend into the depths of your own soul, descend as far as the roots, to the sources of feeling, will and intelligence—and you will *know*. You will know, i.e. you will have *certainty* that the Biblical narrative is true in the most profound and authentic sense of the word — in the sense that you must deny yourself, deny the witness of the inner *structure* of your own soul, in order to be able to doubt the intrinsic truth of Moses' account. The descent into the depths of your own soul in meditating upon the account of paradise in Genesis will render you incapable of doubt. Such is the nature of the certainty that one can have here.

But, of course, it is not a matter of certainty with regard to the garden, its trees, the serpent, the apple or other forbidden fruit, but rather with regard to the vital psychic and spiritual *realities* that these images or symbols reveal. It is not the symbolic *language* of the account which gives certainty of its truth, but rather what it expresses.

It expresses in symbolic language the first layer (first in the sense of the *root* °t all that is human in human nature) of human psychic life, or its "beginning". Now, knowledge of the beginning, *initium* in Latin, is the essence of *initiation*. Initiation is the conscious experience of the *initial microcosmic state* (this is the Hermetic initiation), and of the *initial macrocosmic state* (this is the Pythagorean initiation). The first is a conscious descent into the depths of the human being, to the initial layer. Its method is *enstasy*, i.e. experience of the depths at the foundation within oneself. Here one becomes more and more *profound* until one awakens within oneself to the primordial layer—or the "image and likeness of Gods" —which is the aim of enstasy. It is above all by means of the sense of spiritual

touch that this experience of enstasy is effected. One can compare it to a chemical experiment undergone on the psychic and spiritual plane.

The second initiation experience — that we have designated "Pythagorean" from a hi'storical point of view—is based above all on the auditory sense or sense of

spiritual hearing. It is essentially *musical*, just as the first is substantial or *alchemical*. It is by *ecstasy* — or rapture, or going *out* of oneself — that the macrocosmic layers ("spheres" or "heavens") reveal themselves to consciousness. Pythagoras' "music of the spheres" was this experience, and it is this which was the source of the Pythagorean doctrine concerning the musical and mathematical structure of the macrocosm. For sounds, numbers and geometrical forms were the three stages of representing and mentally visualising the ineffable experience of the "music of the spheres".

It is only from a historical point of view that we have designated as "Pythagorean" the macrocosmic initiation by means of ecstasy. For it is in no way a prerogative of the epoch prior to Christianity. The following is what the apostle Paul says of his own experience of the "spheres" or "heavens" in ecstasy:

I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was *carried up* to the third heaven—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows. And I know that this man was raised up into *paradise*— whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows—and he *heard* ineffable words, which man is not allowed to express — (*et audivit arcane verba, quae non licet homini loqui—kai ekousen arreta remata, ha ouk exon anthropo lalesai*) (2 Corinthians xii, 2-4)

St. Paul was therefore *carried up* to the third heaven or the third macrocosmic sphere and he was then *raised up* into paradise where he *heard* ineffable words. His macrocosmic *initiation* through ecstasy therefore took place in the sphere of paradise, the conscious experience of which ("he *heard* ineffable words") is its aim. just as it is also the aim of initiation through enstasy, which latter is characterised by experience of the primordial layer at the root of the human being or microcosm. The macrocosmic sphere of paradise and the microcosmic layer of Eden are the *initia*, the "beginnings", to which one is initiated in the macrocosmic initiation as well as in the microcosmic initiation. Ecstasy to the heights beyond oneself and enstasy into the depths within oneself lead to knowledge of the same fundamental truth.

Christian esotericism unites these two methods of initiation. The Master has two groups of disciples—"disciples of the day" and "disciples of the night"—the first being disciples of the way of enstasy and the latter those of the way of ecstasy. He has also a third group of disciples "of day *and* night", i.e. who possess the keys to both doors at once, to the door of ecstasy and that of enstasy. Thus, the apostle John, author of the Gospel of the Word-made-flesh, was at the same time he who listened to the heart of the Master. He had the twofold experience —macrocosmic and microcosmic —of the Cosmic Word and the Sacred Heart, of which the litany says: "*Corjesu, rex et centrum omnium cordium*" ("Heart of Jesus, king and centre of all hearts"). It is thanks to this twofold experience that the Gospel which he

wrote is at one and the same time so cosmic and so humanly intimate —of such *heights* and *depths* simultaneously. There, the macrocosmic solar sphere and the microcosmic solar sphere are united, which explains the singular magic of this Gospel.

for the *reality* of paradise is the unity of the macrocosmic solar sphere and the microcosmic solar layer— the sphere of the cosmic heart and the solar foundation of the human heart. Christian initiation is the conscious experience of the heart of the world and the solar nature of man. God-Man is the Initiator, and there is no other.

