

Let us take a very simple example of a Magical Act: that of a man blowing his nose. What are the conditions of the success of the Operation? Firstly, that the man's Will should be to blow his nose; secondly, that he should have a nose capable of being blown; thirdly, that he should have at command an apparatus capable of expressing his spiritual Will in terms of material force, and applying that force to the object which he desires to affect. His Will may be as strong and concentrated as that of Jupiter, and his nose may be totally incapable of resistance; but unless the link is made by the use of his nerves and muscles in accordance with psychological, physiological, and physical law, the nose will remain unblown through all eternity.

Writers on Magick have been unsparing in their efforts to instruct us in the preparation of the Will, but they seem to have imagined that no further precaution was necessary. There is a striking case of an epidemic of this error whose history is familiar to everybody. I refer to Christian Science, and the cognate doctrines of "mental healing" and the like. The theory of such people, stripped of dogmatic furbelows, is perfectly good Magic of its kind, its negroid kind. The idea is correct enough: matter is an illusion created by Will through mind, and consequently susceptible of alteration at the behest of its creator. But the practice has been lacking. They have not developed a scientific technique for applying the Will. It is as if they expected the steam of Watts' kettle to convey people from place to place without the trouble of inventing and using locomotives.

Let us apply these considerations to Magick in its restricted sense, the sense in which it was always understood until the Master Therion extended it to cover the entire operations of Nature.

What is the theory implied in such rituals as those of the Goetia? What does the Magician do? He applies himself to invoke a God, and this God compels the appearance of a spirit whose function is to perform the Will of the Magician at the moment. There is no trace of what may be called machinery in the method. The exorcist hardly takes the pains of preparing a material basis for the spirit to incarnate except the bare connection

of himself with his sigil. It is apparently assumed that the spirit already possesses the means of working on matter. The conception seems to be that of a schoolboy who asks his father to tell the butler to do something for him. In other words, the theory is grossly animistic. The savage tribes described by Frazer had a far more scientific theory. The same may be said of witches, who appear to have been wiser than the thaumaturgists who despised them. They at least made waxen images — identified by baptism — of the people they wished to control. They at least used appropriate bases for Magical manifestations, such as blood and other vehicles of animal force, with those of vegetable virtue such as herbs. They were also careful to put their bewitched products into actual contact — material or astral — with their victims. The classical exorcists, on the contrary, for all their learning, were careless about this essential condition. They acted as stupidly as people who should write business letters and omit to post them.

It is not too much to say that this failure to understand the conditions of success accounts for the discredit into which Magick fell until Eliphas Levi undertook the task of re-habilitating it two generations ago. But even he (profoundly as he studied, and luminously as he expounded, the nature of Magick considered as a universal formula) paid no attention whatever to that question of the Magical Link, though he everywhere implies that it is essential to the Work. He evaded the question by making the *petitio principii* of assigning to the Astral Light the power of transmitting vibrations of all kinds. He nowhere enters into detail as to how its effects are produced. He does not inform us as to the qualitative or quantitative laws of this light. (The scientifically trained student will observe the analogy between Levi's postulate and that of ordinary science *in re* the luminiferous ether.)

It is deplorable that nobody should have recorded in a systematic form the results of our investigations of the Astral Light. We have no account of its properties or of the laws which obtain in its sphere. Yet these are sufficiently remarkable. We may briefly notice that, in the Astral Light, two or more objects can

occupy the same space at the same time without interfering with each other or losing their outlines.

In that Light, objects can change their appearance completely without suffering change of Nature. The same thing can reveal itself in an infinite number of different aspects; in fact, it identifies itself by so doing, much as a writer or a painter reveals himself in a succession of novels or pictures, each of which is wholly himself and nothing else, but himself under varied conditions, though each appears utterly different from its fellows. In that Light one is "swift without feet and flying without wings"; one can travel without moving, and communicate without conventional means of expression. One is insensible to heat, cold, pain, and other forms of apprehension, at least in the shapes which are familiar to us in our bodily vehicles. They exist, but they are appreciated by us, and they affect us, in a different manner. In the Astral Light we are bound by what is, superficially, an entirely different series of laws. We meet with obstacles of a strange and subtle character; and we overcome them by an energy and cunning of an order entirely alien to that which serves us in earthly life. In that Light, symbols are not conventions but realities, yet (on the contrary) the beings whom we encounter are only symbols of the realities of our own nature. Our operations in that Light are really the adventures of our own personified thoughts. **The universe is a projection of ourselves; an image as unreal as that of our faces in a mirror, yet, like that face, the necessary form of expression thereof, not to be altered save as we alter ourselves.**<sup>1</sup> The mirror may

---

1. This passage must not be understood as asserting that the Universe is purely subjective. On the contrary, the Magical Theory accepts the absolute reality of all things in the most objective sense. But all perceptions are neither the observer nor the observed; they are representations of the relation between them. We cannot affirm any quality in an object as being independent of our sensorium, or as being in itself that which it seems to us. Nor can we assume that what we cognize is more than a partial phantom of its cause. We cannot even determine the meaning of such ideas as motion, or distinguish between time and space, except in relation to some particular observer. For example, if I fire a

be distorted, dull, clouded, or cracked; and to this extent, the reflection of ourselves may be false even in respect of its symbolic presentation. In that Light, therefore, all that we do is to discover ourselves by means of a sequence of hieroglyphics, and the changes which we apparently operate are in an objective sense illusions.

But the Light serves us in this way. It enables us to see ourselves, and therefore to aid us to initiate ourselves by showing us what we are doing. In the same way a watchmaker uses a lens, though it exaggerates and thus falsifies the image of the system of wheels which he is trying to adjust. In the same way, a writer employs arbitrary characters according to a meaningless convention in order to enable his reader by retranslating them to obtain an approximation to his idea.

Such are a few of the principal characteristics of the Astral Light. Its quantitative laws are much less dissimilar from those of material physics. Magicians have too often been foolish enough to suppose that all classes of Magical Operations were equally easy. They seem to have assumed that the "almighty power of God" was an infinite quantity in presence of which all finites were equally insignificant. "One day is with the Lord as a thousand years" is their first law of Motion. "Faith can move mountains" they say, and disdain to measure either the faith or the mountains. If you can kill a chicken by Magic, why not destroy an army with equal exertion? "With God all things are possible."

This absurdity is an error of the same class as that mentioned above. The facts are wholly opposed. Two and two make four in the Astral as rigorously as anywhere else. The distance of one's Magical target and the accuracy of one's Magical rifle are factors in the success of one's Magical shooting in just the same way as at Bisley. The law of Magical gravitation is as rigid as that of Newton. The law of Inverse Squares may not apply; but some

---

cannon twice at an interval of 3 hours, an observer on the Sun would note a difference of some 200,000 miles in space between the shots, while to me they seem "in the same place." Moreover, I am incapable of perceiving any phenomenon except by means of the arbitrary instruments of my senses; it is thus correct to say that the Universe as I know it is subjective, without denying its objectivity.

such law does apply. So it is for everything. You cannot produce a thunderstorm unless the materials exist in the air at the time, and a Magician who could make rain in Cumberland might fail lamentably in the Sahara. One might make a talisman to win the love of a shop-girl and find it work, yet be baffled in the case of a countess; or vice versâ. One might impose one's Will on a farm, and be crushed by that of a city; or vice versâ. The MASTER THERION himself, with all his successes in every kind of Magick, sometimes appears utterly impotent to perform feats which almost any amateur might do, because He has matched his Will against that of the world, having undertaken the Work of a Magus to establish the word of is Law on the whole of mankind. He will succeed, without doubt; but He hardly expects to see more than a sample of His product during His present incarnation. But He refuses to waste the least fraction of His force on works foreign to His WORK, however obvious it may seem to the onlooker that His advantage lies in commanding stones to become bread, or otherwise making things easy for Himself.

These considerations being thoroughly understood we may return to the question of making the Magical Link. In the case above cited FRATER PERDURABO composed His talisman by invoking His Holy Guardian Angel according to the Sacred Magick of Abramelin the Mage. That Angel wrote on the lamen the Word of the Aeon. The Book of the Law is this writing. To this lamen the MASTER THERION gave life by devoting His own life thereto. We may then regard this talisman, the Law, as the most powerful that has been made in the world's history, for previous talismans of the same type have been limited in their scope by conditions of race and country. Mohammed's talisman, Allah, was good only from Persia to the Pillars of Hercules. The Buddha's, Anatta, operated only in the South and East of Asia. The new talisman, Thelema, is master of the planet.

But now observe how the question of the Magical Link arises! No matter how mighty the truth of Thelema, it cannot prevail unless it is applied to and by mankind. As long as the Book of the Law was in Manuscript, it could only affect the small group amongst whom it was circulated. It had to be put into action by

the Magical Operation of publishing it. When this was done, it was done without proper perfection. Its commands as to how the work ought to be done were not wholly obeyed. There were doubt and repugnance in FRATER PERDURABO's mind, and they hampered His work. He was half-hearted. Yet, even so, then intrinsic power of the truth of the Law and the impact of the publication were sufficient to shake the world so that a critical war broke out; and the minds of men were moved in a mysterious manner. The second blow was struck by the re-publication of the Book in September 1913, and this time the might of this Magick burst out and caused a catastrophe to civilization. At this hour, the MASTER THERION is concealed, collecting his forces for a final blow. When the Book of the Law and its Comment is published, with the forces of His whole Will in perfect obedience to the instructions which have up to now been misunderstood or neglected, the result will be incalculably effective. The event will establish the kingdom of the Crowned and Conquering Child over the whole earth, and all men shall bow to the Law, which is "love under Will".

This is an extreme case; but there is one law only to govern the small as the great. The same laws describe and measure the motions of the ant and the stars. Their light is no swifter than that of a spark. In every operation of Magick the link must be properly made. The first requisite is the acquisition of adequate force of the kind required for the purpose. We must have electricity of a certain potential in sufficient amount if we wish to heat food in a furnace. We shall need a more intense current and a greater supply to light a city than to charge a telephone wire. No other kind of force will do. We cannot use the force of steam directly to impel an aeroplane, or to get drunk. We must apply it in adequate strength in an appropriate manner.

It is therefore absurd to invoke the spirit of Venus to procure us the love of an Empress, unless we take measures to transmit the influence of our work to the lady. We may for example consecrate a letter expressing our Will; or, if we know how, we may use some object connected with the person whose acts we are attempting to control, such as a lock of hair or a handkerchief

once belonging to her, and so in subtle connection with her aura. But for material ends it is better to have material means. We must not rely on fine gut in trolling for salmon. Our will to kill a tiger is poorly conveyed by a charge of small shot fired at a range of one hundred yards. Our talisman must, therefore, be an object suitable to the nature of our Operation, and we must have some such means of applying its force to such a way as will naturally compel the obedience of the portion of Nature which we are trying to change. If one will the death of a sinner, it is not sufficient to hate him, even if we grant that the vibrations of thought, when sufficiently powerful and pure, may modify the Astral light sufficiently to impress its intention to a certain extent on such people as happen to be sensitive. It is much surer to use one's mind and muscle in service of that hate by devising and making a dagger, and then applying the dagger to the heart of one's enemy. One must give one's hate a bodily form of the same order as that which one's enemy has taken for his manifestation. Your spirit can only come into contact with his by means of this magical manufacture of phantoms; in the same way, one can only measure one's mind (a certain part of it) against another man's by expressing them in some such form as the game of chess. One cannot use chessmen against another man unless he agree to use them in the same sense as you do. The board and men form the Magical Link by which you can prove your power to constrain him to yield. The game is a device by which you force him to turn down his king in surrender, a muscular act made in obedience to your will, though he may be twice your weight and strength.

These general principles should enable the student to understand the nature of the work of making the Magical Link. It is impossible to give detailed instructions, because every case demands separate consideration. It is sometimes exceedingly difficult to devise proper measures.

Remember that Magick includes all acts soever. Anything may serve as a Magical weapon. To impose one's Will on a nation, for instance, one's talisman may be a newspaper, one's triangle a church, or one's circle a Club. To win a woman, one's

pantacle may be a necklace; to discover a treasure, one's wand may be a dramatist's pen, or one's incantation a popular song.

Many ends, many means: it is only important to remember the essence of the operation, which is to will its success with sufficiently pure intensity, and to incarnate that will in a body suitable to express it, a body such that its impact on the bodily expression of the idea one wills to change is to cause it to do so. For instance, is it my will to become a famous physician? I banish all "hostile spirits" such as laziness, alien interests, and conflicting pleasures, from my "circle" the hospital; I consecrate my "weapons" (my various abilities) to the study of medicine; I invoke the "Gods" (medical authorities) by studying and obeying their laws in their books. I embody the "Formulae" (the ways in which causes and effects influence disease) in a "Ritual" (my personal style of constraining sickness to conform with my will). I persist in these conjurations year after year, making the Magical gestures of healing the sick, until I compel the visible appearance of the Spirit of Time, and make him acknowledge me his master. I have used the appropriate kind of means, in adequate measure, and applied them in ways pertinent to my purpose by projecting my incorporeal idea of ambition in a course of action such as to induce in others the incorporeal idea of satisfying mine. I made my Will manifest to sense; sense swayed the Wills of my fellow-men; mind wrought on mind through matter.

I did not "sit for" a medical baronetcy by wishing I had it, or by an "act of faith", or by praying to God "to move Pharaoh's heart", as our modern mental, or our mediaeval, mystic, miracle-mongers were and are muddlers and maudlin enough to advise us to do.

