

CHAPTER V

ASPECTS IN TERMS OF THE SIGNS

TEXTBOOKS commonly deal with the various aspects between bodies. But, perforce, they leave the student to consider for himself what modification will be introduced into the textbook descriptions by the signs which the aspecting planets, in each particular instance, may occupy.

A book that contained every possible aspect in every possible sign-combination would be, of course, almost inconceivable. And even this would not be final, by any means. For though I might by diligent search find, let us say, twenty examples of Sun trine Mars, Aries to Leo, yet these twenty cases would not be in the least comparable. *No aspect can really be abstracted from the horoscope to which it belongs and treated as self-existent.* Such abstractions are made—our textbooks consist of little else. But all must recognise that they are in the highest degree artificial and correspond to nothing in Nature. Their excuse is that nothing else is humanly possible.

In this Chapter the design is to reverse the usual procedure, and, instead of treating the planetary contacts without reference to the signs, to treat aspects in terms of the signs without referring, except incidentally, to the planets that may be involved.

And it is believed that this approach will be found to be informative and worth while. If all aspects between Sun and Mars, for example, will be discovered upon examination to have something in common, irrespective of whether they fall in the fire, air, earth or water triplicities, so it is claimed that all aspects between let us say Aries and Leo, or any other two signs, will have a common element in

their significance, irrespective of the bodies forming them. Naturally this common element will be affected, and often largely obscured, by the qualities of the bodies ; but it will still be there.

In examining the signs, preparatory to this work, we have to note their various classifications.

We have already dealt with that of Positive and Negative.

There is the tendency of the first two or three to crudity and practicality and the corresponding propensity of the last two or three to idealism.

There is the distinction between the limited scope of the first six and the expanded expression of the second six, of which more in a later chapter.

Furthermore, there is the division into three Quadruplicities.

There are the four Triplicities or symbolic Elements.

There is the division, not so often noticed and yet very important, between the Fire and the Water signs ruled by the Lights, Jupiter and Mars, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, the Air and Earth signs ruled by Mercury, Venus and Saturn. We have no name for this division or for Fire-Water in contrast to Air-Earth, but the contrast is real and important. Fire and Water are emotional ; Air and Earth mental. In each case the positive is upward-tending or anabasic and the negative is downward-tending or catabasic.

Fire symbolises at its lowest level animal spirits ; thence it moves up the scale of manifestation to aspiration and (combined with Air) the creative imagination. Water exhibits its quality in forms to which we apply such words as moods and humours, the personal and downward-tending passions and desires.

If, emotionally, we can relate Fire to joy, so we must link Water with sorrow. We might go further and claim

that they have, respectively, an affinity with Life and Death.

The two principles are well portrayed in Tennyson's poem "The Two Voices." They are the spirit that affirms and the spirit that denies.

But, as we must emphasise, there is in Nature a movement towards the normal which compensates for excessive tendencies in one direction. Fire, despite its glorious uprush of vivid life, can collapse badly. Water, for all its melancholic proclivity, may exhibit tenacity and patient endurance. Not all suicides, for example, are of the Water type

Morally, too, Fire may be careless of others or at least lack understanding, whereas Water will show sympathy and understanding

In the practical life Fire is apt to be too venturesome and Water too timid, yet, because of its very weakness, the latter can be shrewd and discerning, prudent and forethoughtful.

If these two elements are strong, to the detriment of the Air-Earth representation, the nature is obviously over-prone to emotionalism.

Air is, in its highest manifestation, pure intellect and (combined with Fire) creative imagination. In lower types it inclines to useless day-dreaming and indolence but is associative, friendly and harmless, without depth of feeling.

Earth is the practical mind, which in its lower expressions tends, like Air, to be lazy, and also to be coarse, narrow-minded and stupid.