What we understand by the term "Initiator" is what the early Christians understood by the word *Kyrios* (*Dominus* or "Lord"). With this, Christian esotericism or Hermeticism is in full accord—with absolute sincerity, today as in the past — when the words of the Creed are recited in church:

*Et in UNUM DOMINUM Jesum Christum, Filium Dei unigenitum,  
Et ex Patre natum ante omnia saecula,  
Deum de Deo, lumen de lumine.  
Deum verum de Deo vero,  
Genitum, non factum, consubstantialem Patri  
per quem omnia facta sunt;  
Qui propter nos homines, et propter nostram salutem descendit de coelis.  
Et incarnatus est de Spiritu Sancto ex Maria Virgine  
Et homo factus est.*

We believe in *one lord*, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God.  
eternally begotten of the Father,  
God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God,  
begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father.  
Through him all things were made.  
For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven:  
by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,  
and was made man.

We bow with respect and gratitude before all the great human souls of the past and present—the sages, the righteous, the prophets, the saints of all continents and all epochs throughout the whole of human history—and we are ready to learn from them all that they wish and are able to teach, but we have only one sole initiator or Lord; we are obliged to reiterate this for the sake of certainty.

But let us return to the theme of paradise.

Paradise" is therefore at one and the same time the fundamental layer of our soul and a cosmic sphere. One finds it just as well through *enstasy* as by *ecstasy*. It is the realm of beginning, and therefore of principles. Above we came across the principle of the three vows: obedience, poverty and chastity. Paradise, being

the realm of beginning and principles, is at the same time that of the beginning of the Fall or the principle of *temptation*, i.e. the principle of transition from obedience to disobedience, from poverty to greed, and from chastity to unchastity.

The temptation in paradise was threefold, just as was the temptation of Jesus Christ in the wilderness. The following are the essential elements of the triple temptation in paradise, as it is described in the account of the Fall in the book of Genesis:

1. Eve *listened* to the voice of the serpent;
2. She *"saw* that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes" (Genesis iii, 6);
3. She *"took* of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, and he ate" (Genesis iii, 6).

The voice of the serpent is that of the living being ("animal") whose intelligence is most advanced ("the most artful") amongst all living beings ("animals") whose consciousness is turned towards the horizontal ("animals of *the fields*"). Now, the intelligence of Adam-Eve was, before the Fall, *vertical*; their eyes had not yet been "opened", and they "were both naked, and were not ashamed" (Genesis ii. 25), i.e. they were conscious of everything vertically—from above to below or, in other words, in God, through God and for God. They were not conscious of "naked" things, i.e. things separated from God. The formula expressing their perception, their vision of things was: "That which is above is as that which is below, and that which is below is as that which is above" (*Tabula Smaragdina*, 2). Thus, although they "were both naked", they "were not ashamed". Because they saw divine ideality expressing itself through phenomenal reality. It was vertical con-sciousness (simultaneous knowledge of the ideal and the real), whose principles are found formulated in the Emerald Table. The formula of horizontal consciousness of the serpent (*nahasch*) would be that of realism, pure and simple: "That which is in me is as that which is outside of me, and that which is outside of me is as that which is in me." This is horizontal con-sciousness (simultaneous knowledge of the subjective and the objective), which sees things not in God, but separated from him or "naked"—within itself, through itself and for itself. And as the self here replaces God (horizontal consciousness being that of the opposition of subject and object), the serpent says that on the day when Adam-Eve (Adam and Eve) eat fruit from the tree which is in the middle of the garden, their eyes will open and they will be *as gods*, i.e. the self will replace the function previously filled by God and that they will know good and evil. If before they saw things in divine light, they will see them now in their own light, i.e. the function of illumination will belong to them, just as once it belonged to God. The *source* of the light will be transferred from God to man.

This was the temptation that Eve heard in listening to the voice of the serpent. Its essence is the principle of *power*, which is autonomy of the light of conscious-

ness- And Eve *listened* to the voice of the serpent. This voice was as audible to her as the other voice bearing from above the single commandment: "You may eat of every tree of the garden; but of the tree of knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for on the day that you eat of it you shall die" (Genesis ii, 16-17).

She therefore heard *two* voices, two inspirations arising from contrary sources. Here is the origin and the principle of doubt. Doubt is twofold inspiration. Faith is a single inspiration. Certainty is vanquished doubt; it is faith regained.

