

MAGICK



THE MASTER THERION

Section 2

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.¹

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 ¹ 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!" ²

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.**"¹

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 occur¹. **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.¹

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. I of the *Equinox*² 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.¹ 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 Will² 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 baulked. 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 consider¹ 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.¹

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.¹ **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!”²

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 tired¹ 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.¹ 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; ¹ 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,¹ 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 plane².

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.¹ 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,¹ Mayan, the greatest of all the devils.

Your may also try "rising on the planes".² 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 Kingsford¹ 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 "Massacre 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; ¹ 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 TEITAN¹ — 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.² **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 clairsaudience; 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 perfectly¹ 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.¹ 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.¹ 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; ² 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.¹

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.²

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.¹

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; 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 "prophe-sying 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.¹

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.¹ 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 ignorant¹ 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.¹

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.¹ 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.¹

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.¹ 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

I. 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.

CHAPTER XIX

OF DRAMATIC RITUALS

The Wheel turns to those effectual methods of invocation employed in the ancient Mysteries and by certain secret bodies of initiates to-day. The object of them is almost invariably¹ the invocation of a God, that God conceived in a more or less material and personal fashion. These Rituals are therefore well suited for such persons as are capable of understanding the spirit of Magick as opposed to the letter. One of the great advantages of them is that a large number of persons may take part, so that there is consequently more force available; but it is important that they should all be initiates of the same mysteries, bound by the same oaths, and filled with the same aspirations. They should be associated only for this one purpose.

Such a company being prepared, the story of the God should be dramatised by a well-skilled poet accustomed to this form of composition. Lengthy speeches and invocations should be avoided, but action should be very full. Such ceremonies should be carefully rehearsed; but in rehearsals care should be taken to omit the climax, which should be studied by the principal character in private. The play should be so arranged that this climax depends on him alone. By this means one prevents the ceremony from becoming mechanical or hackneyed, and the element of surprise

1. The word is unwarrantably universal. It would not be impracticable to adopt this method to such operations as Talismanic Magick. For example, one might consecrate and charge a Pantacle by the communication by AIWAZ to the Scribe of the BOOK of the LAW, the Magician representing the Angel, the Pantacle being the Book, and the person on whom the Pantacle is intended to act taking the part of the Scribe.

assists the lesser characters to get out of themselves at the supreme moment. Following the climax there should always be an unrehearsed ceremony, an impromptu. The most satisfactory form of this is the dance. In such ceremonies appropriate libations may be freely used.

The Rite of Luna (Equinox I. VI) is a good example of this use. Here the climax is the music of the goddess, the assistants remaining in silent ecstasy.

In the rite of Jupiter the impromptu¹ is the dance, in that of Saturn long periods of silence.

It will be noticed that in these Rites poetry and music were largely employed — mostly published pieces by well-known authors and composers. It would be better¹ to write and compose specially for the ceremony².

1. "PERHAPS! One can think of certain Awful Consequences". "But, after all, they wouldn't seem so to the authors!" "But — pity the poor Gods!" "Bother the Gods!"

2. A body of skilled Magicians accustomed to work in concert may be competent to conduct impromptu Orgia. To cite an actual instance in recent times; the blood of a Christian being required for some purpose, a young cock was procured and baptized into the Roman Catholic Church by a man who, being the son of an ordained Priest, was magically an incarnation of the Being of that Priest, and was therefore congenitally possessed of the powers thereto appurtenant. This cock, "Peter Paul," was consequently a baptized Christian for all magical purposes. Order was then taken to imprison the bird; which done, the Magicians assuming respectively the characters of Herod, Herodias, Salome, and the Executioner, acted out the scene of the dance and the beheading, on the lines of Oscar Wilde's drama, "Peter Paul" being cast for the part of John the Baptist. This ceremony was devised and done on the spur of the moment, and its spontaneity and simplicity were presumably potent factors in its success.

On the point of theology, I doubt whether Dom Gorenflot successfully avoided eating meat in Lent by baptizing the pullet a carp. For as the sacrament — by its intention, despite its defects of form — could not fail of efficacy, the pullet must have become a Christian, and therefore a human being. Carp was therefore only its baptized name — cf. Polycarp — and Dom Gorenflot ate human flesh in Lent, so that, for all he became a bishop, he is damned.

CHAPTER XX

OF THE EUCHARIST AND OF THE ART OF ALCHEMY

I

One of the simplest and most complete of Magick ceremonies is the Eucharist.