A few general observations on the Magical Link may not be amiss, in default of details; one cannot make a Manual of How to Go Courting, with an Open-Sesame to each particular Brigand's Cavern, any more than one can furnish a budding burglar with a directory containing the combination of every existing safe. But one can point out the broad distinctions between women who yield, some to flattery, some to eloquence, some to appearance, some to rank, some to wealth, some to ardour, and some to authority. We

cannot exhaust the combinations of Lover's Chess, but we may enumerate the principal gambits: the Bouquet, the Chocolates, the Little Dinner, the Cheque-Book, the Poem, the Motor by Moonlight, the Marriage Certificate, the Whip, and the Feigned Flight.

The Magical Link may be classified under three main heads; as it involves (1) one plane and one person, (2) one plane and two or more persons, (3) two planes.

In class (1) the machinery of Magick — the instrument — already exists. Thus, I may wish to heal my own body, increase my own energy; develop my own mental powers, or inspire my own imagination. Here the Exorcist and the Demon are already connected, consciously or subconsciously, by an excellent system of symbols. The Will is furnished by Nature with an apparatus adequately equipped to convey and execute its orders.

It is only necessary to inflame the Will to the proper pitch and to issue its commands; they are instantly obeyed, unless — as in the case of organic disease — the apparatus is damaged beyond the art of Nature to repair. It may be necessary in such a case to assist the internal "spirits" by the "purification" of medicines, the "banishing" of diet, or some other extraneous means.

But at least there is no need of any special device *ad hoc* to effect contact between the Circle and the Triangle. Operations of this class are therefore often successful, even when the Magician has little or no technical knowledge of Magick. Almost any duffer can "pull himself together", devote himself to study, break off a bad habit, or conquer a cowardice. This class of work, although the easiest, is yet the most important; for it includes initiation itself in its highest sense. It extends to the Absolute in every dimension; it involves the most intimate analysis, and the most comprehensive synthesis. In a sense, it is the sole type of Magick either necessary or proper to the Adept; for it includes both the attainment of the Knowledge and Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel, and the Adventure of the Abyss.

The second class includes all operations by which the Magician strives to impose his Will upon objects outside his own control, but within that of such other wills as are symbolised by means of

a system similar to his own. That is, they can be compelled naturally by cognate consciousness.

For instance, one may wish to obtain the knowledge put forth in this book. Not knowing that such a book exists, one might yet induce some one who knows of it to offer a copy. Thus one's operation would consist in inflaming one's Will to possess the knowledge to the point of devoting one's life to it, in expressing that will by seeking out people who seem likely to know what is needed, and in imposing it on them by exhibiting such enthusiastic earnestness that they will tell the enquirer that this book will meet his needs.

Does this sound too simple? Can this obvious common-sense course be really that marvellous Magick that frightens folk so? Yes, even this triviality is one instance of how Magick works.

But the above practical programme may be a fiasco. One might then resort to Magick in the conventional sense of the word, by constructing and charging a Pantacle appropriate to the object; this Pantacle should then cause a strain in the Astral Light such that the vibrations would compel some alien consciousness to restore equilibrium by bringing the book.

Suppose a severer and more serious aim; suppose that I wish to win a woman who dislikes me and loves somebody else. In this case, not only her Will, but her lover's must be overcome by my own. I have no direct control of either. But my Will is in touch with the woman's by means of our minds; I have only to make my mind the master of hers by the existing means of communication; her mind will then present its recantation to her Will, her Will repeal its decision, and her body submit to mine as the seal of her surrender.

Here the Magical Link exists; only it is complex instead of simple as in the First Class.

There is opportunity for all kinds of error in the transmission of the Will; misunderstanding may mar the matter; a mood may make mischief; external events may interfere; the lover may match me in Magick; the Operation itself may offend Nature in many ways; for instance, if there is a subconscious incompatibility between myself and the woman, I deceive myself into thinking

that I desire her. Such a flaw is enough to bring the whole operation to naught, just as no effort of Will can make oil mix with water.

I may work "naturally" by wooing, of course. But, magically, I may attack her astrally so that her aura becomes uneasy, responding no longer to her lover. Unless they diagnose the cause, a quarrel may result, and the woman's bewildered and hungry Body of Light may turn in its distress to that of the Magician who has mastered it.

Take a third case of this class 2. I wish to recover my watch, snatched from me in a crowd.

Here I have no direct means of control over the muscles that could bring back my watch, nor over the mind that moves these muscles. I am not even able to inform that mind of my Will, for I do not know where it is. But I know it to be a mind fundamentally like my own, and I try to make a Magical Link with it by advertising my loss in the hope of reaching it, being careful to calm it by promising it immunity, and to appeal to its own known motive by offering a reward. I also attempt to use the opposite formula; to reach it by sending my "familiar spirits", the police, to hunt it, and compel its obedience by threats.<sup>1</sup>

Again, a sorcerer might happen to possess an object belonging magically to a rich man, such as a compromising letter, which is really as much part of him as his liver; he may then master the will of that man by intimidating his mind. His power to publish the letter is as effective as if he could injure the man's body directly.

These "natural" cases may be transposed into subtler terms; for instance, one might master another man, even a stranger, by sheer concentration of will, ceremonially or otherwise wrought up to the requisite potential. But in one way or another that will must be

---

1. The ceremonial method would be to transfer to the watch — linked naturally to me by possession and use — a thought calculated to terrify the thief, and induce him to get rid of it at once. Observing clair-sciently this effect, suggest relief and reward as the result of restoring it.

made to impinge on the man; by the normal means of contact if possible, if not, by attacking some sensitive spot in his subconscious sensorium. But the heaviest rod will not land the smallest fish unless there be a line of some sort fixed firmly to both.

The Third Class is characterized by the absence of any existing link between the Will of the Magician and that controlling the object to be affected. (The Second Class may approximate to the Third when there is no possibility of approaching the second mind by normal means, as sometimes happens).

This class of operations demands not only immense knowledge of the technique of Magick combined with tremendous vigour and skill, but a degree of Mystical attainment which is exceedingly rare, and when found is usually marked by an absolute apathy on the subject of any attempt to achieve any Magick at all. Suppose that I wish to produce a thunderstorm. This event is beyond my control or that of any other man; it is as useless to work on their minds as my own. Nature is independent of, and indifferent to, man's affairs. A storm is caused by atmospheric conditions on a scale so enormous that the united efforts of all us Earth-vermin could scarcely disperse one cloud, even if we could get at it. How then can any Magician, he who is above all things a knower of Nature, be so absurd as to attempt to throw the Hammer of Thor? Unless he be simply insane, he must be initiated in a Truth which transcends the apparent facts. He must be aware that all Nature is a continuum, so that his mind and body are consubstantial with the storm, are equally expressions of One Existence, all alike of the self-same order of artifices whereby the Absolute appreciates itself. He must also have assimilated the fact that Quantity is just as much a form as Quality; that as all things are modes of One Substance, so their measures are modes of their relation. Not only are gold and lead mere letters, meaningless in themselves yet appointed to spell the One Name; but the difference between the bulk of a mountain and that of a mouse is no more than one method of differentiating them, just as the letter "m" is not bigger than the letter "i" in any real sense of the word.<sup>1</sup>

---

1. Professor Rutherford thinks it not theoretically impracticable to

Our Magician, with this in his mind, will most probably leave thunderstorms to stew in their own juice; but, should he decide (after all) to enliven the afternoon, he will work in the manner following.

First, what are the elements necessary for his storms? He must have certain stores of electrical force, and the right kind of clouds to contain it.

He must see that the force does not leak away to earth quietly and slyly.

He must arrange a stress so severe as to become at last so intolerable that it will disrupt explosively.

Now he, as a man, cannot pray to God to cause them, **for the Gods are but names for the forces of Nature themselves.**

But, *as a Mystic*, he knows that all things are phantoms of One Thing, and that they may be withdrawn therein to reissue in other attire. He knows that all things are in himself, and that he is All-One with the All. There is therefore no theoretical difficulty about converting the illusion of a clear sky into that of a tempest. On the other hand, he is aware, *as a Magician*, that illusions are governed by the laws of their nature. He knows that twice two is four, although both "two" and "four" are merely properties pertaining to One. He can only use the Mystical identity of all things in a strictly scientific sense. It is true that his experience of clear skies and storms proves that his nature contains elements cognate with both; for if not, they could not affect him. He is the Microcosm of his own Macrocosm, whether or no either one or the other extend beyond his knowledge of them. He must therefore arouse in himself those ideas which are clansmen of the Thunderstorm; collect all available objects of the same nature for talismans, and proceed to excite all these to the utmost by a Magical ceremony; that is, by insisting on their godhead, so that they flame within and without him, his ideas vitalising the talismans. There is thus a vivid vibration of high potential in a certain group

---

construct a detonator which could destroy every atom of matter by releasing the energies of one, so that the vibrations would excite the rest to disintegrate explosively.

of sympathetic substances and forces; and this spreads as do the waves from a stone thrown into a lake, widening and weakening; till the disturbance is compensated. Just as a handful of fanatics, insane with one over-emphasised truth, may infect a whole country for a time by inflaming that thought in their neighbours, so the Magician creates a commotion by disturbing the balance of power. He transmits his particular vibration as a radio operator does with his ray; rate-relation determines exclusive selection.

In practice, the Magician must "evoke the spirits of the storm" by identifying himself with the ideas of which atmospheric phenomena are the expressions as his humanity is of him; this achieved, he must impose his Will upon them by virtue of the superiority of his intelligence and the integration of his purpose to their undirected impulses and uncomprehending interplay.

All such Magick demands the utmost precision in practice. It is true that the best rituals give us instructions in selecting our vehicles of Force. In 777 we find "correspondences" of many classes of being with the various types of operation, so that we know what weapons, jewels, figures, drugs, perfumes, names, etc. to employ in any particular work. But it has always been assumed that the invoked force is intelligent and competent, that it will direct itself as desired without further ado, by this method of sympathetic vibrations.

The necessity of timing the force has been ignored; and so most operations, even when well performed as far as invocation goes, are as harmless as igniting loose gunpowder.

But, even allowing that Will is sufficient to determine the direction, and prevent the dispersion, of the force, we can hardly be sure that it will act on its object, unless that object be properly prepared to receive it. The Link must be perfectly made. The object must possess in itself a sufficiency of stuff sympathetic to our work. We cannot make love to a brick, or set an oak to run errands.

**We see, then, that we can never affect anything outside ourselves save only as it is also within us. Whatever I do to another, I do also to myself.** If I kill a man, I destroy my own life at the same time. That is the magical meaning of the so-



## CHAPTER XVI

### (Part I)

#### OF THE OATH

The third operation in any magical ceremony is the oath or proclamation. The Magician, armed and ready, stands in the centre of the Circle, and strikes once upon the bell as if to call the attention of the Universe. He then declares *who he is*, reciting his magical history by the proclamation of the grades which he has attained, giving the signs and words of those grades.<sup>1</sup> —

He then **states the purpose of the ceremony, and proves that it is necessary to perform it and to succeed in its performance.** He then takes an oath before the Lord of the Universe (not before the particular Lord whom he is invoking) as if to call Him to witness to the act. He swears solemnly that he will perform it — that nothing shall prevent him from performing it — that he will not leave the operation until it is successfully performed — and once again he strikes upon the bell.

Yet, having demonstrated himself in that position at once infinitely lofty and infinitely unimportant, the instrument of destiny, he balances this by the *Confession*, in which there is again an infinite exaltation harmonised with an infinite humility. He admits himself to be a weak human being humbly aspiring to something higher; a creature of circumstance utterly dependent — even for the breath of life — upon a series of fortunate accidents.

---

1. This is not merely to prove himself a person in authority. It is to trace the chain of causes that have led to the present position, so that the operation is seen as karma.

He makes this confession prostrate<sup>1</sup> before the altar in agony and bloody sweat. He trembles at the thought of the operation which he has dared to undertake, saying, "Father, if it be Thy Will, let this cup pass from me ! Nevertheless not my will but Thine be done!"<sup>2</sup>

The dread answer comes that It Must Be, and this answer so fortifies him with holy zeal that it will seem to him as if he were raised by divine hands from that prostrate position; with a thrill of holy exaltation he renews joyfully the Oath, feeling himself once again no longer the man but the Magician, yet not merely the Magician, but the chosen and appointed person to accomplish a task which, however apparently unimportant, is yet an integral part of universal destiny, so that if it were not accomplished the Kingdom of Heaven would be burst in pieces.

He is now ready to commence the invocations. He consequently pauses to cast a last glance around the Temple to assure himself of the perfect readiness of all things necessary, and to light the incense.

---

The Oath is the foundation of all Work in Magick, as it is an affirmation of the Will. An Oath binds the Magician for ever. In Part II of Book 4 something has already been said on this subject; but its importance deserves some further elaboration. Thus, should one, loving a woman, make a spell to compel her embraces, and tiring of her a little later, evoke Zazel to kill her; he will find that the implications of his former Oath conflict with those proper to invoke the Unity of the Godhead of Saturn. Zazel will refuse to obey him in the case of the woman whom he has sworn that he loves. To this some may object that, since all acts are magical, every man who loves a woman implicitly takes an

---

1. Compare the remarks in a previous chapter. But this is a particular case. We leave its justification as a problem.

2. Of course this is for the beginner. As soon as it is assimilated as true, he will say : "My will which is thine be done !" And ultimately no more distinguish "mine" from "thine". A sympathetic change of gesture will accompany the mental change.