Obedience, the principle of obedience, is devotion without reserve to the *sole* voice from above. Now, the very fact that Eve *listened* to another voice than that from above, that she *compared* the two voices, i.e. considered them as if they belonged to the *same plane* (and therefore she doubted), this very fact was an act of spiritual *disobedience* and was the root cause and beginning of the Fall.

It was then that she looked at the tree and saw that it "was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes"—this was the second phase of the temptation and the second stage of the Fall. For it was after having listened to the voice of the serpent that she looked at the tree. She looked at it in a new way — no longer as formerly, when the sole voice from above vibrated in her being, when she experienced not the least attraction for the tree, but rather now with the word of the serpent vibrating in her being—with a questioning, comparing, *doubting* look, i.e. *ready to have experience*. Because when one is in doubt, one is induced to make experiments in order to dispel it—if one does not surmount it by raising oneself to a higher plane.

It was in looking at the tree in this new way that it appeared to her "good for food, and a delight to the eyes". To be induced to seek experience is the beginning and the principle of greed, the principle opposed to poverty.

It was after having looked at the tree in a new way that Eve stretched forth her hand and "she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, and he ate". Here is the third phase of the temptation and the third stage of the Fall: it is to escape from doubt by plunging into experience and making the other take part.

Here is the beginning and the principle of unchastity, contrary to the principle of chastity. Because to seek experiences or to make experiments *based on doubt* is the very essence of carnal, psychic and spiritual unchastity. For this reason one does not carry out experiments in Christian esotericism or Hermeticism. One would never take recourse to experiments with a view to dispelling doubt. One has experiences, of course, but one does not *make* experiments. Because it would be contrary to the holy vow of chastity to put forward a hand and to *take* from the tree of knowledge. The spiritual world does not in any way suffer experimenters. One seeks, one asks, one knocks at its door. But one does not open it by force. One waits for it to be opened.

The Christian doctrine and experience of *grace* expresses the very essence of chastity, just as it also contains the principles of poverty and obedience. It is the doctrine concerning chaste relationships between that which is below and that

which is above. God is not an object and neither is he an object of knowledge. He is the *source* of illuminatory and revelatory grace. He cannot *be grasped*, but he can certainly reveal himself.

Here we have chastity, poverty and obedience underlying the Christian doctrine and experience of grace. Now, all Christian esotericism or Hermeticism, including here all its mysticism, gnosis and magic, is founded on the experience and doctrine of grace, one of the results of which is *initiation*. Initiation is an act of grace from above. It cannot be achieved or produced by any technical outer or inner procedures. One does not initiate oneself; one *becomes* initiated.

Grace. . . are we not tired of the age-old repetition of this subject in Sunday sermons in church, in theological treatises, in the writings of mystics and, lastly, in the pompous declarations of monarchs — be they "High-Christian", "Catholic", "Orthodox" or "defenders of the Faith"? Have we not heard and read about it to the point of satiety. . . whenever and wherever the perfume of incense is smelt and spiriual hymns are heard? Lastly, is not a disciple of modern Hermeticism — he who is getting ready to dare the great adventure of the quest for the Great Arcanum — in the right to ask that he be spared sermons on this mollifying and monotonous subject? Does it not presume too little of his character to invite him to renounce the magnificent magical quaternary—"to dare, to will, to be silent, and to know"—for the whining *Kyrte eleison?*

There is nothing more banal than the rising of the sun which repeats itself day after day throughout innumerable millions of years. Yet it is thanks to this banal phenomenon that our eyes — organs for the light of the sun — see all the new things that life brings. Just as the light of the sun renders us seeing with regard to things of the physical world, so does the light of the spiritual sun — grace — render us seeing with regard to what is brought about from the spiritual world. Light is necessary in order to be able to see there, as well as here.

Similarly, air is necessary in order to breathe and to live. Is not the air which surrounds us a perfect analogy for the *gratia gratis data* — for gratuitously bestowed grace? Because to live in the spirit, vivifying spirit is necessary, which is the air of spiritual respiration.

Can one produce artificially intellectual, moral or artistic *inspiration*? Can the lungs produce the air which they need for respiration?

Now, *the principle* of grace underlies earthly life as well as spiritual life. It is wholly — below and above — ruled by the *laws* of obedience, poverty and chastity. The lungs know that it is necessary to breathe — and they obey. The lungs know that they are in want — and they breathe in. They love purity — and they breathe out. The very process of breathing teaches the laws of obedience, poverty and chastity, i.e. it is a lesson (by analogy) in grace. Conscious breathing in of the reality of grace is Christian *Hatba-yoga*. Christian *Hatba-yoga* is the *vertical* breathing of prayer and benediction — or, in other words, one opens oneself to grace and one receives it.