We will now consider the significance of the various combinations of the signs when linked by aspect, beginning with the eighteen possible sign-contacts that arise by square and opposition. There are six groups, each with three specific types :

Thus,

1. Fire square Water	{	Y—♁
		♂—♎
		♃—♊
2. Earth square Air	{	♁—♁
		♎—♎
		♊—♊
3. Fire square Earth	{	Y—♁
		♂—♁
		♃—♎
4. Air square Water	{	♎—♊
		♁—♁
		♁—♎
5. Fire opposition Air	{	Y—♊
		♂—♁
		♃—♎
6. Earth opposition Water	{	♁—♎
		♎—♊
		♁—♁

(1) Squares between bodies in Fire and Water generate great strength, even violence, and are potential sources of tragedy. Yet they occur frequently in the genitures of successful and gifted men. One does not need to look far, in a collection of the maps of famous people, to find examples of this type.

The propensity to excessive feeling may surge up into uncontrollable anger or virtuous indignation, or it may decline into sentimentality.

(a) Aries-Cancer. This is represented by Annie

Besant, the "passionate pilgrim," Isadora Duncan, the classic dancer, Mrs. Eddy, Von Keyserling, the German philosopher, G. B. Shaw, and Gandhi. It might be called the square of the stormy petrel.

(b) Leo-Scorpio. This seems much less often present in maps of the famous. It is potentially a difficult emplacement for the square contact. It may nourish bitterness, soured by the memory of ancient wrongs; it may be vindictive; the emotional life will be swept by penetrating grief. It would make a good position for a satirist; indeed we find that it is present in the natus of William Blake, who wrote some mordant lines. The fixed nature of the signs congeals and deepens the feelings.

(c) Sagittarius-Pisces. By reason of the mutable "sattvic" nature of the signs, this presents a much less difficult problem. There is likely to be excess of feeling and sentiment, with emotional restlessness, particularly about problems of the intellect. It is, because both signs are Jovian, prone to prodigality.

Cases are—King Edward VII, Chopin, P. B. Das, Indian anarchist, and Vaillant, French anarchist, Charles Dickens, Thomas Hardy, Sir Isaac Newton.

A careful study of these examples will show how the characteristics of the formation worked out; sometimes it is all too obvious. But it seems undeniable that such squares are far from hostile to success. As we have said, they generate power.

So much for Fire-Water interplay.

(2) As we have said, both Air and Earth relate to the mental life, to thought.

(a) Taurus-Aquarius exhibits the contrast between a socially-minded and idealistic attitude and a self-regarding one. Persons whose genitures show this type of square are often engaged on commerce or finance

on the one hand and on scientific pursuits or philanthropy on the other. One calls to mind Lord Avebury (Sir John Lubbock) the banker, archaeologist and naturalist, and on referring to the positions on his birthday (30 April, 1834) the author was interested to find that he had the Sun in Taurus and the Moon in Aquarius. The combination does not seem to produce strong psychological stress and some might regard the division of interests as adding to the pleasures of life (on which subject Lord Avebury wrote a book) rather than detracting from them. Air is an accommodating and normalising influence.

Disabling physical precipitation may be present ; and as an example in point we may quote the natus of Franklin D. Roosevelt, where, however, the afflictions are notably severe. The native's desire to better the material conditions (Taurus) of the people (Aquarius) is true to this type. Lord Avebury instituted bank holidays in Britain.

At best this combination stands for practical idealism, or science and sense.

It may be observed (though we shall revert to the point at a later stage) that Aquarius stands for the so-called herd-instinct, or gregarious aspect of human life. Hence afflictions that involve this sign denote either that the native is unable to adapt himself to social life or that the social life around him for some reason rejects him. And conversely when the sign is harmoniously integrated with the horoscope.

It will be clear that none of the Earth-Air squares are as difficult in their nature as those between Fire and Water.

(b) Virgo-Gemini: Here we have two signs both common in nature and ruled by the same planet, and the squares here are also less dangerous than many, though they may produce discontent, due to the frustra-

tion of the higher Element Air by the lower Earth, and this may manifest as a captious attitude, hard to please and given to bitter feelings and remarks. The square usually generates high mental activity and intelligence of no mean order, though there may be physical indolence.

Perhaps one of the main weaknesses of the class is lack of incentive ; they are apt to find nothing worth while. There is a tendency to bookishness and seclusion.

Naturally much must depend on the strength of Mercury in cases such as these. If it is severely afflicted, dishonesty and sharp practice may occur.

(c) Capricorn-Libra : This type tends to polish, gravity and a certain aloofness. It would befit a statesman, diplomat or professional man, particularly a specialist.