It consists in taking common things, transmuting them into things divine, and consuming them.

So far, it is a type of every magick ceremony, for the reabsorption of the force is a kind of consumption; but it has a more restricted application, as follows.

Take a substance¹ symbolic of the whole course of nature, make it God, and consume it.

There are many ways of doing this; but they may easily be classified according to the number of the elements of which the sacrament is composed.

The highest form of the Eucharist is that in which the Element consecrated is One.

It is one substance and not two, not living and not dead, neither liquid nor solid, neither hot nor cold, neither male nor female.

This sacrament is secret in every respect. For those who may be worthy, although not officially recognized as such, this Eucharist has been described in detail and without concealment, *somewhere* in the published writings of the MASTER THEBION. But He has told no one where. It is reserved for the highest initiates, and is synonymous with the Accomplished Work on the

1. This may be of a composite character.

material plane. It is the Medicine of Metals, the Stone of the Wise, the Potable Gold, the Elixir of Life that is consumed therein. **The altar is the bosom of Isis, the eternal mother; the chalice is in effect the Cup of our Lady Babalon Herself; the Wand is that which Was and Is and Is To Come.**

The Eucharist of *two* elements has its matter of the passives. The wafer (pantacle) is of corn, typical of earth; the wine (cup) represents water. (There are certain other attributions. The Wafer is the Sun, for instance : and the wine is appropriate to Bacchus).

The wafer may, however, be more complex, the "Cake of Light" described in Liber Legis.

This is used in the exoteric **Mass of the Phoenix** (Liber 333, Cap:44) mixed with the blood of the Magus. **This mass should be performed daily at sunset by every magician.**

Corn and wine are equivalent to flesh and blood; but it is easier to convert live substances into the body and blood of God, than to perform this miracle upon dead matter.

The Eucharist of *three* elements has for basis the symbols of the three Gunas. For Tamas (darkness) take opium or nightshade or some sleepy medicine; for Rajas (activity) take strychnine or other excitant; for Sattvas (calm) the cakes of Light may again be suitable.¹

The Eucharist of *four* elements consists of fire, air, water, and earth. These are represented by a flame for fire, by incense or roses for air, by wine for water, and by bread and salt for earth.

The Eucharist of *five* elements has for basis wine for taste, a rose for smell, a flame for sight, a bell for sound, and a dagger for touch. This sacrament is implied in the Mass of the Phoenix in a slightly different form.

1. The Cakes of Light are universally applicable; they contain meal, honey, and oil (carbohydrates, fats, and proteids, the three necessities of human nutrition) : also perfume of the three essential types of magical and curative virtue; the subtle principle of animal life itself is fixed in them by the introduction of fresh living blood.

The Eucharist of *six* elements has Father, Son, and Holy Spirit above; breath, water, and blood beneath. It is a sacrament reserved for high initiates.¹

The Eucharist of *seven* elements is mystically identical with that of one.

Of the method of consecrating the elements it is only necessary to say that they should be treated as talismans. The circle and other furniture of the Temple should receive the usual benefit of the banishings and consecrations. The Oath should be taken and the Invocations made. When the divine force manifests in the elements, they should be solemnly consumed. There is also a simpler method of consecration reserved for initiates of high rank, of which it is here unlawful to speak.

According to the nature of the Sacrament, so will its results be. In some one may receive a mystic grace, culminating in Samadhi; in others a simpler and more material benefit may be obtained.

The highest sacrament, that of One element, is universal in its operation; according to the declared purpose of the work so will the result be. It is a universal Key of all Magick.

These secrets are of supreme practical importance, and are guarded in the Sanctuary with a two-edged sword flaming every way²; **for this sacrament is the Tree of Life itself, and whoso partaketh of the fruit thereof shall never die³.**

Unless he so will. Who would not rather work through incarnation; a real renewal of body and brain, than content himself with a stagnant immortality upon this mote in the Sunlight of the Universe which we call earth?

1. The Lance and the Graal are firstly dedicated to the Holy Spirit of Life, in Silence. The Bread and Wine are then fermented and manifested by vibration, and received by the Virgin Mother. The elements are then intermingled and consumed after the Epiphany of Iacchus, when "Countenance beholdeth Countenance".

2. J. K. Huysmans, who was afraid of them, and tried to betray the little he knew of them, became a Papist, and died of cancer of the tongue.

