

MAN'S GREATEST ACHIEVEMENT

Dr. Nikola Tesla

WHEN a child is born its sense-organs are brought in contact with the outer world.

The waves of sound, heat and light beat upon its feeble body, its sensitive nerve-fibres quiver, the muscles contract and relax in obedience: a gasp, a breath, and in this act a marvelous little engine, of inconceivable delicacy and complexity of construction, unlike any on earth, is hitched to the wheel-work of the Universe.

The little engine labors and grows, performs more and more involved operations, becomes sensitive to ever subtler influences and now there manifests itself in the fully developed being--Man--a desire mysterious, inscrutable and irresistible: to imitate nature, to create, to work himself the wonders he perceives.

Inspired to this task he searches, discovers and invents, designs and constructs, and enriches with monuments of beauty, grandeur and awe, the star of his birth.

He descends into the bowels of the globe to bring forth its hidden treasures and to unlock its immense imprisoned energies for his use.

He invades the dark depths of the ocean and the azure regions of the sky.

He peers into the innermost nooks and recesses of molecular structure and lays bare to his gaze worlds sublimely remote. He subdues and puts to his service the fierce, devastating spark of Prometheus, the titanic forces of the waterfall, the wind and the tide.

He tames the thundering bolt of Jove and annihilates time and space. He makes the great Sun itself his obedient toiling slave.

Such is his power and might that the heavens reverberate and the whole earth trembles by the mere sound of his voice.

What has the future in store for this strange being, born of a breath, of perishable tissue, yet immortal, with his powers fearful and divine? What magic will be wrought by him in the end? What is to be his noblest deed, his crowning achievement?

Long ago he recognized that all perceptible matter comes from a primary substance, of a tenuity beyond conception and filling all space--the Akasa or luminiferous ether--which is acted upon by the life-giving Prana or creative force, calling into existence, in never ending cycles, all things and phenomena.

The primary substance, thrown into infinitesimal whirls of prodigious velocity, becomes gross matter; the force subsiding, the motion ceases and matter disappears, reverting to the primary substance.

Can Man control this grandest, most awe-inspiring of all processes in nature? Can he harness her inexhaustible energies to perform all their functions at his bidding, more still--can he so refine his means of control as to put them in operation simply by the force of his will?

If he could do this he would have powers almost unlimited and supernatural. At his command, with but a slight effort on his part, old worlds would disappear, and new ones of his planning would spring into being.

He could fix, solidify and preserve the ethereal shapes of his imagining, the fleeting visions of his dreams. He could express all the creations of his mind, on any scale, in forms concrete and imperishable.

He could alter the size of this planet, control its seasons, guide it along any path he might choose through the depths of the Universe.

He could make planets collide and produce his suns and stars, his heat and light. He could originate and develop life in all its infinite forms.

To create and to annihilate material substance, cause it to aggregate in forms according to his desire, would be the supreme manifestation of the power of Man's mind, his most complete triumph over the physical world, his crowning achievement which would place him beside his Creator and fulfill his ultimate destiny.