Curiously enough it occurs in the birth-figures both of Gladstone and Disraeli.

It is the very antithesis of the Aries-Cancer square (as might be expected) ; here there is no Berserk rage, but a cool and collected attitude, seemingly detached but actually watching all things carefully. It would be the perfect civil servant, at least as Tallyrand defined him " completely efficient and entirely devoid of zeal."

We have now discussed the contacts between Elements which belong to the same one of the two primary divisions of the zodiac. That is, between Fire-Water (both emotional) and between Air-Earth (both mental). We come next to those conflicts which cut across this division, that is, between Fire and Earth and between Air and Water. These, of course, are basically different in their nature. Those that we have already dealt with tend to be *exaggerative* in character ; they lead to excess of emotion or of mind. In the class we shall now discuss mind and

emotion directly clash ; we do not find an exaggeration of either, but a struggle for mastery between the two.

(3) Fire square Earth seems an obviously difficult combination.

It is pre-eminently the *square of objective frustration*, of not getting what you want. The emotional nature, the desires, meet here the solid facts of the objective world which say "Nay" to them. If the signs are occupied by bodies of like nature (as for example the Sun in Fire and Saturn in Earth) then the effects will of course be all the clearer and more drastic—this point applies, one need hardly say, to all these studies.

It is, therefore, the quadrature of hard struggle. We find it, for instance, in the cases of J. M. Barrie and the great Hahnemann, and, quite strongly, in Adolf Hitler, who had an earthly planet (Saturn) in Fire and a fiery planet (Mars) in Earth. Indeed it is present in Winston Churchill's map—Moon in Virgo square Sun in Sagittarius. It brought the pride of Louis XIV (Mercury in Virgo square Mars in Sagittarius) into difficulties.

It will be seen that this formation does not necessarily spell defeat, either interior or exterior. As regards the former, we refer to a nativity that was made the subject of a competition in "Astrology" for December, 1944. The native was born at Weymouth, Dorsetshire, on 1 August, 1864, at 00.30 a.m. Here Sun in Leo is square two planets in Taurus. She voluntarily and cheerfully forsook town life and lived in circumstances of extreme hardship all her life—and thoroughly enjoyed them. Thus free will enters in ; we cannot alter the main lines of our naticities, but we can certainly follow them readily or reluctantly according to our own determination. It is true that the "main lines" of our psychological qualities are also indicated by the horoscope of birth. Jupiter in Sagittarius is not Saturn in Capricorn ; but there is an

ordinate, as opposed to an inordinate, expression of both values.

A digression on Fate and Free will is hardly out of place here, for the Fire-Earth conflict is precisely concerned with this problem. It comes to a head here, and those who meditate deeply on it (and the philosophic astrologer can hardly avoid doing so) often have the related stress in their maps. One could quote Alan Leo again in this connection.

A "Young Spendthrift" (*Notable Nativities*, No. 260) who regarded himself as *fated* to waste his substance had, most appropriately, the Sun in Aries square Saturn in Capricorn.

Those who are confronted with the Fire-Earth problem, then, must expect obstruction to their life-expression. They need not, however, react in the idiotic manner that served this man for an excuse. They will rather decide, carefully and patiently, what they may wisely expect to obtain from life, and they will then accept the results of their efforts with good heart. Each case will vary, according to the bodies involved, the houses occupied, and the rest of the horoscope. The woman cited above had a free outlet for her afflicted Sun in a close trine of that luminary to Neptune. Others are not so fortunate. Had she set her heart on wealth, she would inevitably have been defeated, for the squares from Taurus must have proved too strong.

The extravagance of N.N. No. 260 was an act of silly bravado, as if one could prove one's indifference to Earth-limitation by flinging away what one has.

To take the Fire-Earth type under its three heads, we will begin with.

(a) the Aries-Capricorn square, which, in contrast to the Capricorn-Libra class, has an undercurrent of selfishness and tends to roughness and violence, as for

example the case of the mass-murderer Kuerten (born 3.30 a.m., 26 May, 1883, at Cologne) and *Notable Nativities* Nos. 56, 560 and 764.