3. The use of the Elixir of Life is only justifiable in peculiar circumstances. To go counter to the course of natural Change is to approximate perilously to the error of the "Black Brothers".

With regard to the preparations for such Sacraments, the Catholic Church has maintained well enough the traditions of the true Gnostic Church in whose keeping the secrets are.¹

Chastity² is a condition; fasting for some hours previous is a condition; an earnest and continual aspiration is a condition. Without these antecedents even the Eucharist of the One and Seven is partially — though such is its intrinsic virtue that it can never be wholly — balked of its effect.

A Eucharist of some sort should most assuredly be consummated daily by every magician, and he should regard it as the main sustenance of his magical life. It is of more importance than any other magical ceremony, because it is a complete circle. The whole of the force expended is completely re-absorbed; yet the virtue is that vast gain represented by the abyss between Man and God.

The magician becomes filled with God, fed upon God, intoxicated with God. Little by little his body will become purified by the internal lustration of God; day by day his mortal frame, shedding its earthly elements, will become in very truth the Temple of the Holy Ghost. Day by day matter is replaced by Spirit, the human by the divine; ultimately the change will be complete; God manifest in flesh will be his name.

This is the most important of all magical secrets that ever were or are or can be. To a Magician thus renewed the attainment of the Knowledge and Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel becomes an inevitable task; every force of his nature, unhindered, tends to that aim and goal of whose nature neither man nor god may speak, for that it is infinitely beyond speech or thought or

1. Study, in the Roman Missal, the Canon of the Mass, and the chapter of "defects".

2. The Word Chastity is used by initiates to signify a certain state of soul and of mind determinant of a certain habit of body which is nowise identical with what is commonly understood. Chastity in the true magical sense of the word is inconceivable to those who are not wholly emancipated from the obsession of sex.

ecstasy or silence. Samadhi and Nibbana are but its shadows cast upon the universe.

II

If the Master Therion effects by this book nothing else but to demonstrate the continuity of nature and the uniformity of Law, He will feel that His work has not been wasted. In his original design of Part III he did not contemplate any allusion to alchemy. It has somehow been taken for granted that this subject is entirely foreign to regular Magick, both in scope and method. It will be the main object of the following description to establish it as essentially a branch of the subject, and to show that it may be considered simply as a particular case of the general proposition — differing from evocatory and talismanic Magick only in the values which are represented by the unknown quantities in the pantomorphous equations.

There is no need to make any systematized attempt to decipher the jargon of Hermetic treatises. We need not enter upon an historical discussion. Let it suffice to say that the word alchemy is an Arabic term consisting of the article “al” and the adjective “khemi” which means “that which pertains to Egypt”¹. A rough translation would be “The Egyptian matter”. The assumption is that the Mohammedan grammarians held traditionally that the art was derived from that wisdom of the Egyptians which was the boast of Moses, Plato, and Pythagoras, and the source of their illumination.

Modern research (by profane scholars) leaves it still doubtful as to whether Alchemical treatises should be classified as mystical, magical, medical, or chemical. The most reasonable opinion is that all these objects formed the pre-occupation of the alchemists in varying proportions. Hermes is alike the God of Wisdom, Thaumaturgy, therapeutics, and physical science. All these may consequently claim the title Hermetic. It cannot be doubted that such writers as Fludd aspired to spiritual perfection. It is equally sure that Edward Kelly wrote primarily from the point of view

1. This etymology differs from that given by Skeat; I can do no more than present my submission.

of a Magician; that Paracelsus applied himself to the cure of disease and the prolongation of life as the first consideration, although his greatest achievements seem to modern thinkers to have been rather his discoveries of opium, zinc, and hydrogen; so that we tend to think of him as a chemist no less than we do of Van Helmont, whose conception of gas ranks him as one of those rare geniuses who have increased human knowledge by a fundamentally important idea.

The literature of Alchemy is immense. Practically all of it is wholly or partially unintelligible. Its treatises, from the "Asch Metzareph" of the Hebrews to the "Chariot of Antimony" are deliberately couched in hieratic riddles. Ecclesiastical persecution, and the profanation of the secrets of power, were equally dreaded. Worse still, from our point of view, this motive induced writers to insert intentionally misleading statements, the more deeply to bedevil unworthy pretenders to their mysteries.

We do not propose to discuss any of the actual processes. Most readers will be already aware that the main objects of alchemy were the Philosopher's Stone, the Medicine of Metals, and various tinctures and elixirs possessing divers virtues; in particular, those of healing disease, extending the span of life, increasing human abilities, perfecting the nature of man in every respect, conferring magical powers, and transmuting material substances, especially metals, into more valuable forms.