Oath of love, and therefore would never be able to murder her later, as we find to be the not uncommon case. The explanation is as follows. It is perfectly true that when Bill Sykes desires to possess Nancy, he does in fact evoke a spirit of the nature of Venus, constraining him by his Oath of Love (and by his magical power as a man) to bring him the girl. So also, when he wants to kill her, he evokes a Martial or Saturnian spirit, with an Oath of hate. But these are not pure planetary spirits, moving in well-defined spheres by rigidly righteous laws. They are gross concretions of confused impulses, "incapable of understanding the nature of an oath". They are also such that the idea of murder is nowise offensive to the Spirit of Love.

It is indeed the criterion of spiritual *caste* that conflicting elements should not coexist in the same consciousness. The psalm-singing Puritan who persecutes publicans, and secretly soaks himself in fire-water; the bewhiskered philanthropist in broad-cloth who swindles his customers and sweats his employees: these men must not be regarded as single-minded scoundrels, whose use of religion and respectability to cloke their villainies is a deliberate disguise dictated by their criminal cunning. Far from it, they are only too sincere in their "virtues"; their terror of death and of supernatural vengeance is genuine; it proceeds from a section of themselves which is in irreconcilable conflict with their rascality. Neither side can conciliate, suppress, or ignore the other; yet each is so craven as to endure its enemy's presence. Such men are therefore without pure principles; they excuse themselves for every dirty trick that turns to their apparent advantage.

The first step of the Aspirant toward the Gate of Initiation tells him that purity — unity of purpose — is essential above all else. "Do what thou Wilt" strikes on him, a ray of fierce white flame consuming all that is not utterly God. Very soon he is aware that he cannot consciously contradict himself. He develops a subtle sense which warns him that two trains of thought which he had never conceived as connected are incompatible. Yet deeper drives "Do what thou wilt"; subconscious oppositions are evoked to visible appearance. The secret sanctuaries of the soul are cleansed. "Do What thou Wilt" purges his every part. He has become One, one only. His Will is consequently released from

the interference of internal opposition, and he is a Master of Magick. But for that very reason he is now utterly impotent to achieve anything that is not in absolute accordance with his Original Oath, with his True Will, by virtue whereof he incarnated as a man. With Bill Sykes love and murder are not mutually exclusive, as they are with King Arthur. The higher the type of man, the more sensitive he becomes; so that the noblest love divines intuitively when a careless word or gesture may wound, and, vigilant, shuns them as being of the family of murder. In Magick, likewise, the Adept who is sworn to attain to the Knowledge and Conversation of his Holy Guardian Angel may in his grosser days have been expert as a Healer, to find that he is now incapable of any such work. He will probably be puzzled, and wonder whether he has lost all his power. Yet the cause may be no more than that the Wisdom of his Angel deprecates the interference of ignorant kindness with diseases which may have been sent to the sufferer for a purpose profoundly important to his welfare.

In the case of The MASTER THERION, he had originally the capacity for all classes of Orgia. In the beginning, He cured the sick, bewitched the obstinate, allured the seductive, routed the aggressive, made himself invisible, and generally behaved like a Young-Man-About-Town on every possible plane. He would afflict one vampire with a Sending of Cats, and appoint another his private Enchantress, neither aware of any moral oxymoron, nor hampered by the implicit incongruity of his oaths.

But as He advanced in Adeptship, this coltishness found its mouth bitted; as soon as He took serious Oaths and was admitted to the Order which we name not, those Oaths prevented him using His powers as playthings. Trifling operations, such as He once could do with a turn of the wrist, became impossible to the most persistent endeavour. It was many years before He understood the cause of this. But little by little He became so absorbed in the Work of His true Will that it no longer occurred to Him to indulge in capricious amusements.

Yet even at this hour, though He be verily a Magus of A. . . A. . ., though His Word be the Word of the Aeon, though He be the Beast 666, the Lord of the Scarlet Woman "in whom is all power

given", there are still certain Orgia beyond Him to perform, because to do so would be to affirm what He hath denied in those Oaths by whose virtue He is That He is. This is the case, even when the spirit of such Orgia is fully consonant with His Will. The literal sense of His original Oath insists that it shall be respected.

The case offers two instances of this principle. FRATER PERDURABO specifically swore that He would renounce His personal possessions to the last penny; also that He would allow no human affection to hinder Him. These terms were accepted; He was granted infinitely more than He had imagined possible to any incarnated Man. On the other hand, the price offered by Him was exacted as strictly as if it had been stipulated by Shylock. Every treasure that he had on earth was taken away, and that, usually, in so brutal or cruel a manner as to make the loss itself the least part of the pang. Every human affection that He had in His heart — and that heart aches for Love as few hearts can ever conceive — was torn out and trampled with such infernal ingenuity in intensifying torture that His endurance is beyond belief. Inexplicable are the atrocities which accompanied every step in His Initiation! Death dragged away His children with slow savagery; the women He loved drank themselves into delirium and dementia before His eyes, or repaid His passionate devotion with toad-cold treachery at the moment when long years of loyalty had tempted Him to trust them. His friend, that bore the bag, stole that which was put therein, and betrayed his Master as thoroughly as he was able. At the first distant rumour that the Pharisees were out, his disciples "all forsook Him and fled". His mother nailed Him with her own hands to the cross, and reviled Him as nine years He hung thereupon.

Now, having endured to the end, being Master of Magick, He is mighty to Work His true Will; which Will is, to establish on Earth His Word, the Law of Thelema. He hath none other Will than this; so all that He doth is unto this end. All His Orgia bear fruit; what was the work of a month when He was a full Major Adept is to day wrought in a few minutes by the Words of Will, uttered with the right vibrations into the prepared Ear.

But neither by the natural use of His abilities, though they have made Him famous through the whole world, nor by the utmost might of his Magick, is He able to acquire material wealth beyond the minimum necessary to keep Him alive and at work. It is in vain that He protests that not He but the Work is in need of money; He is barred by the strict letter of His Oath to give all that He hath for His magical Attainment.

Yet more awful is the doom that He hath invoked upon Himself in renouncing His right as a man to enjoy the Love of those whom He loves with passion so selfless, so pure, and so intense in return for the power so to love Mankind that He be chosen to utter the Word of the Aeon for their sake, His reward universal abhorrence, bodily torment, mental despair, and moral paralysis.

Yet He, who hath power over Death, with a breath to call back health, with a touch to beckon life, He must watch His own child waste away month by month, aware that His Art may not anywise avail, who hath sold the signet ring of his personal profit to buy him a plain gold band for the felon finger of his bride, that worn widow, the World!

## CHAPTER XV

### I

#### OF THE INVOCATION

In the straightforward or "Protestant" system of Magick there is very little to add to what has already been said. The Magician addresses a direct petition to the Being invoked. But the secret of success in invocation has not hitherto been disclosed. It is an exceedingly simple one. It is practically of no importance whatever that the invocation should be "right". There are a thousand different ways of compassing the end proposed, so far as external things are concerned. The whole secret may be summarised in these four words: "**Enflame thyself in praying.**"<sup>1</sup>

The mind must be exalted until it loses consciousness of self. The Magician must be carried forward blindly by a force which, though in him and of him, is by no means that which he in his normal state of consciousness calls I. Just as the poet, the lover, the artist, is carried out of himself in a creative frenzy, so must it be for the Magician.

It is impossible to lay down rules for the obtaining of this special stimulus. To one the mystery of the whole ceremony may appeal; another may be moved by the strangeness of the words, even by the fact that the "barbarous names" are unintelligible to him. Sometimes in the course of a ceremony the true meaning of some barbarous name that has hitherto baffled his analysis may flash upon him, luminous and splendid, so that he is caught up into

---

1. This is Qabalistically expressed in the old Formula : Domine noster, audi tuo servo! kyrie Christe! O Christe!

orgasm. The smell of a particular incense may excite him effectively, or perhaps the physical ecstasy of the magick dance.

**Every Magician must compose his ceremony in such a manner as to produce a dramatic climax. At the moment when the excitement becomes ungovernable, when the whole conscious being of the Magician undergoes a spiritual spasm, at that moment must he utter the supreme adjuration.**

One very effective method is to stop short, by a supreme effort of will, again and again, on the very brink of that spasm, until a time arrives when the idea of exercising that will fails to occur<sup>1</sup>. **Inhibition is no longer possible or even thinkable, and the whole being of the Magician, no minutest atom saying nay, is irresistibly flung forth. In blinding light, amid the roar of ten thousand thunders, the Union of God and man is consummated.**

If the Magician is still seen standing in the Circle, quietly pursuing his invocations, it is that all the conscious part of him has become detached from the true ego which lies behind that normal consciousness. But the circle is wholly filled with that divine essence; all else is but an accident and an illusion.

**The subsequent invocations, the gradual development and materialization of the force, require no effort.** It is one great mistake of the beginner to concentrate his force upon the actual stated purpose of the ceremony. This mistake is the most frequent cause of failures in invocation.

A corollary of this Theorem is that the Magician soon discards evocation almost altogether — only rare circumstances demand any action what ever on the material plane. The Magician devotes himself entirely to the invocation of a god; and as soon as his balance approaches perfection he ceases to invoke any partial god; only that god vertically above him is in his path. And so a man who perhaps took up Magick merely with the idea of acquiring knowledge, love, or wealth, finds himself irrevocably committed to the performance of *The Great Work*.

---

1. This forgetfulness must be complete; it is fatal to try to 'let oneself go' consciously.

It will now be apparent that there is no distinction between magick and meditation except of the most arbitrary and accidental kind.<sup>1</sup>

## II

Beside these open methods there are also a number of mental methods of Invocation, of which we may give three.

The first method concerns the so-called astral body. The Magician should practise the formation of this body as recommended in Liber O, and learn to rise on the planes according to the instruction given in the same book, though limiting his "rising" to the particular symbol whose God he wishes to invoke.

The second is to recite a mantra suitable to the God.

The third is the assumption of the form of the God — by transmuting the astral body into His shape. This last method is really essential to all proper invocation, and cannot be too sedulously practised.

There are many other devices to aid invocation, so many that it is impossible to enumerate them; and the Magician will be wise to busy himself in inventing new ones.

We will give one example.

Suppose the Supreme Invocation to consist of 20 or 30 barbarous names, let him imagine these names to occupy sections of a vertical column, each double the length of the preceding one; and let him imagine that his consciousness ascends the column with each name. The mere multiplication will then produce a feeling of awe and bewilderment which is the proper forerunner of ecstasy.

In the essay "Energized Enthusiasm" in No. IX, Vol. 1 of the Equinox<sup>2</sup> is given a concise account of one of the classical methods of arousing Kundalini. This essay should be studied with care and determination.

---

1. There is the general metaphysical antithesis that Magick is the Art of the Will-to-Live, Mysticism of the Will-to-Die; but — "Truth comes bubbling to my brim; Life and Death are one to Him!".

2. The earliest and truest Christians used what is in all essentials this method. See "Fragments of a Faith Forgotten" by G. R. S. Mead, Esq. B. A., pp. 80-81.

There is a real connexion between what the vulgar call blasphemy and

what they call immorality, in the fact that the Christian legend is an echo of a Phallic rite. There is also a true and positive connexion between the Creative force of the Macrocosm, and that of the Microcosm. For this reason the latter must be made as pure and consecrated as the former. The puzzle for most people is how to do this. The study of Nature is the Key to that Gate.

## CHAPTER XVI

### (Part II)

#### OF THE CHARGE TO THE SPIRIT

#### WITH SOME ACCOUNT OF THE

#### CONSTRAINTS AND CURSES OCCASIONALLY NECESSARY

##### I

On the appearance of the spirit, or the manifestation of the force in the talisman which is being consecrated, it is necessary to bind it by an Oath or Charge. A spirit should be made to lay its hand visibly on the weapon by whose might it has been evoked, and to "swear obedience and faith to Him that liveth and triumpheth, that reigneth above him in His palaces as the Balance of Righteousness and Truth" by the Names used in that evocation.

It is then only necessary to formulate the Oath or Charge in language harmonious with the previously announced purpose of the operation.

**The precaution indicated is not to let oneself sink into one's humanity while the weapon is extended beyond the Circle. Were the force to flow from it to you instead of from you to it, you would be infallibly blasted, or, at the least, become the slave of the spirit.**

At no moment is it more important that the Divine Force should not only fill, but radiate from, the aura of the Magician.

##### II

Occasionally it may happen that the spirit is recalcitrant, and refuses to appear.

Let the Magician consider the cause of such disobedience!

It may be that the place or time is wrong. One cannot easily evoke water-spirits in the Sahara, or salamanders in the English Lake District. Hismael will not readily appear when Jupiter is below the horizon.<sup>1</sup> In order to counteract a natural deficiency of this sort, one would have to supply a sufficient quantity of the proper kind of material. One cannot make bricks without straw.

With regard to invocations of the Gods, such considerations do not apply. The Gods are beyond most material conditions. It is necessary to fill the *heart* and *mind* with the proper basis for manifestation. The higher the nature of the God, the more true this is. **The Holy Guardian Angel has always the necessary basis. His manifestation depends solely on the readiness of the Aspirant, and all magical ceremonies used in that invocation are merely intended to prepare that Aspirant; not in any way to attract or influence Him. It is His constant and eternal Will<sup>2</sup> to become one with the Aspirant, and the moment the conditions of the latter make it possible, That Bridal is consummated.**

### III.

The obstinacy of a spirit (or the inertia of a talisman) usually implies a defect in invocation. The spirit cannot resist even for a moment the constraint of his Intelligence, when that Intelligence is working in accordance with the Will of the Angel, Archangel

---

1. It is not possible in this elementary treatise to explain the exact nature of the connexion between the rays of the actual planet called Jupiter and the Jupiterian elements which exist in various degrees in terrestrial objects.