With respect to the magnificent quaternary of traditional magic: "to dare, to

will, to be silent and to know", it is formulated — *mutandis mutatis* — by the Master in the following way:

Ask, and it will be given you;  
 Seek, and you will find;  
 Knock, and it will be opened to you.  
 For everyone who asks receives,  
 And he who seeks finds,  
 And to him who knocks it will be opened.  
 (Matthew vii, 7-8)

It is a matter of daring to ask, of the will to seek, of being silent in order to knock and of knowing when it is opened to you. For knowledge does not happen automatically; it is what is revealed when the door is opened.

This is the formula of the synthesis of effort and grace, of the principle of work and that of receptivity, and, lastly, of merit and gift. This synthesis enunciates the absolute law of all spiritual progress and, consequently, all spiritual discipline, whether it be practised by a solitary Christian Hermeticist, or by a community in a cloister or convent, or by a religious or mystical order, or by any esoteric or Christian-Hermetic fraternity. It is the law which every Christian disciple, of every Christian spiritual school, obeys. And Christian Hermeticism, i.e. the whole of traditional mysticism, gnosis, magic and occult philosophy, passed through baptism and transfiguration by the fire, light and life of Christianity, is in no way an exception here. Hermeticism without grace is only sterile erudite historicism; Hermeticism without effort is only superficial sentimental aestheticism. There is certainly THE WORK in Hermeticism, and this work is the child of grace and effort.

Dear Unknown Friend, if you have knowledge of theology, you will recognise here the pure and simple doctrine of the Catholic Church concerning the relationship between work and grace. You find here again the rejection of Pelagianism, according to which it is only work (or effort) which counts, and also of Luther's Protestantism, according to which it is only grace which counts. You find here the doctrine of the Catholic Church — *natura vulnerata, non deleta*— is also implied, i.e. that Nature is not entirely corrupt in consequence of the Fall, but that it preserves a virgin element and that consequently there is also an element in human nature which is therefore capable of effort and work which *counts*.

Thus, does Christian Hermeticism simply borrow the fundamental principles of its Hermetic-philosophical teaching from Catholic theology?

It should not be forgotten that Christian Hermeticism is not a religion apart, nor a church apart, nor even a science apart, which would compete with religion, with the Church, or with science. It is the connecting link (hyphen) between mysticism, gnosis and magic, expressed through symbolism—symbolism being the means of expression of the dimensions of *depth* and *height* (and therefore of

enstasy and ecstasy), of all that is universal (which corresponds to the dimension of *breadth*), and of all that is traditional (corresponding to the dimension of *length*). Being Christian, Hermeticism accepts the cross of the universality, the tradition, the depth and the height of Christianity, in the sense of the apostle Paul when he said:

That you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have power to comprehend with all the saints *what is the breadth and length and height and depth*, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. (Ephesians iii, 18-19)

This is the complete formula of initiation.

Now, in aspiring to knowledge and experience of the depth and height of Universal Christianity — i.e. Catholic and traditional, that is, of the Church - Hermeticism borrows nothing and cannot borrow anything from the Church, since it is nothing other, and *is unable* to be anything other, than an aspect of the Church itself, namely the aspect of its dimension of depth and height. It is therefore flesh of its flesh and blood of its blood; it does *not borrow* from the Church, since it *is part of it*. It is the *invisible* aspect of universality (in space) and tradition (in time), both of which become visible in the Church. For the Church is not only universal and traditional, but also profound and sublime. Now, Christian Hermeticism is only the *vertical aspect*, i.e. that of depth and height, of the Church. This in no way means to say that individual Hermeticists will be in possession of all that is profound and sublime (i.e. all the esotericism) of the Church; it means to say only that one is a Christian Hermeticist in so far as one has consciousness of the depth and height of the universal tradition of Christianity and that each person who has this experience and consciousness represents Christian Hermeticism. Then, are all the Church doctors who teach the way of spiritual experience beyond theoretical theology, and all the saints and mystics of the Church who have had this experience, at the same time Hermeticists? Yes, they are in so far as they are witnesses and representatives of the profound and sublime in Christianity. They all have much to say to modern Hermeticists, who have much to learn from them. Take for example *De triplici via* ("The Threefold Way") by St. Bonaventura; there you will read:

Note, lastly, what the Truth must be:

1. In the first Hierarchy:

evoked by the utterance of prayer,  
work of the Angels;  
heard in study and reading,  
work of the Archangels;  
announced through example and preaching,  
work of the Principalities.