The subject is further complicated by the fact that many authors were unscrupulous quacks. Ignorant of the first elements of the art, they plagiarized without shame, and reaped a harvest of fraudulent gain. They took advantage of the general ignorance, and the convention of mystery, in just the same way as their modern successors do in the matter of all Occult sciences.

But despite all this, one thing is abundantly clear; all serious writers, though they seem to speak of an infinity of different subjects, so much so that it has proved impossible for modern analytic research to ascertain the true nature of any single process, were agreed on the fundamental theory on which they based their practices. It appears at first sight as if hardly any two of them were in accord as to the nature of the "First Matter of the Work".

They describe this in a bewildering multiplicity of unintelligible symbols. We have no reason to suppose that they were all talking of the same thing, or otherwise. The same remarks apply to every reagent and every process, no less than to the final product or products.

Yet beneath this diversity, we may perceive an obscure identity. They all begin with a substance in nature which is described as existing almost everywhere, and as universally esteemed of no value. The alchemist is in all cases to take this substance, and subject it to a series of operations. By so doing, he obtains his product, This product, however named or described, is always a substance which represents the truth or perfection of the original "First Matter"; and its qualities are invariably such as pertain to a living being, not to an inanimate mass. In a word, **the alchemist is to take a dead thing, impure, valueless, and powerless, and transform it into a live thing, active, invaluable and thaumaturgic.**

The reader of this book will surely find in this a most striking analogy with what we have already said of the processes of Magick. What, by our definition, is initiation ? The First Matter is a man, that is to say, a perishable parasite, bred of the earth's crust, crawling irritably upon it for a span, and at last returning to the dirt whence he sprang. The process of initiation consists in removing his impurities, and finding in his true self an immortal intelligence to whom matter is no more than the means of manifestation. The initiate is eternally individual; he is ineffable, incorruptible, immune from everything. He possesses infinite wisdom and infinite power in himself. This equation is identical with that of a talisman. The Magician takes an idea, purifies it, intensifies it by invoking into it the inspiration of his soul. It is no longer a scrawl scratched on a sheep-skin, but a word of Truth, imperishable, mighty to prevail throughout the sphere of its purport. The evocation of a spirit is precisely similar in essence. The exorcist takes dead material substances of a nature sympathetic to the being whom he intends to invoke. He banishes all impurities therefrom, prevents all interference therewith, and proceeds to give life to the subtle substance thus prepared by instilling his soul.

Once again, there is nothing in this exclusively 'magical'. Rembrandt Van Ryn used to take a number of ores and other crude objects. From these he banished the impurities, and consecrated them to his work, by the preparation of canvasses, brushes, and colours. This done, he compelled them to take the stamp of his soul; from those dull, valueless creatures of earth he created a vital and powerful being of truth and beauty. It would indeed be surprising to anybody who has come to a clear comprehension of nature if there were any difference in the essence of these various formulas. The laws of nature apply equally in every possible circumstance.

We are now in a position to understand what alchemy is. We might even go further and say that even if we had never heard of it, we know what it must be.

Let us emphasize the fact that the final product is in all cases a living thing. It has been the great stumbling block to modern research that the statements of alchemists cannot be explained away. From the chemical standpoint it has seemed not *à priori* impossible that lead should be turned into gold. Our recent discovery of the periodicity of the elements has made it seem likely, at least in theory, that our apparently immutable elements should be modifications of a single one.¹ Organic Chemistry, with its metatheses and syntheses dependent on the conceptions of molecules as geometrical structures has demonstrated a praxis which gives this theory body; and the properties of Radium have driven the Old Guard from the redoubt which flew the flag of the essential heterogeneity of the elements. The doctrines of Evolution have brought the alchemical and monistic theory of matter into line with our conception of life; the collapse of the wall between the animal and vegetable kingdoms has shaken that which divided them from the mineral.

But even though the advanced chemist might admit the possibility of transmuting lead into gold, he could not conceive of that

1. See R. K. Duncan, "The New Knowledge", for a popularisation of recent results.

Aleister Crowley held this doctrine in his teens at a period when it was the grossest heresy.

gold as other than metallic, of the same order of nature as the lead from which it had been made. That this gold should possess the power of multiplying itself, or of acting as a ferment upon other substances, seemed so absurd that he felt obliged to conclude that the alchemists who claimed these properties for their Gold must, after all, have been referring not to Chemistry, but to some spiritual operations whose sanctity demanded some such symbolic veil as the cryptographic use of the language of the laboratory.