It is less excitable than Aries-Cancer, but more cunning. It would probably find its best expression in some occupation involving skill in action with a modicum of difficulty and danger, as a life at sea or in pioneer colonisation. It would rebel strongly against a humdrum life.

(b) Leo-Taurus has violent possibilities, often with a motive of monetary gain. Landru, for instance, the French Bluebeard, had Pluto rising in Taurus in square to Mars in Leo. But the "incorruptible" Robespierre had Sun in Taurus square Neptune and Mars in Leo.

One might expect a strongly speculative element here in finance. There would be great stubbornness and probable pride.

Physical precipitation in the form of obstinate disease is likely. There is also the liability to emotional sorrows.

(c) Sagittarius-Virgo is a typically critical combination, Virgo striving to reduce to precise order and expression the ideas that the fiery sign perpetually throws off in the course of its intellectual explorings. It is unlikely to be a dangerous contact unless violent bodies are implicated; it will disperse its force in debate and disputation.

It is the sort of square one would expect to find in the maps of enthusiasts for theological controversy, and Henry VIII, who took his share in that form of activity, so much in vogue in his time, had a square in these signs, joined with that typically theological position, Jupiter in Gemini. His use of religious qualms in the matter of obtaining his divorce seems well in agreement with the square between the

self-regarding Virgo and Sagittarius. His daughter Elizabeth had a similar configuration.

(4) We come next to Air square Water, a conflict which is frequently productive of unhealthy mental conditions, including phobias, or irrational fears. This relationship is not difficult to understand. There is the impact between the reasoning mind and the all-various contents of the subconscious, with which Water is closely connected. So little kinship or resemblance is there between these two elements that difficulties of the above kind are sure to arise. It is like wedding a sylph, a delicate spirit of the Air, with a will-o'-the-wisp which is the unwholesome product of marsh and swamp. Reconciliation is impossible; disentanglement is difficult. Only the perpetual effort of nature to normalise, assisted by skilled psychological treatment, may avail to resolve the knots, or so-called complexes, that will appear. Vague fears, derived perhaps from remote experiences of the brain-cells in far-back ancestors, perhaps from shocks in infancy, or possibly from something as prosaic as gastric or hepatic trouble, creep towards and seek to derange the pure action of thought and reason.

If Fire-Earth represents the struggle between the will and the hard resistance of actuality, so this type stands for the struggle between reason and the irrational, mental order against the chaos of the unconscious. Much, as always, must depend upon the bodies involved in each particular example, but the underlying condition, shown by the signs, the essential background, is this.

(a) It may be proposed that the Gemini-Pisces square is less serious because the common signs have always a possibility of dispelling their difficulties in talk and discussion, and the fixed embedded quality of the usual "complex" is most likely to occur under the fixed signs. But circumstances arise when talk is impossible,

viz., in solitude, and the author has had cases of phobic dread of solitude (and of the dark—symbolical of negativity) under this square. Fear of insanity may also occur. I have also an example of obsession by a negro (again a symbol of the negative). The Empress of Mexico, who lost her reason after her husband's execution and developed a dread of poison, had this square, combined with other extremely heavy stresses.

All forms of fear are exaggerated if Saturn, who has his detriment in Cancer, the prime Water sign, is implicated.

At best this type would probably tend to superficial chatter and restlessness of mind and body, with a good deal of general kindness. For it may be said that almost any Piscean factor—and this includes Neptune—operates against harshness and roughness.

(b) The Libra-Cancer inhibitions are likely to affect *action*. Stage-fright is a good example, shyness another. The latter is a general condition arising in the presence of strangers; the former occurs in more special circumstances. Both arise from a sense of inadequacy which in certain situations paralyses the power to act, even when the reason assures the sufferer that there is nothing to fear. It seems as if the will is unable to exert its normal powers; there are some things which the native, though perhaps usually a quite normal person, "can't face."

That human beings, especially those brought up in large towns, should have a propensity towards this sort of inhibition, does not seem at all strange. Most of us are mere ciphers amongst thousands of others. As children we are dependent upon our parents, as employees upon our employer, in old age upon the kindness or even charity of others. Thus many live in a state of conscious fear and anxiety, whilst in others the conscious