2. In the second Hierarchy:  
 joined with as refuge and place of indulgence,  
 work of the Powers;  
 apprehended through zeal and emulation,  
 work of the Virtues;  
 conjoined with in self-deprecation and mortification,  
 work of the Dominions.
3. In the third Hierarchy:  
 worshipped through sacrifice and praise,  
 work of the Thrones;  
 admired through ecstasy (going out of oneself)  
 and contemplation,  
 work of the Cherubim;  
 embraced in kiss and dilection *{amplectanda per  
 osculum et dilectionem}*,  
 work of the Seraphim.

Note diligently what I say here,  
 because this is a fountain of life.

(St. Bonaventura, *De triplici via*, iii, 14)

Just a brief fragment to furnish material for years of meditation! Can one, being a Hermeticism allow oneself to ignore such testimonies (and there are hundreds of them) of the spiritual world and its authentic experience? Fabre d'Olivet, Eliphas Levi, Saint-Yves d'Alveydre, Guaita, Papus and Peladan certainly merit being studied—just as do so many others of Hermetic and occult movements— but studying them alone does not suffice. Are they the only authentic witnesses and are their works the only first-hand sources of the reality of the spiritual world and experience of it? Let us therefore take heed of *all* those who know through experience, and let us seek in the first place for the *authenticity* of the experience instead of for erudition and theoretical speculation.

But let us return to the theme of temptation. It is threefold, as we have seen, we are able therefore to speak of three fundamental temptations which relate to the three fundamental conditions of the state of grace from paradise, or to the three vows which form the basis of all spiritual culture following the Fall: obedience, poverty and chastity. This is the *practical* meaning of the hexagram or the seal of Solomon: . This seal is that of the memory of paradise and the Fall, i.e. it concerns the *Law* (Torah). For the Law is the child of paradise and the temptation.

Since the New Alliance is the fulfillment of the Old, the work of redemption began with the repetition of the three primordial temptations. But this time it was the Son of Man who was tempted, and the temptation took place not in the garden of Eden but rather in a terrestrial wilderness. And this time it was not the

serpent ("the most artful amongst animals of the fields") who tempted him, but the "prince of this world", i.e. the "new man", the "superman" or the *other*"son of man"—who, if incarnated, would be the realisation of the promise of freedom made by the serpent.

Antichrist, the ideal of biological and historical *evolution without grace*, is not an individuality or entity created by God, but rather the *egregore* or phantom generated through the biological and historical evolution opened up by the serpent, who is the author and master of the biological and historical evolution that science studies and teaches. The antichrist is the ultimate *product* of this evolution without grace and not an entity *created* by God—the act of divine *creation* being always, without exception, an act of grace. He is therefore an *egregore*, an artificial being who owes his existence to collective generation *from below*.

Let us ponder, therefore, on the notion of "*egregore*" with a view to understanding better what the antichrist is—this important and enigmatic figure of esotericism and Christian Hermeticism, who is at the same time the source of the temptation in the wilderness.

To begin with, here is what Robert Ambelain says in *La Kabbale pratique*:

One gives the name *egregore* to a *force* generated by a powerful spiritual current and then nourished at regular intervals, according to a rhythm in harmony with the universal life of the cosmos, or to a *union of entities* united by a common characteristic nature. (Robert Ambelain. *La Kabbale pratique*, Paris. 1951. p. 175)

This is a definition which leaves nothing more to be desired. It is unfortunately muddled up by the paragraph which immediately follows:

In the Invisible, beyond the physical perception of man. exist artificial beings—generated by devotion, enthusiasm and fanaticism—that one names *egregores*. These are the souls of great spiritual currents, good or evil. The *Mystical Church*, *Heavenly Jerusalem*, the *Body of Christ* and all these synonymous names are the epithets that one commonly gives to the *egregore* of Catholicism. Freemasonry, Protestantism, Islam, Buddhism are *egregores*. Great political ideologies are other *egregores*. (*ibid.*, p. 175)

Here is a singular mixture of truth and falsehood. What is true here is that invisible artificial collectively-engendered beings exist, i.e. that *egregores* are real; but what is false is the confusion of things which are of an entirely different nature (the "Body of Christ" and "political ideologies"! ) without distinguishing the substance here. Because if one classifies the Mystical Church, the Body of Christ, Freemasonry and Buddhism as *egregores*, i.e. as "artificial beings generated by devotion, enthusiasm and fanaticism", why not consider God also as an *egregore*?