The MASTER THERION is sanguine that his present reduction of all cases of the art of Magick to a single formula will both elucidate and vindicate Alchemy, while extending chemistry to cover all classes of Change.

There is an obvious condition which limits our proposed operations. This is that, as the formula of any Work effects the extraction and visualization of the Truth from any "First Matter", the "Stone" or "Elixir" which results from our labours will be the pure and perfect Individual originally inherent in the substance chosen, and nothing else. The most skilful gardener cannot produce lilies from the wild rose; his roses will always be roses, however he have perfected the properties of his stock.

There is here no contradiction with our previous thesis of the ultimate unity of all substance. It is true that Hobbs and Nobbs are both modifications of the Pleroma. Both vanish in the Pleroma when they attain Samadhi. But they are not interchangeable to the extent that they are individual modifications; the initiate Hobbs is not the initiate Nobbs any more than Hobbs the haberdasher is Nobbs of "the nail and sarspan business as he got his money by". Our skill in producing aniline dyes does not enable us to dispense with the original aniline, and use sugar instead. Thus the Alchemists said : "To make gold you must take gold"; their art was to bring each substance to the perfection of its own proper nature.

No doubt, part of this process involved the withdrawal of the essence of the "First Matter" within the homogeneity of "Hyle", just as initiation insists on the annihilation of the individual in the Impersonal Infinity of Existence to emerge once more as a less confused and deformed Eidolon of the Truth of Himself. This is the guarantee that he is uncontaminated by alien elements. The

“Elixir” must possess the activity of a “nascent” substance, just as “nascent” hydrogen combines with arsenic (in “Marsh’s test”) when the ordinary form of the gas is inert. Again, oxygen satisfied by sodium or diluted by nitrogen will not attack combustible materials with the vehemence proper to the pure gas.

We may summarize this thesis by saying that **Alchemy includes as many possible operations as there are original ideas inherent in nature.**

Alchemy resembles evocation in its selection of appropriate material bases for the manifestation of the Will; but differs from it in proceeding without personification, or the intervention of alien planes.¹ It may be more closely compared with Initiation; for the effective element of the Product is of the essence of its own nature, and inherent therein; the Work similarly consists in isolating it from its accretions.

Now just as the Aspirant, on the Threshold of Initiation, finds himself assailed by the “complexes” which have corrupted him, their externalization excruciating him, and his agonized reluctance to their elimination plunging him into such ordeals that he seems (both to himself and to others) to have turned from a noble and upright man into an unutterable scoundrel; so does the *First Matter* blacken and putrefy as the Alchemist breaks up its coagulations of impurity.

The student may work out for himself the various analogies involved, and discover the “Black Dragon”, the “Green Lion”, the “Lunar Water”, the “Raven’s Head”, and so forth. The indications above given should suffice all who possess aptitude for Alchemical Research.

Only one further reflection appears necessary; namely, that the Eucharist, with which this chapter is properly preoccupied, must be conceived as one case — as the critical case — of the Art of the Alchemist.

The reader will have observed, perhaps with surprise, that The MASTER THERION describes several types of Eucharist. The reason is that given above; there is no substance incompetent to

1. Some alchemists may object to this statement. I prefer to express no final opinion on the matter.

serve as an element in some Sacrament; also, each spiritual Grace should possess its peculiar form of Mass, and therefore its own "materia magica". It is utterly unscientific to treat "God" as a universal homogeneity, and use the same means to prolong life as to bewitch cattle. One does not invoke "Electricity" indiscriminately to light one's house and to propel one's brougham; one works by measured application of one's powers to intelligent analytical comprehension of the conditions of each separate case.

There is a Eucharist for every Grace that we may need; we must apprehend the essential characters in each case, select suitable Elements, and devise proper processes.

To consider the classical problems of Alchemy: the Medicine of Metals must be the quintessence of some substance that serves to determine the structure (or rate of vibration) whose manifestation is in characteristic metallic qualities. This need not be a chemical substance at all in the ordinary sense of the word.

The Elixir of Life will similarly consist of a living organism capable of growth, at the expense of its environment; and of such a nature that its "true Will" is to cause that environment to serve it as its means of expression in the physical world of human life.