2. Since this Knowledge and Conversation is not universal, it seems at first as if an omnipotent will were being balked. But His Will and your will together make up that one will, because you and He are one. That one will is therefore divided against itself, so long as your will fails to aspire steadfastly.

Also, His will cannot constrain yours. He is so much one with you that even your will to separate is His will. He is so certain of you that He delights in your perturbation and coquetry no less than in your surrender. These relations are fully explained in Liber LXV. See also Liber Aleph CXI.

and God above him. It is therefore better to repeat the Invocations than to proceed at once to curses.

**The Magician should also consider<sup>1</sup> whether the evocation be in truth a necessary part of the Karma of the Universe,** as he has stated in his own Oath (See Cap. XVI. 1), For if this be a delusion, success is impossible. It will then be best to go back to the beginning, and recapitulate with greater intensity and power of analysis the Oath and the Invocations. And this may be done thrice.

**But if this be satisfactorily accomplished, and the spirit be yet disobedient, the implication is that some hostile force is at work to hinder the operation. It will then become advisable to discover the nature of that force, and to attack and destroy it. This makes the ceremony more useful than ever to the Magician, who may thereby be led to unveil a black magical gang whose existence he had not hitherto suspected.**

His need to check the vampiring of a lady in Paris by a sorceress once led FRATER PERDURABO to the discovery of a very powerful body of black magicians, with whom he was obliged to war for nearly 10 years before their ruin was complete and irremediable as it now is.

Such a discovery will not necessarily impede the ceremony. A general curse may be pronounced against the forces hindering the operation (for *ex hypothesi* no divine force can be interfering) and having thus temporarily dislodged them — for the power of the God invoked will suffice for this purpose — one may proceed with a certain asperity to conjure the spirit, for that he has done ill to bend before the conjurations of the Black Brothers.

Indeed, some demons are of a nature such that they only understand curses, are not amenable to courteous command:—

“a slave

Whom stripes may move, not kindness.”

**Finally, as a last resource, one may burn the Sigil of the**

---

1. Of course this should have been done in preparing the Ritual. But he renews this consideration from the new standpoint attained by the invocation.

**Spirit in a black box with stinking substances, all having been properly prepared beforehand, and the magical links properly made, so that he is really tortured by the Operation.**<sup>1</sup>

This is a rare event, however. Only once in the whole of his magical career was FRATER PERURABO driven to so harsh a measure.

#### IV

In this connexion, **beware of too ready a compliance on the part of the spirit.** If some Black Lodge has got wind of your operation, it may send the spirit, full of hypocritical submission, to destroy you. Such a spirit will probably pronounce the oath amiss, or in some way seek to avoid his obligations.

It is a dangerous trick, though, for the Black Lodge to play; for if the spirit come properly under your control, it will be forced to disclose the transaction, and the current will return to the Black Lodge with fulminating force. The liars will be in the power of their own lie; their own slaves will rise up and put them into bondage. The wicked fall into the pit that they themselves digged.

And so perish all the King's enemies!

#### V

The charge to the spirit is usually embodied, except in works of pure evocation, which after all are comparatively rare, in some kind of talisman. In a certain sense, the talisman is the Charge expressed in hieroglyphics. **Yet, every object soever is a talisman,** for the definition of a talisman is: something upon which an act of will (that is, of Magick) has been performed in order to fit it for a purpose. Repeated acts of will in respect of

---

1. The precise meaning of these phrases is at first sight obscure. The spirit is merely a recalcitrant part of one's own organism. To evoke him is therefore to become conscious of some part of one's own character; to command and constrain him is to bring that part into subjection. This is best understood by the analogy of teaching oneself some mental-physical accomplishment (e. g. billiards), by persistent and patient study and practice, which often involves considerable pain as well as trouble.

any object consecrate it without further ado. One knows what miracles can be done with one's favourite mashie! One has used the mashie again and again, one's love for it growing in proportion to one's success with it, and that success again made more certain and complete by the effect of this "love under will", which one bestows upon it by using it.

It is, of course, very important to keep such an object away from the contact of the profane. It is instinctive not to let another person use one's fishing rod or one's gun. It is not that they could do any harm in a material sense. It is the feeling that one's use of these things has consecrated them to one's self.

Of course, the outstanding example of all such talismans is the wife. A wife may be defined as an object specially prepared for taking the stamp of one's creative will. This is an example of a very complicated magical operation, extending over centuries. But, theoretically, it is just an ordinary case of talismanic magick. It is for this reason that so much trouble has been taken to prevent a wife having contact with the profane; or, at least, to try to prevent her.

Readers of the Bible will remember that Absalom publicly adopted David's wives and concubines on the roof of the palace, in order to signify that he had succeeded in breaking his father's magical power.

Now, there are a great many talismans in this world which are being left lying about in a most reprehensibly careless manner. Such are the objects of popular adoration, as ikons and idols. But, it is actually true that a great deal of real magical Force is locked up in such things; consequently, by destroying these sacred symbols, you can overcome magically the people who adore them.

It is not at all irrational to fight for one's flag, provided that the flag is an object which really means something to somebody. Similarly, with the most widely spread and most devotedly worshipped talisman of all, money, you can evidently break the magical will of a worshipper of money by taking his money away from him, or by destroying its value in some way or another. But, in the case of money, general experience tells us that there is very little of it lying about loose. In this case, above all,

people have recognised its talismanic virtue, that is to say, its power as an instrument of the will.

But with many ikons and images, it is easy to steal their virtue. This can be done sometimes on a tremendous scale, as, for example, when all the images of Isis and Horus, or similar mother-child combinations, were appropriated wholesale by the Christians. The miracle is, however, of a somewhat dangerous type, as in this case, where enlightenment has come through the researches of archaeologists. It has been shown that the so-called images of Mary and Jesus are really nothing but imitations of those of Isis and Horus. Honesty is the best policy in Magick as in other lines of life.

## CHAPTER XVII

### OF THE LICENSE TO DEPART

After a ceremony has reached its climax, anti-climax must inevitably follow. But if the ceremony has been successful this anti-climax is merely formal. The Magician should rest permanently on the higher plane to which he has aspired.<sup>1</sup> **The whole force of the operation should be absorbed;** but there is almost certain to be a residuum, since no operation is perfect; and (even if it were so) there would be a number of things, sympathetic to the operation, attracted to the Circle. These must be duly dispersed, or they will degenerate and become evil. It is always easy to do this where invocations are concerned; the mere removal of the strain imposed by the will of the magician will restore things to their normal aspects, in accordance with the great law of inertia. In a badly-managed evocation, however, this does not always obtain; the spirit may refuse to be controlled, and may refuse to depart — even after having sworn obedience. In such a case extreme danger may arise.

In the ordinary way, the Magician dismisses the spirit with these words: "And now I say unto thee, depart in peace unto thine habitations and abodes — and may the blessing of the Highest be upon thee in the name of (here mention the divine name suitable to the operation, or a Name appropriate to redeem that spirit); and let there be peace between thee and me; and be thou very ready to come, whensoever thou art invoked and called!"<sup>2</sup>

---

1. The rock-climber who relaxes on the face of the precipice falls to earth; but once he has reached a safe ledge he may sit down.

2. It is usual to add "either by a word, or by a will, or by this mighty Conjunction of Magick Art."

Should he fail to disappear immediately, it is a sign that there is something very wrong. The Magician should immediately reconsecrate the Circle with the utmost care. He should then repeat the dismissal; and if this does not suffice, he should then perform the banishing ritual suitable to the nature of the spirit and, if necessary, add conjurations to the same effect. In these circumstances, or if anything else suspicious should occur, he should not be content with the apparent disappearance of the spirit, who might easily make himself invisible and lie in ambush to do the Magician a mischief when he stepped out of the Circle — or even months afterwards.

**Any symbol which has once definitely entered your environment with your own consent is extremely dangerous; unless under absolute control. A man's friends are more capable of working him harm than are strangers; and his greatest danger lies in his own habits.**

Of course it is the very condition of progress to build up ideas into the subconscious. The necessity of selection should therefore be obvious.

True, there comes a time when all elements soever must be thus assimilated. Samadhi is, by definition, that very process. But, from the point of view of the young magician, there is a right way — strait and difficult — of performing all this. **One cannot too frequently repeat that what is lawful and proper to one Path is alien to another.**

Immediately after the License to Depart, and the general closing up of the work, it is necessary that the Magician should sit down and write up his magical record. However much he may have been tired<sup>1</sup> by the ceremony, he ought to force himself to do this until it becomes a habit. **Verily, it is better to fail in the magical ceremony than to fail in writing down an accurate record of it.** One need not doubt the propriety of this remark. Even if one is eaten alive by Malkah be-Tarshishim ve-Ruachoth ha-Schehalim, it does not matter very much, for it is over so very quickly. But the record of the transaction is

---

1. He ought to be refreshed, more than after a full night's deep sleep. This forms one test of his skill.

otherwise important. Nobody cares about Duncan having been murdered by Macbeth. It is only one of a number of similar murders. But Shakespeare's account of the incident is a unique treasure of mankind. And, apart from the question of the value to others, there is that of the value to the magician himself. **The record of the magician is his best asset.**

It is as foolish to do Magick without method, as if it were anything else. To do Magick without keeping a record is like trying to run a business without book-keeping. There are a great many people who quite misunderstand the nature of Magick. They have an idea that it is something vague and unreal, instead of being, as it is, a direct means of coming into contact with reality. It is these people who pay themselves with phrases, who are always using long words with no definite connotation, who plaster themselves with pompous titles and decorations which mean nothing whatever. With such people we have nothing to do. But to those who seek reality the Key of Magick is offered, and they are hereby warned that the key to the treasure-house is no good without the combination; and the combination is the magical record.

**From one point of view, magical progress actually consists in deciphering one's own record.**<sup>1</sup> For this reason it is the most important thing to do, on strictly magical grounds. But apart from this, it is absolutely essential that the record should be clear, full and concise, because it is only by such a record that your teacher can judge how it is best to help you. Your magical teacher has something else to do besides running around after you all the time, and the most important of all his functions is that of auditor. Now, if you call in an auditor to investigate a business, and when he asks for the books you tell him that you have not thought it worth while to keep any, you need not be surprised if he thinks you every kind of an ass.

It is — at least, it was — perfectly incredible to The MASTER THERION that people who exhibit ordinary common sense in

---

1. As one is a Star in the Body of Nuith, every successive incarnation is a Veil, and the acquisition of the Magical Memory a gradual Unveiling of that Star, of that God.

the other affairs of life should lose it completely when they tackle Magick. It goes far to justify the belief of the semi-educated that Magick is rather a crazy affair after all. However, there are none of these half-baked lunatics connected with the A.: A.:, because the necessity for hard work, for passing examinations at stated intervals, and for keeping an intelligible account of what they are doing, frightens away the unintelligent, idle and hysterical.

There are numerous models of magical and mystical records to be found in the various numbers of the *Equinox*, and the student will have no difficulty in acquiring the necessary technique, if he be diligent in practice.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### OF CLAIRVOYANCE AND OF THE BODY OF LIGHT ITS POWER AND ITS DEVELOPMENT ALSO CONCERNING DIVINATION

#### I

**Within the human body is another body of approximately the same size and shape; <sup>1</sup> but made of a subtler and less illusory material.** It is of course not "real"; but then no more is the other body! Before treating of clairvoyance one must discuss briefly this question of reality, for misapprehension on the subject has given rise to endless trouble.

There is the story of the American in the train who saw another American carrying a basket of unusual shape. His curiosity mastered him, and he leant across and said: "Say, stranger, what you got in that bag?" The other, lantern-jawed and taciturn, replied: "Mongoose". The first man was rather baffled, as he had never heard of a mongoose. After a pause he pursued, at the risk of a rebuff: "But say, what is a Mongoose?" "Mongoose eats snakes", replied the other. This was another poser, but he pursued; "What in hell do you want a Mongoose for?" "Well, you see", said the second man (in a confidential whisper) "my brother sees snakes". The first man was more puzzled than ever; but after a long think, he continued rather pathetically: "But say, them ain't real snakes". "Sure", said the man with the basket, "but this Mongoose ain't real either".

This is a perfect parable of Magick. **There is no such thing**

---

1. i. e. as a general rule. It can be altered very greatly in these respects.

**as truth in the perceptible universe; every idea when analysed is found to contain a contradiction.** It is quite useless (except as a temporary expedient) to set up one class of ideas against another as being "more real". The advance of man towards God is not necessarily an advance towards truth. All philosophical systems have crumbled. But each class of ideas possesses true relations within itself. It is possible, with Berkeley,<sup>1</sup> to deny the existence of water and of wood; but, for all that, wood floats on water. The Magician becomes identical with the immortal Osiris, yet the Magician dies. In this dilemma the facts must be restated. One should preferably say that the Magician becomes conscious of that part of himself which he calls the immortal Osiris; and that Part does not "die".

Now this interior body of the Magician, of which we spoke at the beginning of this chapter, does exist, and can exert certain powers which his natural body cannot do. It can, for example, pass through "matter", and it can move freely in every direction through space. But this is because "matter", in the sense in which we commonly use the word, is on another plane<sup>2</sup>.

**Now this fine body perceives a universe which we do not ordinarily perceive.** It does not necessarily perceive the universe which we do normally perceive, so although in this body I can pass through the roof, it does not follow that I shall be able to tell what the weather is like. I might do so, or I might not; but if I could not, it would not prove that I was deceiving myself in supposing that I had passed through the roof. **This body, which is called by various authors the Astral double, body of Light, body of fire, body of desire, fine body, scin-laeca and numberless other names is naturally fitted to perceive objects of its own class... in particular, the phantoms of the astral plane.**

---

1. The real Berkeley did nothing of the sort: the reference here is to an imaginary animal invented by Dr. Johnson out of sturdy British ignorance.