No there are superhuman spiritual entities which are not artificially engendered, which manifest themselves and *reveal* themselves. The confusion between that which descends from above and that which is engendered from below is, moreover, very widespread amongst materialistic scientists as also amongst occultists. Thus, many biologists consider the unity of consciousness—or the human soul—as the phenomenon or sum-product of millions of points of consciousness belonging to the cells of the organism's nervous system. For them the "soul" is only an *egregore* engendered collectively by millions of individual cells. But this is not so. The *egregore* of the cells certainly exists—this is the *phantom*, of an electromagnetic nature, which resists decomposition after death for some time and which can manifest in "haunted houses", etc. But this phantom has nothing to do either with the soul itself or with the subtle bodies (etheric or life body, and astral or soul body) with which the soul is clothed in addition to the physical body.

Now, to say that the Mystical Church or the Body of Christ, for example, is an *egregore* is to advance the thesis that it is a phantom engendered by millions of believers, just as the phantoms of the dead are engendered by millions of cells. The confusion of the *soul* and the *phantom* is a sufficiently serious error. No less serious is the case of confusion of *revelations* and *inventions*—of spiritual beings who reveal themselves *from above*, and *egregores* engendered artificially from below. Because *egregores*, as powerful as they may be, have only an ephemeral existence, whose duration depends entirely on galvanising nourishment on the part of their creators. However, it is the souls and spirits from above—forming, inspiring and directing communities of human beings—who nourish and vivify human souls: for example, Archangels (who are the spirits of nations); Principalities (Archai or "time spirits"); the spiritual entity which is behind Tibetan Buddhism; not to mention Christ, whose Flesh and Blood each day vivifies and unites the Church (Christ's Mystical Body). *Egregores* are therefore nourished by men, whilst the latter are nourished by souls and spirits from above.

Nevertheless, although God, Christ, the Holy Virgin, the spiritual hierarchies, the saints, the Church (or the Mystical Body of Christ) are real entities, there still exists also a phantom or *egregore* of the Church, which is its "double", just as every man, every nation, every religion, etc., have their "doubles". But just as he who sees in Russia, for example, only the bear, in France only the cock and in Germany only the wolf, is being unfair towards the country of the Heart, the country of Intelligence and the country of Initiative—so is one being unjust towards the Catholic Church when one sees, instead of the Mystical Body of Christ, only its historical phantom, the fox. In order to see rightly one has to look rightly. And to look rightly means to endeavour to see through the mists of the phantoms of things. This is one of the principal practical precepts of Christian Hermeticism. It is thanks to the effort to see through the phantoms that one arrives at knowledge of the depth and height spoken of by the apostle Paul, which is the very essence of Hermeticism.

Regarding the antichrist, this is the *phantom of the whole of mankind*, the

being engendered through the whole historical evolution of humanity. He is the "superman" who haunts the consciousness of all those who seek to elevate themselves through their own effort, without grace. He appeared to Friedrich Nietzsche and showed him "in an instant all the kingdoms of the world" which have existed, exist and will exist, in the circle of eternal return (*die ewige Wiederkehr*) he invited him to cast himself down into the domain which is beyond good and evil (*Jenseits von Gut und Bose*), and to embrace and announce the gospel of evolution, the gospel of the will-to-power (*Wille zur Macht*) — *this*, and this alone ("Gott ist tot...". i.e. "God is dead"), transforms stone (inorganic matter) into bread (organic matter), and organic matter into animal, and animal into man, and man into superman (*Uebersch*), who is beyond good and evil and who obeys only his own will ("*O mein Wille, meine Notwendigkeit. du bist mein Gesetz. . .*").

He appeared to Karl Marx and showed him "in an instant all the kingdoms of the world" where all the slaves of the past are transformed into sovereign masters who no longer obey either God, having dethroned him, or Nature, having subjugated her, and who eat their bread which they owe solely to their own knowledge and effort in transforming stone into bread.

And the phantom of humanity has appeared to many others. He appeared also to the Son of Man in the desert. This was the meeting of divine Law made flesh and the law of the serpent—biological and historical evolution—made soul.

Divine Law is grace; it is the activity descending from the Holy Trinity which was revealed forty days before the temptation in the wilderness, when the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan was accomplished by John the Baptist. The law of the serpent is the action of the will moving gropingly forward, snaking through epochs and layers of biological evolution, passing from form to form; it is the triad of the will-to-power, the "groping trial" and the transformation of that which is gross into that which is subtle.

Vertical trinitarian grace and the triadic spirit of horizontal evolution met, therefore, in the consciousness of the Son of Man forty days after the baptism in the Jordan. Then the three temptations of the Son of Man took place. And just as the baptism in the Jordan is the prototype of the Holy Sacrament of Baptism, so is the meeting of grace (received at the baptism in the Jordan) with the quintessence of the evolutionary impulse since the Fall the prototype of the Holy Sacrament of Confirmation. For it is then that grace from above is firmly established against the law from below. It is then that evolution gives way to grace.