The Universal Medicine will be a menstruum of such subtlety as to be able to penetrate all matter and transmute it in the sense of its own tendency, while of such impartial purity as to accept perfectly the impression of the Will of the Alchemist. This substance, properly prepared, and properly charged, is able to perform all things soever that are physically possible, within the limits of the proportions of its momentum to the inertia of the object to which it is applied.

It may be observed in conclusion that, in dealing with forms of Matter-Motion so subtle as these, it is not enough to pass the Pons Asinorum of intellectual knowledge.

The MASTER THERION has possessed the theory of these Powers for many years; but His practice is still in progress towards perfection. Even efficiency in the preparation is not all; there is need to be judicious in the manipulation, and adroit in the administration, of the product. He does not perform haphazard miracles, but applies His science and skill in conformity with the laws of nature.

CHAPTER XXI

OF BLACK MAGIC

OF THE MAIN TYPES OF THE OPERATIONS OF MAGICK ART AND OF THE POWERS OF THE SPHINX

I

As was said at the opening of the second chapter, the Single Supreme Ritual is the attainment of the Knowledge and Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel. *It is the raising of the complete man in a vertical straight line.*

Any deviation from this line tends to become black magic. Any other operation is black magic.

In the True Operation the Exaltation is equilibrated by an expansion in the other three arms of the Cross. Hence the Angel immediately gives the Adept power over the Four Great Princes and their servitors.¹

If the magician needs to perform any other operation than this, it is only lawful in so far as it is a necessary preliminary to That One Work.

There are, however many shades of grey. It is not every magician who is well armed with theory. Perhaps one such may invoke Jupiter, with the wish to heal others of their physical ills. This sort of thing is harmless,² or almost so. It is not evil in

1. See the Book of the Sacred Magic of Abramelin the Mage.

2. There is nevertheless the general objection to the diversion of channels of Initiation to the Sea of Attainment, into ditches of irrigation for the fields of material advantage. It is bad business to pay good coin for perishable products; like marrying for money, or prostituting poetic genius to political purposes. The converse course, though equally

itself. It arises from a defect of understanding. **Until the Great Work has been performed, it is presumptuous for the magician to pretend to understand the universe, and dictate its policy. Only the Master of the Temple can say whether any given act is a crime.** "Slay that innocent child?" (I hear the ignorant say) "What a horror!" "Ah!" replies the Knower, with foresight of history, "but that child will become Nero. Hasten to strangle him!"

There is a third, above these, who understands that Nero was as necessary as Julius Caesar.

The Master of the Temple accordingly interferes not with the scheme of things except just so far as he is doing the Work which he is sent to do. Why should he struggle against imprisonment, banishment, death? It is all part of the game in which he is a pawn. "It was necessary for the Son of Man to suffer these things, and to enter into His glory."

The Master of the Temple is so far from the man in whom He manifests that all these matters are of no importance to Him. It may be of importance to His Work that man shall sit upon a throne, or be hanged. In such a case He informs his Magus, who exerts the power intrusted to Him, and it happens accordingly. Yet all happens naturally, and of necessity, and to all appearance without a word from Him.

Nor will the mere Master of the Temple, as a rule, presume to act upon the Universe, save as the servant of his own destiny. It is only the Magus, He of the grade above, who has attained to Chokhmah, Wisdom, and so dare act. He must dare act, although it like Him not. But He must assume the Curse of His grade, as it is written in the Book of the Magus.¹

There are, of course, entirely black forms of magic. To him who has not given every drop of his blood for the cup of BABALON

objectionable as pollution of the purity of the planes, is at least respectable for its nobility. The ascetic of the Thebaid or the Trappist Monastery is infinitely worthier than the health-peddler and success-monger of Boston or Los Angeles; for the one offers temporal trash to gain eternal wealth, while the other values spiritual substance only as enabling him to get better bodily conditions, and a firmer grip on the dollars.

1. Equinox I, VII, 5-9.

all magic power is dangerous. There are even more debased and evil forms, things in themselves black. Such is the use of spiritual force to material ends. Christian Scientists, Mental Healers, Professional Diviners, Psychics and the like, are all *ipso facto* Black Magicians.

They exchange gold for dross. They sell their higher powers for gross and temporary benefit.

That the most crass ignorance of Magick is their principal characteristic is no excuse, even if Nature accepted excuses, which she does not. If you drink poison in mistake for wine, your "mistake" will not save your life.