2. We do not call electrical resistance, or economic laws, unreal, on the ground that they are not directly perceived by the senses. Our magical doctrine is universally accepted by sceptics — only they wish to make Magick itself an exception!

There is some sort of vague and indeterminate relation between the Astrals and the Materials; and it is possible, with great experience, to deduce facts about material things from the astral aspect which they present to the eyes of the Body of Light.<sup>1</sup> This astral plane is so varied and so changeable that several clairvoyants looking at the same thing might give totally different accounts of what they saw; yet they might each make correct deductions. In looking at a man the first clairvoyant might say: "The lines of force are all drooping"; the second: "It seems all dirty and spotty"; a third; "The Aura looks very ragged." Yet all might agree in deducing that the man was in ill-health. In any case, all such deductions are rather unreliable. One must be a highly skilled man before one can trust one's vision. A great many people think that they are extremely good at the business, when in fact they have only made some occasional shrewd guesses (which they naturally remember) in the course of hundreds of forgotten failures.

The only way to test clairvoyance is to keep a careful record of every experiment made. For example, FRATER O. M. once gave a clairvoyant a waistcoat to psychometrize. He made 56 statements about the owner of the waistcoat; of these 4 were notably right; 17, though correct, were of that class of statement which is true of almost everybody. The remainder were wrong. It was concluded from this that he showed no evidence of any special power. In fact, his bodily eyes — if he could discern Tailoring — would have served him better, for he thought the owner of the vest was a corn-chandler, instead of an earl, as he is.

**The Magician can hardly take too much trouble to develop this power in himself.** It is extremely useful to him in guarding himself against attack; in obtaining warnings, in judging character, and especially in watching the process of his Ceremonies.

---

1. This is because there is a certain necessary correspondence between planes; as in the case of an Anglo-Indian's liver and his temper. The relation appears "vague and indeterminate" only in so far as one happens to be ignorant of the laws which state the case. The situation is analogous to that of the chemist before the discovery of the law of "Combining Weights", etc.

There are a great many ways of acquiring the power. Gaze into a crystal, or into a pool of ink in the palm of the hand, or into a mirror, or into a teacup. Just as with a microscope the expert operator keeps both eyes open, though seeing only through the one at the eye-piece of the instrument, so the natural eyes, ceasing to give any message to the brain, the attention is withdrawn from them, and the man begins to see through the Astral eyes.

These methods appear to The MASTER THERION to be unsatisfactory. Very often they do not work at all. It is difficult to teach a person to use these methods; and, worst of all, they are purely passive! You can see only what is shewn you, and you are probably shewn things perfectly pointless and irrelevant.

The proper method is as follows: — **Develop the body of Light until it is just as real to you as your other body, teach it to travel to any desired symbol, and enable it to perform all necessary Rites and Invocations. In short, educate it.** Ultimately, the relation of that body with your own must be exceedingly intimate; but before this harmonizing takes place, you should begin by a careful differentiation. The first thing to do, therefore, is to get the body outside your own. To avoid muddling the two, you begin by imagining a shape resembling yourself standing in front of you. Do not say: "Oh, it's only imagination!" The time to test that is later on, when you have secured a fairly clear mental image of such a body. Try to imagine how your own body would look if you were standing in its place; try to transfer your consciousness to the Body of Light. Your own body has its eyes shut. Use the eyes of the Body of Light to describe the objects in the room behind you. Don't say, "It's only an effort of subconscious memory"...the time to test that is later on.

As soon as you feel more or less at home in the fine body, let it rise in the air. Keep on feeling the sense of rising; keep on looking about you as you rise until you see landscapes or beings of the astral plane. Such have a quality all their own. They are not like material things — they are not like mental pictures — they seem to lie between the two.

After some practice has made you adept, so that in the course

of an hour's journey you can reckon on having a fairly eventful time, turn your attention to reaching a definite place on the astral plane; invoke Mercury, for example, and examine carefully your record of the resulting vision — discover whether the symbols which you have seen correspond with the conventional symbols of Mercury.

**This testing of the spirits is the most important branch of the whole tree of Magick. Without it, one is lost in the jungle of delusion. Every spirit, up to God himself, is ready to deceive you if possible, to make himself out more important than he is; in short, to lay in wait for your soul in 333 separate ways. Remember that after all the highest of all the Gods is only the Magus,<sup>1</sup> Mayan, the greatest of all the devils.**

Your may also try "rising on the planes".<sup>2</sup> With a little practice, especially if you have a good Guru, you ought to be able to slip in and out of your astral body as easily as you slip and out of a dressing-gown. It will then no longer be so necessary for your astral body to be sent far off; without moving an inch you will be able to "turn on" its eyes and ears — as simply as the man with the microscope (mentioned above) can transfer his complete attention from one eye to the other.

**Now, however unsuccessful your getting out of the body may apparently have been, it is most necessary to use every effort to bring it properly back. Make the Body of Light coincide in space with the physical body, assume the God-Form, and vibrate the name of Harpocrates with the utmost energy; then recover unity of consciousness.** If you fail to do this properly you may find yourself in serious trouble. Your Body of Light may wander away uncontrolled, and be attacked and obsessed. You will become aware of this through the occurrence of headache, bad dreams, or even more serious signs such as hysteria, fainting fits, possibly madness or paralysis. Even the worst of these attacks will probably wear off, but it may leave you permanently damaged to a greater or less extent.

---

1. See Liber 418, 3rd Aethyr.

2. See Infra and Appendix.

A great majority of "spiritualists", "occultists", "Toshosophists", are pitiable examples of repeated losses from this cause.

The emotional type of religionist also suffers in this way. Devotion projects the fine body, which is seized and vampirized by the demon masquerading as "Christ" or "Mary", or whoever may be the object of worship. Complete absence of all power to concentrate thought, to follow an argument, to formulate a Will, to hold fast to an opinion or a course of action, or even to keep a solemn oath, mark indelibly those who have thus lost parts of their souls. They wander from one new cult to another even crazier. Occasionally such persons drift for a moment into the surroundings of The MASTER THERION, and are shot out by the simple process of making them try to do a half-hour's honest work of any kind.

**In projecting the Astral, it is a valuable additional safeguard to perform the whole operation in a properly consecrated circle.**

Proceed with great caution, then, but proceed. In time your Body of Light will be as strong against the spirits as your other body against the winds of Heaven. All depends upon the development of that Body of Light. It must be furnished with an organism as ramified and balanced as its shadowy brother, the material body.

To recapitulate once more, then, **the first task is to develop your own Body of Light within your own circle** without reference to any other inhabitants of the world to which it belongs.

That which you have accomplished with the subject you may now proceed to do with the object. You will learn to see the astral appearance of material things; and although this does not properly belong to pure clairvoyance, one may here again mention that **you should endeavour to the utmost to develop and fortify this Body of Light. The best and simplest way to do this is to use it constantly, to exercise it in every way.** In particular it may be employed in ceremonies of initiation or of invocation — while the physical body remains silent and still.

In doing this it will often be necessary to create a Temple on the astral plane. **It is excellent practice to create symbols. This one precaution is needed: after using them, they should be reabsorbed.**

Having learned to create astral forms, the next step will be at first very difficult. Phantasmal and fleeting as the astral is in general, those forms which are definitely attached to the material possess enormous powers of resistance, and it consequently requires very high potential to influence them. Their material analogues seem to serve as a fortress. Even where a temporary effect is produced, the inertia of matter draws it back to the normal; yet the power of the trained and consecrated will in a well-developed astral body is such that it can even produce a permanent change in the material upon whose Body of Light you are working, e.g.; one can heal the sick by restoring a healthy appearance to their astral forms. On the other hand, it is possible so to disintegrate the the Body of Light even of a strong man that he will fall dead.

Such operations demand not only power, but judgment. Nothing can upset the sum total of destiny — everything must be paid for the uttermost farthing. For this reason a great many operations theoretically possible cannot be performed. Suppose, for example, you see two men of similarly unhealthy astral appearance. In one case the cause may be slight and temporary. Your help suffices to restore him in a few minutes. The other, who looks no worse, is really oppressed by a force incalculably greater than you could control, and you would only damage yourself by attempting to help him. The diagnosis between the two cases could be made by an investigation of the deeper strata of the astral, such as compose the "causal body".

A body of black magicians under Anna Kingsford<sup>1</sup> once attempted to kill a vivisector who was not particularly well known; and they succeeded in making him seriously ill. But in attempting the same thing with Pasteur they produced no effect whatever, because Pasteur was a great genius — an adept in his own line far greater than she in hers — and because millions of people were daily blessing him. **It cannot be too clearly understood that magical force is subject to the same laws of proportion as any other kind of force.** It is useless for a mere millionaire to try to bankrupt a man who has the Bank of England behind him.

---

1. Anna Kingsford, so far as her good work is concerned, was only the rubber stamp of Edward Maitland.

To sum up, the first task is to separate the astral form from the physical body, the second to develop the powers of the astral body, in particular those of sight, travel, and interpretation; third, to unify the two bodies without muddling them.

This being accomplished, the magician is fitted to deal with the invisible.

## II

It is now useful to continue with considerations of other planes, which have commonly been classed under the Astral. There is some reason for this, as the delimitations are somewhat vague. Just as the vegetable kingdom merges into the animal, and as the material plane has beings which encroach upon the boundaries of the astral, so do we find it in the higher planes.

The mental images which appear during meditation are subjective, and pertain not at all to the astral plane. Only very rarely do astral images occur during meditation. It is a bad break in the circle, as a rule, when they do.

There is also a Magical Plane. This touches the material, and even includes a portion of it. It includes the Astral, chiefly a full-blooded type of the Astral. It reaches to and includes most, if not all, of the spiritual planes.

The Magical plane is thus the most comprehensive of all. Egyptian Gods are typical inhabitants of this plane, and it is the home of every Adept.

The spiritual planes are of several types, but are all distinguished by a reality and intensity to be found nowhere else. Their inhabitants are formless, free of space and time, and distinguished by incomparable brilliance.

There are also a number of sub-planes, as, for example, the Alchemical. This plane will often appear in the practice of "Rising on the Planes"; its images are usually those of gardens curiously kept, mountains furnished with peculiar symbols, hieroglyphic animals, or such figures as that of the "Hermetic Arcanum", and pictures like the "Goldseekers" and the "Masseacre of the Innocents" of Basil Valentine. There is a unique quality about the alchemical Plane which renders its images immediately recognisable.

The are also planes corresponding to various religions past and present, all of which have their peculiar unity.

**It is of the utmost importance to the "Clairvoyant" or "traveller in the fine body" to be able to find his way to any desired plane, and operate therein as its ruler.**

**The Neophyte of A. . . A. . . is examined most strictly in this practice before he is passed to the degree of Zelator.**

In "Rising on the Planes" one must usually pass clear through the Astral to the Spiritual. Some will be unable to do this. The "fine body" which is good enough to subsist on lower planes, a shadow among shadows, will fail to penetrate the higher strata. It requires a great development of this body, and an intense infusion of the highest spiritual constituents of man, before he can pierce the veils. The constant practice of Magick is the best preparation possible. Even though the human consciousness fail to reach the goal, the consciousness of the fine body itself may do so, wherefore whoso travels in that body on a subsequent occasion may be found worthy; and its success will react favourably on the human consciousness, and increase its likelihood of success in its next magical operation.

Similarly, the powers gained in this way will strengthen the magician in his meditation-practices. His Will becomes better able to assist the concentration, to destroy the mental images which disturb it, and to reject the lesser rewards of that practice which tempt, and too often stop the progress of, the mystic.

Although it is said that the spiritual lies "beyond the astral", this is theoretical; <sup>1</sup> the advanced Magician will not find it to be so in practice. He will be able by suitable invocation to travel directly to any place desired. In Liber 418 an example of perfection is given. The Adept who explored these Aethyrs did not have to pass through and beyond the Universe, the whole of which yet lies within even the inmost (30th) Aethyr. He was able to summon the Aethyrs he wanted, and His chief difficulty was that sometimes

---

1. The Hon. Bertrand Russell's *Principia Mathematica* may be said to "lie beyond" Colenso's *School Arithmetic*; but one can take the former book from one's shelves — as every one should — and read it without first going all through the latter again.

He was at first unable to pierce their veils. In fact, as the Book shows, it was only by virtue of successive and most exalted initiations undergone in the Aethyrs themselves that He was able to penetrate beyond the 15th. The Guardians of such fortresses know how to guard.

The MASTER THERION has published the most important practical magical secrets in the plainest language. No one, by virtue of being clever or learned, has understood one word; and those unworthy who have profaned the sacrament have but eaten and drunken damnation to themselves.

One may bring down stolen fire in a hollow tube from Heaven, as The MASTER THERION indeed has done in a way that no other adept dared to do before him. But the thief, the Titan, must foreknow and consent to his doom to be chained upon a lonely rock, the vulture devouring his liver, for a season, until Hercules, the strong man armed by virtue of that very fire, shall come and release him.

The TEITAN<sup>1</sup> — whose number is the number of a man, six hundred and three score and six — unsubdued, consoled by Asia and Panthea, must send forth constant showers of blessing not only upon Man whose incarnation he is, but upon the tyrant and the persecutor. His infinite pain must thrill his heart with joy, since every pang is but the echo of some new flame that leaps upon the earth lit by his crime.