The three temptations of the Son of Man in the wilderness were his experience of the directing impulses of evolution, namely the will-to-power, the "groping trial" and the transformation of the gross into the subtle. They signify at the same time the test of the three vows—the vows of obedience, chastity and poverty.

It is with the last trial that Matthew (ch. iv) begins his account of the temptation of Jesus Christ. For the celestial fullness (*pleroma*) which descended at the time of the baptism in the Jordan brought with it the corresponding terrestrial

emptiness (*kenoma*), which is expressed in the Gospel account by the solitude, the wilderness and the fasting.

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And he fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterward he was hungry. (Matthew iv, 1-2)

*Hunger of the spirit*, the soul and the body is the experience of *emptiness* or poverty. It is therefore the vow of poverty which is put to the test when "the tempter came and said to him: If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread" (Matthew iv, 3). "Command these stones to become loaves of bread"—this is the very essence of the aspiration of humanity in the scientific epoch, namely to victory over poverty. Synthetic resins, synthetic rubber, synthetic fibre, synthetic vitamins, synthetic proteins and. . . eventually synthetic bread!—When? Soon, perhaps. Who knows?

"Command these stones to become bread"—this is the formula of evolution in the sense of "transformism" belonging to the mentality of some academics, who teach that the plant kingdom (i.e. "bread") is only a transformation of the mineral kingdom (i.e. "these stones"), and that consequently organic matter ("bread") is only the result of the physical and chemical regrouping of little molecules into giant molecules ("macromolecules") in the process of "polymerisation". Polymerisation is therefore considered today by a number of scientists as the possible—even probable—equivalent of the operation proposed by the tempter in the wilderness, namely the transformation of stones into bread.

The operation proposed by the tempter is at the same time the dominant motif of the doctrines overrunning the world today which regard the economic life as primary and the spiritual life as its epiphenomenon or as an "ideological superstructure" upon the economic basis. That which is below is primary and that which is above is secondary, since it is matter which engenders spirit—such is the dogma commonly underlying "economicism" and "transformism", and the statement made by the tempter to the Son of Man. And this was his reply to this dogma: Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God" (Matthew iv. 4).

Let us ponder on this formula.

It expresses, in the first place, the essence of the vow of poverty. For the vow of poverty is to live as much from the word which comes from the mouth of God as from the bread which enters the mouth of man. Then it *adds* to the law of biological nourishment, where the kingdoms *lower* than man serve him food, the new law of grace, where it is the kingdom *higher* than man, the kingdom of heaven, which feeds him. This means to say that not only the spirit and the soul of man are able to *live*, i.e. to receive impulses, forces and substances from above, but also his body. The vivifying spiritual effect of divine magic or grace with respect to the spiritual and psychic life is the millennial-old common experience of sincere Christians, but it is less known that there were—and there are—cases where the

body itself can go without any food for a lapse of time sufficient to cause death from biological hunger a hundred-fold. Thus, Teresa Neumann lived in our time at Konnersreuth (Bavaria) solely from Holy Communion for decades; St. Catherine of Siena lived nine years from Holy Communion alone; St. Lidvina of Schiedam (near Rotterdam, Holland) likewise lived for many years exclusively from Holy Communion—to cite only the cases that are well-verified.

This is the *significance* of the words: "Man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God." Here is its principal implication: as the law of evolution, the law of the serpent, comprises the struggle for existence and as "bread" or food is the principal factor in the struggle for existence, the fact of the entry of grace into human history since Jesus Christ signifies at the same time the possibility of gradually abolishing the struggle for existence. It is therefore the vow of poverty which will abolish it.

Then the devil took him to the holy city, and set him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to him: If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down; for it is written, "He will give his Angels charge of you," and "On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone." Jesus said to him: Again it is written, "You shall not tempt the Lord your God!" (Matthew iv, 5-7)

This is the "groping trial", to which natural evolution owes much, which speaks this time. It is the *method of* so-called natural evolution which has replaced since the Fall the world created by God (i.e. "paradise"). Because evolution proceeds gropingly from form to form, trying and rejecting, then trying anew. . . The world of evolution from protozoa to vertebrates and from vertebrates to mammals and then to apes and to *pithecanthropus* is neither the accomplishment of absolute wisdom nor absolute goodness. It is rather the work of a really vast intelligence and a very resolute will pursuing a definite aim determined by the method of "trial and error". One could say that it is a matter more of a great scientific intellect and the will of an experimenter which is revealed in natural evolution (the existence of which one can no longer deny), rather than divine wisdom and goodness. The tableau of evolution that the natural sciences—above all biology—have at last obtained as the result of prodigious work reveals to us *without any doubt* the work of a very subtle, but imperfect, intellect and a very determined, but imperfect, will. It is therefore the serpent, "the most artful animal of the fields", that the world of biological evolution reveals to us, and not God. It is the serpent who is the "prince of this world", and who is the author and director of the purely biological evolution following the Fall. Read *The Phenomenon of Man* by Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, which gives the best summary and interpretation that I know of natural evolution; study this book and you *could not* arrive at any other conclusion than that the world of evolution is the work of the serpent of paradise, and that it is only since the prophetic religions (of which there were many) and