Below these in one sense, yet far above them in another, **are the Brothers of the Left Hand Path**¹. These are they who "shut themselves up", who refuse their blood to the Cup, who have trampled Love in the Race for self-aggrandisement.

As far as the grade of Exempt Adept, they are on the same path as the White Brotherhood; for until that grade is attained, the goal is not disclosed. Then only are the goats, the lonely leaping mountain-masters, separated from the gregarious huddling valley-bound sheep. Then those who have well learned the lessons of the Path are ready to be torn asunder, to give up their own life to the Babe of the Abyss which is — and is not — they.

The others, proud in their purple, refuse. They make themselves a false crown of the Horror of the Abyss; they set the Dispersion of Choronzon upon their brows; they clothe themselves in the poisoned robes of Form; they shut themselves up; and when the force that made them what they are is exhausted, their strong towers fall, they become the Eaters of Dung in the Day of Be-with-us, and their shreds, strewn in the Abyss, are lost.

Not so the Masters of the Temple, that sit as piles of dust in the City of the Pyramids, awaiting the Great Flame that shall consume that dust to ashes. For the blood that they have surrendered is treasured in the Cup of OUR LADY BABALON, a mighty

1. See Liber 418, and study it well, in this matter. Equinox I, V. Supplement.

medicine to a wake the Eld of the All-Father, and redeem the Virgin of the World from her virginity.

II

Before leaving the subject of Black Magic, one may touch lightly on the question of Pacts with the Devil.

The Devil does not exist. It is a false name invented by the Black Brothers to imply a Unity in their ignorant muddle of dispersions. A devil who had unity would be a God ¹.

It was said by the Sorcerer of the Jura that **in order to invoke the Devil it is only necessary to call him with your whole will.**

This is an universal magical truth, and applies to every other being as much as to the Devil. For the whole will of every man is in reality the whole will of the Universe.

It is, however, always easy to call up the demons, for they are always calling you; and you have only to step down to their level

1. "The Devil" is, historically, the God of any people that one personally dislikes. This has led to so much confusion of thought that THE BEAST 666 has preferred to let names stand as they are, and to proclaim simply that AIWAZ — the solar-phallic-hermetic "Lucifer" is His own Holy Guardian Angel, and "The Devil" SATAN or HADIT of our particular unit of the Starry Universe. This serpent, SATAN, is not the enemy of Man, but HE who made Gods of our race, knowing Good and Evil; He bade "Know Thyself!" and taught Initiation. He is "the Devil" of the Book of Thoth, and His emblem is BAPHOMET, the Androgyne who is the hieroglyph of arcane perfection. The number of His ATU is xv, which is Yod Hé, the Monogram of the Eternal, the Father one with the Mother, the Virgin Seed one with all-containing Space. He is therefore Life, and Love. But moreover his letter is Ayin, the Eye; he is Light, and his Zodiacal image is Capricornus, that leaping goat whose attribute is Liberty. (Note that the "Jehovah" of the Hebrews is etymologically connected with these. The classical example of such antinomy, one which has led to such disastrous misunderstandings, is that between NU and HAD, North and South, Jesus and John. The subject is too abstruse and complicated to be discussed in detail here. The student should consult the writings of Sir R. Payne Knight, General Forlong, Gerald Massey, Fabre d'Olivet; etc. etc., for the data on which these considerations are ultimately based.)

and fraternize with them. They will then tear you in pieces at their leisure. Not at once; they will wait until you have wholly broken the link between you and your Holy Guardian Angel before they pounce, lest at the last moment you escape.

Antony of Padua and (in our own times) "Macgregor" Mathers are examples of such victims.

Nevertheless, every magician must firmly extend his empire to the depth of hell. "My adepts stand upright, their heads above the heavens, their feet below the hells."¹

This is the reason why the magician who performs the Operation of the "Sacred Magic of Abramelin the Mage", immediately after attaining to the Knowledge and Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel, must evoke the Four Great Princes of the Evil of the World.

"Obedience and faith to Him that liveth and triumpheth, that reigneth above you in your palaces as the Balance of Righteousness and Truth" is your duty to your Holy Guardian Angel, and the duty of the demon world to you.

These powers of "evil" nature are wild beasts; they must be tamed, trained to the saddle and the bridle; they will bear you well. There is nothing useless in the Universe: do not wrap up your Talent in a napkin, because it is only "dirty money"!

With regard to Pacts, they are rarely lawful. There should be no bargain struck. Magick is not a trade, and no hucksters need apply. Master everything, but give generously to your servants, once they have unconditionally submitted.