For the Gods are the enemies of Man; it is Nature that Man must overcome ere he enter into his kingdom.<sup>2</sup> **The true God**

---

1. TEITAN =  $300 + 5 + 10 + 300 + 1 + 50 = 666$ .

2. In another sense, a higher sense, Nature is absolutely right throughout. The position is that the Magician discovers himself imprisoned in a distorted Nature of Iniquity; and his task is to disentangle it. This is all to be studied in the Book of Wisdom or Folly (Liber ALEPH, CXI) and in The Master Therion's edition of the *Tao Teh King*. A rough note from His Magical Diary is appended here:

"All elements must at one time have been separate, — that would be the case with great heat. Now when atoms get to the sun, when we get to the sun, we get that immense, extreme heat, and all the elements are themselves again. Imagine that each atom of each element possesses the memory of all his adventures in combination. By the way, that atom

**is man. In man are all things hidden.** Of these the Gods, Nature, Time, all the powers of the universe are rebellious slaves. It is these that men must fight and conquer in the power and in the name of the Beast that hath availed them, the Titan, the Magus, the Man whose number is six hundred and three score and six.

### III

The practice of Rising on the Planes is of such importance that special attention must be paid to it. It is part of the essential technique of Magick. Instruction in this practice has been given with such conciseness in Liber O, that one cannot do better than quote verbatim (the "previous experiment" referred to in the first sentence is the ordinary astral journey.):

"I. The previous experiment has little value, and leads to few results of importance. But it is susceptible of a development which merges into a form of Dharana — concentration — and as such may lead to the very highest ends. The principal use of the practice in

---

(fortified with that memory) would not be the same atom; yet it is, because it has gained nothing from anywhere except this memory. Therefore, by the lapse of time, and by virtue of memory, a thing could become something more than itself; and thus a real development is possible. One can then see a reason for any element deciding to go through this series of incarnations; because so, and only so, can he go; and he suffers the lapse of memory which he has during these incarnations, because he knows he will come through unchanged.

"Therefore you can have an infinite number of gods, individual and equal though diverse, each one supreme and utterly indestructible. This is also the only explanation of how a being could create a war in which war, evil, etc. exist. Evil is only an appearance, because, (like "good") it cannot affect the substance itself, but only multiply its combinations. This is something the same as mystic monotheism, but the objection to that theory is that God has to create things which are all parts of himself, so that their interplay is false. If we presuppose many elements, their interplay is natural. It is no objection to this theory to ask who made the elements, — the elements are at least there, and God, when you look for him, is not there. Theism is *obscurum per obscurius*. A male star is built up from the centre outwards; a female from the circumference inwards. This is what is meant when we say that woman has no soul. It explains fully the difference between the sexes.

the last chapter is to familiarise the student with every kind of obstacle and every kind of delusion, so that he may be perfect master of every idea that may arise in his brain, to dismiss it, to transmute it, to cause it instantly to obey his will.

“2. Let him then begin exactly as before; but with the most intense solemnity and determination.

“3. Let him be very careful to cause his imaginary body to rise in a line exactly perpendicular to the earth’s tangent at the point where his physical body is situated (or, to put it more simply, straight upwards).

“4. Instead of stopping, let him continue to rise until fatigue almost overcomes him. If he should find that he has stopped without willing to do so, and that figures appear, let him at all costs rise above them. Yea, though his very life tremble on his lips, let him force his way upward and onward!

“5. Let him continue in this so long as the breath of life is in him. Whatever threatens, whatever allures, though it were Typhon and all his hosts loosed from the pit and leagued against him, though it were from the very Throne of God himself that a voice issues bidding him stay and be content, let him struggle on, ever on.

“6. At last there must come a moment when his whole being is swallowed up in fatigue, overwhelmed by its own inertia. Let him sink (when no longer can he strive, though his tongue be bitten through with the effort and the blood gush from his nostrils) into the blackness of unconsciousness; and then on coming to himself, let him write down soberly and accurately a record of all that hath occurred : yea, a record of all that hath occurred.”

Of course, the Rising may be done from any starting point. One can go (for example) into the circle of Jupiter, and the results, especially in the lower planes, will be very different to those obtained from a Saturnian starting point.

The student should undertake a **regular** series of such experiments, in order to familiarise himself not only with the nature of the different spheres, but with the inner meaning of each. Of course, it is not necessary in every case to push the

practice to exhaustion, as described in the instructions, but this is the proper thing to do whenever definitely practising, in order to acquire the power of Rising. But, having obtained this power, it is, of course, legitimate to rise to any particular plane that may be necessary for the purpose of exploration, as in the case of the visions recorded in Liber 418, where the method may be described as mixed. In such a case, it is not enough to invoke the place you wish to visit, because you may not be able to endure its pressure, or to breathe its atmosphere. Several instances occur in that record where the seer was unable to pass through certain gateways, or to remain in certain contemplations. He had to undergo certain Initiations before he was able to proceed. **Thus, it is necessary that the technique of Magick should be perfected. The Body of Light must be rendered capable of going everywhere and doing everything. It is, therefore, always the question of drill which is of importance.** You have got to go out Rising on the Planes every day of your life, year after year. You are not to be disheartened by failure, or too much encouraged by success, in any one practice or set of practices. What you are doing is what will be of real value to you in the end; and that is, developing a character, creating a Karma, which will give you the power to do your Will.

#### IV

Divination is so important a branch of Magick as almost to demand a separate treatise.

Genius is composed of two sides; the active and the passive. The power to execute the Will is but blind force unless the Will be enlightened. At every stage of a Magical Operation it is necessary to know what one is doing, and to be sure that one is acting wisely. **Acute sensitiveness is always associated with genius;** the power to perceive the universe accurately, to analyse, coordinate, and judge impressions is the foundation of all great Work. An army is but a blundering brute unless its intelligence department works as it should.

The Magician obtains the transcendental knowledge necessary to an intelligent course of conduct directly in consciousness by clairvoyance and clairaudience; but communication with superior

intelligences demands elaborate preparation, even after years of successful performance.

It is therefore useful to possess an art by which one can obtain at a moment's notice any information that may be necessary. This art is divination. The answers to one's questions in divination are not conveyed directly but through the medium of a suitable series of symbols. These symbols must be interpreted by the diviner in terms of his problem. It is not practicable to construct a lexicon in which the solution of every difficulty is given in so many words. It would be unwieldy; besides, nature does not happen to work on those lines.

The theory of any process of divination may be stated in a few simple terms.

1. We postulate the existence of intelligences, either within or without the diviner, of which he is not immediately conscious. (It does not matter to the theory whether the communicating spirit so-called is an objective entity or a concealed portion of the diviner's mind.) We assume that such intelligences are able to reply correctly — within limits — to the questions asked.

2. We postulate that it is possible to construct a compendium of hieroglyphs sufficiently elastic in meaning to include every possible idea, and that one or more of these may always be taken to represent any idea. We assume that any of these hieroglyphics will be understood by the intelligences with whom we wish to communicate in the same sense as it is by ourselves. We have therefore a sort of language. One may compare it to a *lingua franca* which is perhaps defective in expressing fine shades of meaning, and so is unsuitable for literature, but which yet serves for the conduct of daily affairs in places where many tongues are spoken. Hindustani is an example of this. But better still is the analogy between the conventional signs and symbols employed by mathematicians, who can thus convey their ideas perfectly<sup>1</sup> without speaking a word of each other's languages.

---

1. As a matter of fact, they cannot. The best qualified are the most diffident as to having grasped the meaning of their colleagues with exactitude; in criticising their writings they often make a point of apologising for possible misunderstanding.

3. We postulate that the intelligences whom we wish to consult are willing, or may be compelled, to answer us truthfully.

Let us first consider the question of the compendium of symbols. The alphabet of a language is a more or less arbitrary way of transcribing the sounds employed in speaking it. The letters themselves have not necessarily any meaning as such. But **in a system of divination each symbol stands for a definite idea.** It would not interfere with the English language to add a few new letters. In fact, some systems of shorthand have done so. But a system of symbols suitable for divination must be a complete representation of the Universe, so that each is absolute, and the whole insusceptible of increase or diminution. It is (in fact) technically a pantacle in the fullest sense of the word.

Let us consider some prominent examples of such system. We may observe that a common mode of divination is to inquire of books by placing the thumb at random within the leaves. The Books of the Sybil, the works of Vergil, and the Bible have been used very frequently for this purpose. For theoretical justification, one must assume that the book employed is a perfect representation of the Universe. But even if this were the case, it is an inferior form of construction, because the only reasonable conception of the Cosmos is mathematical and hieroglyphic rather than literary. **In the case of a book, such a book as the Book of the Law which is the supreme truth and the perfect rule of life, it is not repugnant to good sense to derive an oracle from its pages. It will of course be remarked that the Book of the Law is not merely a literary compilation but a complex mathematical structure. It therefore fulfils the required conditions.**

The principal means of divination in history are astrology, geomancy, the Tarot, the Holy Qabalah, and the Yi King. There are hundreds of others; from pyromancy, oneiromancy, auguries from sacrifices, and the spinning-top of some ancient oracles to the omens drawn from the flight of birds and the prophesying of tea-leaves. It will be sufficient for our present purpose to discuss only the five systems first enumerated.

ASTROLOGY is theoretically a perfect method, since the symbols employed actually exist in the macrocosm, and thus possess a

natural correspondence with microcosmic affairs. But in practice the calculations involved are overwhelmingly complicated. A horoscope is never complete. It needs to be supplemented by innumerable other horoscopes. For example, to obtain a judgment on the simplest question, one requires not only the nativities of the people involved, some of which are probably inaccessible, but secondary figures for directions and transits, together with progressed horoscopes, to say nothing of prenatal, mundane, and even horary figures. To appreciate the entire mass of data, to balance the elements of so vast a concourse of forces, and to draw a single judgment therefrom, is a task practically beyond human capacity. Besides all this, the actual effects of the planetary positions and aspects are still almost entirely unknown. No two astrologers agree on all points; and most of them are at odds on fundamental principles.<sup>1</sup> This science had better be discarded unless the student chances to feel strongly drawn toward it. It is used by the MASTER THERION Himself with fairly satisfactory results, but only in special cases, in a strictly limited sphere, and with particular precautions. Even so, He feels great diffidence in basing His conduct on the result so obtained.

GEOMANCY has the advantage of being rigorously mathematical. A hand-book of the science is to be found in Equinox I, II. The objection to its use lies in the limited number of the symbols. To represent the Universe by no more than 16 combinations throws too much work upon them. There is also a great restriction arising from the fact that although 15 symbols appear in the final figure, there are, in reality, but 4, the remaining 11 being drawn by an ineluctable process from the "Mothers". It may be added that the tables given in the handbook for the interpretation of the figure are exceedingly vague on the one hand, and insufficiently comprehensive on the other. Some Adepts, however, appear to find this system admirable, and obtain great satisfaction from its use. Once more, the personal equation must be allowed full weight. At one time the MASTER THERION employed it extensively; but He was never wholly at ease with it; He found the

---

1. Nearly all professional astrologers are ignorant of their own subject, as of all others.

interpretation very difficult. Moreover, it seemed to Him that the geomantic intelligences themselves were of a low order, the scope of which was confined to a small section of the things which interested Him; also, they possessed a point of view of their own which was far from sympathetic with His, so that misunderstanding constantly interfered with the Work.

THE TAROT and THE HOLY QABALAH may be discussed together. The theoretical basis of both is identical: The Tree of Life.<sup>1</sup> The 78 symbols of the Tarot are admirably balanced and combined. They are adequate to all demands made upon them; each symbol is not only mathematically precise, but possesses an artistic significance which helps the diviner to understand them by stimulating his aesthetic perceptions. The MASTER THERION finds that the Tarot is infallible in material questions. The successive operations describe the course of events with astonishing wealth of detail, and the judgments are reliable in all respects. But a proper divination means at least two hours' hard work, even by the improved method developed by Him from the traditions of initiates. Any attempt to shorten the proceedings leads to disappointment; furthermore, the symbols do not lend themselves readily to the solution of spiritual questions.

**The Holy Qabalah, based as it is on pure number, evidently possesses an infinite number of symbols. Its scope is conterminous with existence itself; and it lacks nothing in precision, purity, or indeed in any other perfection. But it cannot be taught; <sup>2</sup> each man must select for himself the materials for the main structure of his system.** It requires years of work to erect a worthy building. Such a building is never finished; every day spent on it adds new ornaments. The Qabalah is therefore a living Temple of the Holy Ghost. It is the man himself and his universe expressed in terms of thought whose

---

1. Both these subjects may be studied in the Equinox in several articles appearing in several numbers.

2. It is easy to teach the General Principles of exegesis, and the main doctrines. There is a vast body of knowledge common to all cases; but this is no more than the basis on which the student must erect his original Research.

language is so rich that even the letters of its alphabet have no limit. This system is so sublime that it is unsuited to the solution of the petty puzzles of our earthly existence. In the light of the Qabalah, the shadows of transitory things are instantly banished.

The YI KING is the most satisfactory system for general work. The MASTER THERION is engaged in the preparation of a treatise on the subject, but the labour involved is so great that He cannot pledge Himself to have it ready at any definite time. The student must therefore make his own investigations into the meaning of the 64 hexagrams as best he can.

