

THE RIDDLE OF THE UNIVERSE

I. Each human individual, like every other higher animal, is a single simple cell at the commencement of his existence.

II. This "stem-cell" (cytula) is formed in the same manner in all cases—that is, by the blending or copulation of two separate cells of diverse origin, the female ovum and the male spermatozoon.

III. Each of these sexual cells has its own "cell-soul"—that is, each is distinguished by a peculiar form of sensation and movement.

IV. At the moment of conception or impregnation, not only the protoplasm and the nuclei of the two sexual cells coalesce, but also their "cell-souls"; in other words, the potential energies which are latent in both, and inseparable from the matter of the protoplasm, unite for the formation of a new potential energy, the "germ-soul" of the newly constructed stem-cell.

V. Consequently each personality owes his bodily and spiritual qualities to both parents; by heredity the nucleus of the ovum contributes a portion of the maternal features, while the nucleus of the spermatozoon brings a part of the father's characteristics.

By these empirical facts of conception, moreover, the further fact of extreme importance is established, that every man, like every other animal, *has a beginning of existence*; the complete copulation of the two sexual cell-nuclei marks the precise moment when not only the body, but also the "soul," of the new stem-cell makes its appearance. This fact suffices of itself to destroy the myth of the immortality of the soul, to which we shall return later on. It suffices, too, for the destruction of the still prevalent superstition that man owes his personal existence to the favor of God. Its origin is rather to be attributed solely to the "eros"