Christianity that the "good news" (*evangelion*) of another way than that of the evolution of the serpent exists.

[slow, the tempter proposed to the Son of Man the method to which he owes his existence: the trial. "Throw yourself down and it will be seen if it is true that you are the Son of God and that you are not as I am, the son of evolution, son of the serpent." This was the temptation of chastity. For, as we have shown above, the spirit of chastity excludes all trial. The *trial* is the very essence of what the Bible designates as "fornication". Fornication—as, moreover, every other vice and also every virtue—is threefold: spiritual, psychic and carnal. Its root is spiritual; the region of its deployment and growth is that of the soul; and the flesh is simply the domain where it fructifies. It is thus that spiritual error becomes vice and vice becomes sickness.

For this reason the prophets of Israel stigmatised the spiritual fornication of the people of the Old Alliance each time that they let themselves be seduced by the cults of "strange gods"—Bel, Moloch and Astarte. These gods were only *egregores*—creatures of the collective human imagination and will—whilst the Holy One of Israel was the *revealed* God, unimaginable though he was, having no other relationship with the human will than that of the Law imposed upon it. This is why the "strange gods" had a singular attraction for the Israelites, being the gods of "this world" and not the transcendent God of revelation, obedience to which was to return to live in a *spiritual monastery* in relation to "this world and its gods". They were always being tempted to throw themselves from the height and isolation of the pinnacle of the temple above into the layers of collective instinct below, and to test whether there would be "Angels who will bear you up lest you strike your foot against a stone", i.e. to try to find in the near and dense layers of the forces of natural evolution directing and protecting forces with less effort than in the height and rare air surrounding the pinnacle of the revealed God's temple. The principle of spiritual fornication is therefore the preference of the subconscious to the conscious and superconscious. of instinct to the Law, and of the world of the serpent to the world of the WORD.

Just as the first two temptations are directed at the vows of holy poverty and holy chastity, so is the third temptation (according to the Gospel of Matthew) directed at the vow of holy obedience. This time it is a matter of the will-to-power, the Nietzschean *Wille zur Macht*.

Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory; and he said to him: All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me. Then Jesus said to him: Begone, Satan! for it is written, "You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve." (Matthew iv, 8-10)

Let us note the elements of this temptation: the very high mountain, all the kingdoms of the world and their glory, worship of he who has the power to rise

to the top of the mountain and there to give possession of everything in the kingdoms of *his* world.

It is a matter, therefore, of accepting the ideal of the superman ("fall down and worship me"), who is the summit of evolution ("he took him to a very high mountain") and who, having passed through the mineral, plant, animal and human kingdoms, subjecting them to his power, is lord over them, i.e. he is their final cause or aim and ideal, their representative or their collective concentrated will, and he is their master, who has taken their subsequent evolution into his hands. Now, the choice here is between the ideal of the superman, who is "as God", and God himself.

Holy obedience is therefore faithfulness to the living God himself; revolt or disobedience is the decision taken in favour of the superman, who personifies the will-to-power.

The sixth Arcanum of the Tarot "The Lover", although it puts in relief only the temptation of chastity, evokes the whole range of ideas of the three temptations and the three vows—with the three temptations in paradise and those in the wilderness being inseparable in reality—just as the three vows are also. Because one cannot be "chaste" without being "poor" and "obedient", just as one cannot renounce the divine ideal in favour of the ideal of the superman without at the same time falling into the region of trial (experimentation), where there is no immediate certainty, and into the region of the law of the serpent formulated as follows: "You shall go upon your belly and you shall eat dust all the days of your life" (Genesis iii. 14), i.e. the region where there is no grace.

But what is the immediate consequence of resisting temptation? The Gospel account gives the answer here, as follows:

Then the devil left him. and behold, Angels *came and ministered to him.* (Matthew iv, 11)

This response belongs to the range of ideas and facts of the seventh Arcanum of the Tarot "The Chariot", whose Card represents a man standing on a triumphal chariot drawn by two horses.