**The Yi King is mathematical and philosophical in form. Its structure is cognate with that of the Qabalah; the identity is so intimate that the existence of two such superficially different systems is transcendent testimony to the truth of both.** It is in some ways the most perfect hieroglyph ever constructed. It is austere and sublime, yet withal so adaptable to every possible emergency that its figures may be interpreted to suit all classes of questions. One may resolve the most obscure spiritual difficulties no less than the most mundane dilemmas; and the symbol which opens the gates of the most exalted palaces of initiation is equally effective when employed to advise one in the ordinary business of life. The MASTER THERION has found the Yi King entirely satisfactory in every respect. The intelligences which direct it show no inclination to evade the question or to mislead the querent. A further advantage is that the actual apparatus is simple. Also the system is easy to manipulate, and five minutes is sufficient to obtain a fairly detailed answer to any but the most obscure questions.

With regard to the intelligences whose business it is to give information to the diviner, their natures differ widely, and correspond more or less to the character of the medium of divination. Thus, the geomantic intelligences are gnomes, spirits of an earthy nature, distinguished from each other by the modifications due to the various planetary and zodiacal influences which pertain to the several symbols. The intelligence governing Puella is not to be confused with that of Venus or of Libra. It is simply a particular terrestrial daemon which partakes of those natures.

The Tarot, on the other hand, being a book, is under Mercury, and the intelligence of each card is fundamentally Mercurial. Such symbols are therefore peculiarly proper to communicate thought. They are not gross, like the geomantic daemons; but, as against this, they are unscrupulous in deceiving the diviner.<sup>1</sup>

The Yi King is served by beings free from these defects. The intense purity of the symbols prevent them from being usurped by intelligences with an axe of their own to grind.<sup>2</sup>

**It is always essential for the diviner to obtain absolute magical control over the intelligences of the system which he adopts.** He must not leave the smallest loop-hole for being tricked, befogged, or mocked. He must not allow them to use casuistry in the interpretation of his questions. It is a common knavery, especially in geomancy, to render an answer which is literally true, and yet deceives. For instance, one might ask whether some business transaction would be profitable, and find, after getting an affirmative answer, that it really referred to the other party to the affair!

There is, on the surface, no difficulty at all in getting replies. In fact, the process is mechanical; success is therefore assured, bar a stroke of apoplexy. But, even suppose we are safe from deceit, how can we know that the question has really been put to another mind, understood rightly, and answered from knowledge? It is obviously possible to check one's operations by clairvoyance, but this is rather like buying a safe to keep a brick in. Experience is the only teacher. **One acquires what one may almost call a new sense. One feels in one's self whether one is right or not. The diviner must develop this sense.** It resembles the exquisite sensibility of touch which is found in the great billiard player whose fingers can estimate infinitesimal degrees of force,

---

1. This does not mean that they are malignant. They have a proper pride in their office as Oracles of Truth; and they refuse to be profaned by the contamination of inferior and impure intelligences. A Magician whose research is fully adapted to his Neschamah will find them lucid and reliable.

2. Malicious or pranksome elementals instinctively avoid the austere sincerity of the Figures of Fu and King Wan.

or the similar phenomenon in the professional taster of tea or wine who can distinguish fantastically subtle differences of flavour.

It is a hard saying; but **in order to divine without error, one ought to be a Master of the Temple.** Divination affords excellent practice for those who aspire to that exalted eminence, for **the faintest breath of personal preference will deflect the needle from the pole of truth in the answer.** Unless the diviner have banished utterly from his mind the minutest atom of interest in the answer to his question, he is almost certain to influence that answer in favour of his personal inclinations.

The psycho-analyst will recall the fact that dreams are phantasmal representations of the unconscious Will of the sleeper, and that not only are they images of that Will instead of representations of objective truth, but the image itself is confused by a thousand cross-currents set in motion by the various complexes and inhibitions of his character. If therefore one consults the oracle, one must take care that one is not consciously or unconsciously bringing pressure to bear upon it. It is just as when an Englishman cross-examines a Hindu, the ultimate answer will be what the Hindu imagines will best please the inquirer.

The same difficulty appears in a grosser form when one receives a perfectly true reply, but insists on interpreting it so as to suit one's desires. The vast majority of people who go to "fortune-tellers" have nothing else in mind but the wish to obtain supernatural sanction for their follies. Apart from Occultism altogether, every one knows that when people ask for advice, they only want to be told how wise they are. Hardly any one acts on the most obviously commonsense counsel if it happens to clash with his previous intentions. Indeed, who would take counsel unless he were warned by some little whisper in his heart that he was about to make a fool of himself, which he is determined to do, and only wants to be able to blame his best friend, or the oracle, when he is overtaken by the disaster which his own interior mentor foresees?

Those who embark on divination will be wise to consider the foregoing remarks very deeply. They will know when they are getting deep enough by the fact of the thought beginning to hurt them. It is essential to explore oneself to the utmost, to analyse

one's mind until one can be positive, beyond the possibility of error, that one is able to detach oneself entirely from the question. The oracle is a judge; it must be beyond bribery and prejudice.

It is impossible in practice to lay down rules for the interpretation of symbols. Their nature must be investigated by intellectual methods such as the Qabalah, but the precise shape of meaning in any one case, and the sphere and tendency of its application, must be acquired partly by experience, that is, by induction, by recording and classifying one's experiments over a long period; and — this is the better part — by refining one's ratiocination to the point where it becomes instinct or intuition, whichever one likes to call it.

It is proper in cases where the sphere of the question is well marked to begin the divination by invocations of the forces thereto appropriate. An error of judgment as to the true character of the question would entail penalties proportionate to the extent of that error; and the delusions resulting from a divination fortified by invocation would be more serious than if one had not employed such heavy artillery.<sup>1</sup>

There can, however, be no objection to **preparing oneself by a general purification and consecration devised with the object of detaching oneself from one's personality and increasing the sensitiveness of one's faculties.**

All divination comes under the general type of the element Air. The peculiar properties of air are in consequence its uniform characteristics. Divination is subtle and intangible. It moves with mysterious ease, expanding, contracting, flowing, responsive to the slightest stress. It receives and transmits every vibration without retaining any. It becomes poisonous when its oxygen is defiled by passing through human lungs.

There is a peculiar frame of mind necessary to successful divination. The conditions of the problem are difficult. It is obviously necessary for the mind of the diviner to be concentrated absolutely upon his question. Any intrusive thought will confuse the oracle as certainly as the reader of a newspaper is confused

---

1. The apparent high sanction for the error would fortify the obstinacy of the mule.

when he reads a paragraph into which a few lines have strayed from another column. It is equally necessary that **the muscles with which he manipulates the apparatus of divination must be entirely independent of any volition of his. He must lend them for the moment to the intelligence whom he is consulting**, to be guided in their movement to make the necessary mechanical actions which determine the physical factor of the operation. It will be obvious that this is somewhat awkward for the diviner who is also a magician, for as a magician he has been constantly at work to keep all his forces under his own control, and to prevent the slightest interference with them by any alien Will. It is, in fact, commonly the case, or so says the experience of The MASTER THERION, that the most promising Magicians are the most deplorable diviners, and vice versâ. It is only when the aspirant approaches perfection that he becomes able to reconcile these two apparently opposing faculties. Indeed, there is no surer sign of all-round success than this ability to put the whole of one's powers at the service of any type of task.

With regard to the mind, again, it would seem that concentration on the question makes more difficult the necessary detachment from it. Once again, the diviner stands in need of a considerable degree of attainment in the practices of meditation. **He must have succeeded in destroying the tendency of the ego to interfere with the object of thought. He must be able to conceive of a thing out of all relation with anything else.** The regular practice of concentration leads to this result; in fact, it destroys the thing itself as we have hitherto conceived it; for the nature of things is always veiled from us by our habit of regarding them as in essential relation with ourselves and our reactions toward them.

One can hardly expect the diviner to make Samadhi with his question — that would be going too far, and destroy the character of the operation by removing the question from the class of concatenated ideas. It would mean interpreting the question in terms of "without limit", and thus imply an equally formless answer. But he should approximate to this extreme sufficiently to **allow the question entire freedom to make for itself its own proper links with the intelligence directing the answer,**

preserving its position on its own plane, and evoking the necessary counterpoise to its own deviation from the norm of nothingness.

We may recapitulate the above reflections in a practical form. We will suppose that one wishes to divine by geomancy whether or no one should marry, it being assumed that one's emotional impulses suggest so rash a course. The man takes his wand and his sand; he traces the question, makes the appropriate pentagram, and the sigil of the spirit. Before tracing the dashes which are to determine the four "Mothers", he must strictly examine himself. He must banish from his mind every thought which can possibly act as an attachment to his proposed partner. He must banish all thoughts which concern himself, those of apprehension no less than those of ardour. He must carry his introspection as far as possible. He must observe with all the subtlety at his command whether it pains him to abandon any of these thoughts. So long as his mind is stirred, however slightly, by one single aspect of the subject, he is not fit to begin to form the figure. **He must sink his personality in that of the intelligence hearing the question propounded by a stranger to whom he is indifferent, but whom it is his business to serve faithfully.** He must now run over the whole affair in his mind, making sure of his utter aloofness therefrom. He must also make sure that his muscles are perfectly free to respond to the touch of the Will of that intelligence. (It is of course understood that he has not become so familiar with geomancy by dint of practice as to be able to calculate subconsciously what figures he will form; for this would vitiate the experiment entirely. It is, in fact, one of the objections to geomancy that sooner or later one does become aware at the time of tracing them whether the dots are going to be even or odd. This needs a special training to correct).

Physio-psychological theory will probably maintain that the "automatic" action of the hand is controlled by the brain no less than in the case of conscious volition; but this is an additional argument for identifying the brain with the intelligence invoked.

Having thus identified himself as closely as possible with that intelligence, and concentrated on the question as if the "propheying spirit" were giving its whole attention thereto, he must

await the impulse to trace the marks on the sand; and, as soon as it comes let it race to the finish. Here arises another technical difficulty. One has to make 16 rows of dots; and, especially for the beginner, the mind has to grapple with the apprehension lest the hand fail to execute the required number. It is also troubled by fearing to exceed; but excess does not matter. Extra lines are simply null and void, so that the best plan is to banish that thought, and make sure only of not stopping too soon.<sup>1</sup>

The lines being traced, the operation is over as far as spiritual qualities are required, for a time. The process of setting up the figure for judgment is purely mechanical.

But, in the judgment, the diviner stands once more in need of his inmost and utmost attainments. **He should exhaust the intellectual sources of information at his disposal, and form from them his judgment. But having done this, he should detach his mind from what it has just formulated, and proceed to concentrate it on the figure as a whole, almost as if it were the object of his meditation.** One need hardly repeat that in both these operations detachment from one's personal partialities is as necessary as it was in the first part of the work. In setting up the figure, bias would beget a Freudian phantasm to replace the image of truth which the figure ought to be; and it is not too much to say that the entire subconscious machinery of the body and mind lends itself with horrid willingness to this ape-like antic of treason. But now that the figure stands for judgment, the same bias would tend to form its phantasm of wish-fulfilment in a different manner. It would act through the mind to bewray sound judgment. It might, for example, induce one to emphasize the Venereal element in Puella at the expense of the Saturnian. It might lead one to underrate the influence of a hostile figure, or to neglect altogether some element of importance. The MASTER THERION has known cases where the diviner was so afraid of an unfavourable answer that he made actual mistakes in the simple mechanical construction of the figure! Finally, in the

---

1. Practice soon teaches one to count subconsciously.....yes, and that is the other difficulty again!

summing up; it is fatally easy to slur over unpleasantness, and to breathe on the tiniest spark that promises to kindle the tinder — the rotten rags! — of hope.

The concluding operation is therefore to **obtain a judgment of the figure, independent of all intellectual or moral restraint. One must endeavour to apprehend it as a thing absolute in itself.** One must treat it, in short, very much the same as one did the question; as a mystical entity, till now unrelated with other phenomena. One must, so to speak, adore it as a god, uncritically: "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth." **It must be allowed to impose its intrinsic individuality on the mind,** to put its fingers independently on whatever notes it pleases.

In this way one obtains an impression of the true purport of the answer; and one obtains it armed with a sanction superior to any sensible suggestions. It comes from and to a part of the individual which is independent of the influence of environment; is adjusted to that environment by true necessity, and not by the artifices of such adaptations as our purblind conception of convenience induces us to fabricate.

The student will observe from the above that **divination is in one sense an art entirely separate from that of Magick; yet it interpenetrates Magick at every point.** The fundamental laws of both are identical. The right use of divination has already been explained; but it must be added that **proficiency therein,** tremendous as is its importance in furnishing the Magician with the information necessary to his strategical and tactical plans, **in no wise enables him to accomplish the impossible.** It is not within the scope of divination to predict the future (for example) with the certainty of an astronomer in calculating the return of a comet.<sup>1</sup> There is always much virtue in divination; for (Shakespeare assures us!) there is "much virtue in IF"!

In estimating the ultimate value of a divinatory judgment, one must allow for more than the numerous sources of error inherent

---

1. The astronomer himself has to enter a caveat. He can only calculate the probability on the observed facts. Some force might interfere with the anticipated movement.

in the process itself. The judgment can do no more than the facts presented to it warrant. It is naturally impossible in most cases to make sure that some important factor has not been omitted. In asking, "shall I be wise to marry?" one leaves it open for wisdom to be defined in divers ways. One can only expect an answer in the sense of the question. The connotation of "wise" would then imply the limitations "in your private definition of wisdom", "in reference to your present circumstances." It would not involve guarantee against subsequent disaster, or pronounce a philosophical dictum as to wisdom in the abstract sense. **One must not assume that the oracle is omniscient.** By the nature of the case, on the contrary, it is the utterance of a being whose powers are partial and limited, though not to such an extent, or in the same directions, as one's own. But a man who is advised to purchase a certain stock should not complain if a general panic knocks the bottom out of it a few weeks later. The advice only referred to the prospects of the stock in itself. The divination must not be blamed any more than one would blame a man for buying a house at Ypres three years before the World-War.

As against this, one must insist that it is obviously to the advantage of the diviner to obtain this information from beings of the most exalted essence available. An old witch who has a familiar spirit of merely local celebrity such as the toad in her tree, can hardly expect him to tell her much more of private matters than her parish magazine does of public. It depends entirely on the Magician how he is served. The greater the man, the greater must be his teacher. It follows that the highest forms of communicating daemons, those who know, so to speak, the court secrets, disdain to concern themselves with matters which they regard as beneath them. One must not make the mistake of calling in a famous physician to one's sick Pekinese. One must also beware of asking even the cleverest angel a question outside his ambit. A heart specialist should not prescribe for throat trouble.

**The Magician ought therefore to make himself master of several methods of divination; using one or the other as the purpose of the moment dictates. He should make a point of organizing a staff of such spirits to suit various**

**occasions. These should be "familiar" spirits, in the strict sense; members of his family.** He should deal with them constantly, avoiding whimsical or capricious changes. He should choose them so that their capacities cover the whole ground of his work; but he should not multiply them unnecessarily, for he makes himself responsible for each one that he employs. Such spirits should be ceremonially evoked to visible or semi-visible appearance. A strict arrangement should be made and sworn. This must be kept punctiliously by the Magician, and its infringement by the spirit severely punished. Relations with these spirits should be confirmed and encouraged by frequent intercourse. They should be treated with courtesy, consideration, and even affection. They should be taught to love and respect their master, and to take pride in being trusted by him.

It is sometimes better to act on the advice of a spirit even when one knows it to be wrong, though in such a case one must take the proper precautions against an undesirable result. The reason for this is that spirits of this type are very sensitive. They suffer agonies of remorse on realising that they have injured their Master; for he is their God; they know themselves to be part of him, their aim is to attain to absorption in him. They understand therefore that his interests are theirs. Care must be taken to employ none but spirits who are fit for the purpose, not only by reason of their capacity to supply information, but for their sympathy with the personality of the Magician. Any attempt to coerce unwilling spirits is dangerous. They obey from fear; their fear makes them flatter, and tell amiable falsehoods. It also creates phantasmal projections of themselves to personate them; and these phantasms, besides being worthless, become the prey of malicious daemons who use them to attack the Magician in various ways whose prospect of success is enhanced by the fact that he has himself created a link with them.

One more observation seems desirable while on this subject. Divination of any kind is improper in matters directly concerning the Great Work itself. **In the Knowledge and Conversation of his Holy Guardian Angel, the adept is possessed of all he can possibly need. To consult any other is to insult one's**

**Angel.** Moreover, it is to abandon the only person who really knows, and really cares, in favour of one who by the nature of the case, must be ignorant<sup>1</sup> of the essence of the matter — one whose interest in it is no more (at the best) than that of a well-meaning stranger. It should go without saying that until the Magician has attained to the Knowledge and Conversation of his Holy Guardian Angel he is liable to endless deceptions. He does not know Himself; how can he explain his business to others? How can those others, though they do their best for him, aid in anything but trifles? One must therefore be prepared for disappointment at every stage until one attains to adeptship.

This is especially true of divination, because the essence of the horror of not knowing one's Angel is the utter bewilderment and anguish of the mind, complicated by the persecution of the body, and envenomed by the ache of the soul. One puts the wrong questions, and puts them wrong; gets the wrong answers, judges them wrong, and acts wrongly upon them. One must nevertheless persist, aspiring with ardour towards one's Angel, and comforted

---

1. No intelligence of the type that operates divination is a complete Microcosm as Man is. He knows in perfection what lies within his own Sphere, and little or nothing beyond it. Graphiel knows all that is knowable about Martial matters, as no Man can possibly do. For even the most Martial man is limited as to Madim by the fact that Mars is only one element in his molecule; the other elements both inhibit concentration on their colleague, and veil him by insisting on his being interpreted in reference to themselves. No entity whose structure does not include the entire Tree of Life is capable of the Formulae of Initiation. Graphiel, consulted by the Aspirants to Adeptship, would be bound to regard the Great Work as purely a question of Combat, and ignore all other considerations. His advice would be absolute on technical points of this kind; but its very perfection would persuade the Aspirant to an unbalanced course of action which would entail failure and destruction. It is pertinent to mention in this connection that one must not expect absolute information as to what is going to happen. "Fortune-telling" is an abuse of divination. At the utmost one can only ascertain what may reasonably be expected. The proper function of the process is to guide one's judgment. Diagnosis is fairly reliable; advice may be trusted, generally speaking; but prognosis should always be cautious. The essence of the business is the consultation of specialists.

by the assurance that He is guiding one secretly towards Himself, and that all one's mistakes are necessary preparations for the appointed hour of meeting Him. Each mistake is the combing-out of some tangle in the hair of the bride as she is being coiffed for marriage.

On the other hand, although the adept is in daily communication with his Angel, he ought to be careful to consult Him only on questions proper to the dignity of the relation. One should not consult one's Angel on too many details, or indeed on any matters which come within the office of one's familiar spirits. One does not go the King about petty personal trifles. **The romance and rapture of the ineffable union which constitutes Adeptship must not be profaned by the introduction of commonplace cares.** One must not appear with one's hair in curl-papers, or complain of the cook's impertinence, if one wants to make the most of the honeymoon.<sup>1</sup>

To the Adept divination becomes therefore a secondary consideration, although he can now employ it with absolute confidence, and probably use it with far greater frequency than before his attainment. Indeed, this is likely in proportion as he learns that resort to divination (on every occasion when his Will does not instantly instruct him) with implicit obedience to its counsels careless as to whether or no they may land him in disaster, is a means admirably efficacious of keeping his mind untroubled by external impressions, and therefore in the proper condition to receive the reiterant strokes of rapture with which the love of his Angel ravishes him.

We have now mapped out the boundaries of possibility and propriety which define the physical and political geography of divination. The student must guard himself constantly against supposing that this art affords any absolute means of discovering "truth", or indeed, of using that word as if it meant more than the

---

1. As the poet puts it; "Psyche, beware how thou disclose Thy tricks of toilet to Eros, Or let him learn that those love-breathing Lyrical lips that whisper, wreathing His brows with sense-bewitching gold, Are equally expert to scold; That those caressing hands will maybe Yet box his ears and slap the baby!"

relation of two ideas each of which is itself as subject to "change without notice" as a musical programme.

Divination, in the nature of things, can do no more than put the mind of the querent into conscious connection with another mind whose knowledge of the subject at issue is to his own as that of an expert to a layman. The expert is not infallible. The client may put his question in a misleading manner, or even base it on a completely erroneous conception of the facts. He may misunderstand the expert's answer, and he may misinterpret its purport. Apart from all this, excluding all error, both question and answer are limited in validity by their own conditions; and these conditions are such that truth may cease to be true, either as time goes on, or if it be flawed by the defect of failure to consider some circumstances whose concealed operation cancels the contract.

In a word, divination, like any other science, is justified of its children. It would be extraordinary should so fertile a mother be immune from still-births, monstrosities, and abortions.

We none of us dismiss our servant science with a kick and a curse every time the telephone gets out of order. The telephone people make no claim that it always works and always works right.<sup>1</sup> Divination, with equal modesty, admits that "it often goes wrong; but it works well enough, all things considered. The science is in its infancy. All we can do is our best. We no more pretend to infallibility than the mining expert who considers himself in luck if he hits the bull's eye four times in ten."

The error of all dogmatists (from the oldest prophet with his "literally-inspired word of God" to the newest German professor with his single-track explanation of the Universe) lies in trying to prove too much, in defending themselves against critics by stretching a propably excellent theory to include all the facts and the fables, until it bursts like the overblown bladder it is.

Divination is no more than a rough and ready practical method which we understand hardly at all, and operate only as empirics. Success for the best diviner alive is no more certain in any particular instance than a long putt by a champion golfer. Its calculations

---

1. Except in New York City.

are infinitely more complex than Chess, a Chess played on an infinite board with men whose moves are indeterminate, and made still more difficult by the interference of imponderable forces and unformulated laws; while its conduct demands not only the virtues, themselves rare enough, of intellectual and moral integrity, but intuition combining delicacy with strength in such perfection and to such extremes as to make its existence appear monstrous and miraculous against Nature.

To admit this is not to discredit oracles. On the contrary, the oracles fell into disrepute just because they pretended to do more than they could. To divine concerning a matter is little more than to calculate probabilities. We obtain the use of minds who have access to knowledge beyond ours, but not to omniscience. HRU, the great angel set over the Tarot, is beyond us as we are beyond the ant; but, for all we know, the knowledge of HRU is excelled by some mightier mind in the same proportion. Nor have we any warrant for accusing HRU of ignorance or error if we read the Tarot to our own delusion. He may have known, he may have spoken truly; the fault may lie with our own insight.<sup>1</sup>

The MASTER THERION has observed on innumerable occasions that divinations, made by him and dismissed as giving untrue answers, have justified themselves months or years later when he was able to revise his judgment in perspective, untroubled by his personal passion.

It is indeed surprising how often the most careless divinations give accurate answers. When things go wrong, it is almost always possible to trace the error to one's own self-willed and insolent presumption in insisting that events shall accommodate themselves to our egoism and vanity. It is comically unscientific to adduce

---

1. The question of the sense in which an answer is true arises. One not mix up the planes. Yet, as Mr. Russell shows, *Op Cit.* p. 61, the worlds which lie behind phenomena must possess the same structure as our own. "Every proposition having a communicable significance must lie in just that essence of individuality which, for that very reason, is irrelevant to science". Just so: but this is to confess the impotence of science to attain truth, and to admit the urgency of developing a mental instrument of superior capacity.

examples of the mistakes of the diviners as evidence that their art is fatuous. Every one knows that the simplest chemical experiments often go wrong. Every one knows the eccentricities of fountain pens; but nobody outside Evangelical circles makes fun of the Cavendish experiment, or asserts that, if fountain pens undoubtedly work now and then, their doing so is merely coincidence.

The fact of the case is that the laws of nature are incomparably more subtle than even science suspects. The phenomena of every plane are intimately interwoven. The arguments of Aristotle were dependent on the atmospheric pressure which prevented his blood from boiling away. **There is nothing in the universe which does not influence every other thing in one way or another.** There is no reason in Nature why the apparently chance combinations of half-a-dozen sticks of tortoise-shell should not be so linked both with the human mind and with the entire structure of the Universe that the observation of their fall should not enable us to measure all things in heaven and earth.

With one piece of curved glass we have discovered uncounted galaxies of suns; with another, endless orders of existence in the infinitesimal. With the prism we have analysed light so that matter and force have become intelligible only as forms of light. With a rod we have summoned the invisible energies of electricity to be our familiar spirit serving us to do our Will, whether it be to outsoar the condor, or to dive deeper into the demon world of disease than any of our dreamers dared to dream.

Since with four bits of common glass mankind has learnt to know so much, achieved so much, who dare deny that the Book of Thoth, the quintessentialized wisdom of our ancestors whose civilizations, perished though they be, have left monuments which dwarf ours until we wonder whether we are degenerate from them, or evolved from Simians, who dare deny that such a book may be possessed of unimaginable powers?

It is not so long since the methods of modern science were scoffed at by the whole cultured world. In the sacred halls themselves the roofs rang loud with the scornful laughter of the high priests as each new postulant approached with his unorthodox offering.

There is hardly a scientific discovery in history which was not decried as quackery by the very men whose own achievements were scarce yet recognized by the world at large.

Within the memory of the present generation, the possibility of aeroplanes was derisively denied by those very engineers accounted most expert to give their opinions.

The method of divination, the *ratio* of it, is as obscure to-day as was that of spectrum analysis a generation ago. That the chemical composition of the fixed stars should become known to man seemed an insane imagining too ridiculous to discuss. To-day it seems equally irrational to enquire of the desert sand concerning the fate of empires. Yet surely it, if any one knows, should know!

To-day it may sound impossible for inanimate objects to reveal the inmost secrets of mankind and nature. We cannot say why divination is valid. We cannot trace the process by which it performs its marvels.<sup>1</sup> But the same objections apply equally well to the telephone. No man knows what electricity is, or the nature of the forces which determine its action. We know only that by doing certain things we get certain results, and that the least error

---

1. The main difference between a Science and an Art is that the former admits mensuration. Its processes must be susceptible of the application of quantitative standards. Its laws reject imponderable variables. Science despises Art for its refusal to conform with calculable conditions. But even to-day, in the boasted Age of Science, man is still dependent on Art as to most matters of practical importance to him; the Arts of Government, of War, of Literature, etc. are supremely influential, and Science does little more than facilitate them by making their materials mechanically docile. The utmost extension of Science can merely organize the household of Art. Art thus progresses in perception and power by increased control or automatic accuracy of its details. The MASTER THERION has made an Epoch in the Art of Magick by applying the Method of Science to its problems. His Work is a contribution of unique value, comparable only to that of those men of genius who revolutionized the empirical guesswork of "natural philosophers". The Magicians of to-morrow will be armed with mathematical theory, organized observation, and experimentally-verified practice. But their Art will remain inscrutable as ever in essence; talent will never supplant genius. Education is impotent to produce a poet greater than Robert Burns; the perfection of laboratory apparatus prepares indeed the path of a Pasteur, but cannot make masters of mediocrities.

on our part will bring our work to naught. The same is exactly true of divination. The difference between the two sciences is no more than this : that, more minds having been at work on the former we have learnt to master its tricks with greater success than in the case of the latter.