There is also the question of alliances with various Powers. These again are hardly ever allowable.² No Power which is not

1. Liber XC, verse 40. See The Equinox.

2. Notwithstanding, there exist certain bodies of spiritual beings, in whose ranks are not only angelic forces, but elementals, and even daemons, who have attained to such Right Understanding of the Universe that they have banded themselves together with the object of becoming Microcosms, and realize that their best means to this end is devotion to the service of the true interests of Mankind. Societies of spiritual forces, organized on these lines, dispose of enormous resources. The Magician who is himself sworn to the service of humanity may count upon the heartiest help of these Orders. Their sincerity may always be assured by putting them to the

a microcosm in itself — and even archangels reach rarely to this centre of balance — is fit to treat on an equality with Man. The proper study of mankind is God; with Him is his business; and with Him alone. Some magicians have hired legions of spirits for some special purpose; but it has always proved a serious mistake. The whole idea of exchange is foreign to magick. The dignity of the magician forbids compacts. “The Earth is the Lord’s and the fulness thereof”.

III

The operations of Magick art are difficult to classify, as they merge into each other, owing to the essential unity of their method and result. We may mention :

1. Operations such as evocation, in which a live spirit is brought from dead matter.

2. Consecrations of talismans in which a live spirit is bound into “dead” matter and vivifies the same.

3. Works of divination, in which a live spirit is made to control operations of the hand or brain of the Magician. Such works are accordingly most dangerous, to be used only by advanced magicians, and then with great care.

4. Works of fascination, such as operations of invisibility, and transformations of the apparent form of the person or thing concerned. This consists almost altogether in distracting the attention, or disturbing the judgment, of the person whom it is wished to deceive. There are, however, “real” transformations of the adept himself which are very useful. See the Book of the Dead for methods. The assumption of God-Forms can be carried to the point of actual transformation.

5. Works of Love and Hate, which are also performed (as

test of the acceptance of the Law of Thelema. Whoso denies “Do what thou wilt shall be the Whole of the Law” confesses that he still clings to the conflict in his own nature; he is not, and does not want to be, true to himself. *A fortiori*, he will prove false to you.

a rule) by a fascination. These works are too easy; and rarely useful. They have a nasty trick of recoiling on the magician.

6. Works of destruction, which may be done in many different ways. One may fascinate and bend to one's will a person who has of his own right the power to destroy. One may employ spirits or talismans. The more powerful magicians of the last few centuries have employed books.

In private matters these works are very easy, if they be necessary. An adept known to The MASTER THERION once found it necessary to slay a Circe who was bewitching brethren. He merely walked to the door of her room, and drew an Astral T ("traditore", and the symbol of Saturn) with an astral dagger. Within 48 hours she shot herself. ¹

7. Works of creation and dissolution, and the higher invocations.

There are also hundreds of other operations; ² to bring wanted objects — gold, books, women and the like; to open locked doors, to discover treasure; to swim under water; to have armed men at command — etc., etc. All these are really matters of detail; the Adeptus Major will easily understand how to perform them if necessary. ³

1. As explained above, in another connexion, he who "destroys" any being must accept it, with all the responsibilities attached, as part of himself. The Adept here in question was therefore obliged to incorporate the elemental spirit of the girl — she was not human, the sheath of a Star, but an advanced planetary daemon, whose rash ambition had captured a body beyond its capacity to conduct — in his own magical vehicle. He thereby pledged himself to subordinate all the sudden accession of qualities — passionate, capricious, impulsive, irrational, selfish, short-sightedness, sensual, fickle, crazy, and desperate, to his True Will; to discipline, co-ordinate, and employ them in the Great Work, under the penalty of being torn asunder by the wild horses which he had bound fast to his own body by the act of "destroying" their independent consciousness and control of their chosen vehicle. See His Magical Record An XX, ☉ in Ω and onward.

2. Examples of Rituals for several such purposes are given in the Equinox.

3. Moral : become an Adeptus Major !

It should be added that all these things happen “naturally”.¹ Perform an operation to bring Gold — your rich uncle dies and leaves you his money; books — you see the book wanted in a catalogue that very day, although you have advertised in vain for a year; woman — but if you have made the spirits bring you enough gold, this operation will become unnecessary.²

It must further be remarked that it is absolute Black Magic to use any of these powers if the object can possibly be otherwise attained. If your child is drowning, you must jump and try to save him; it won't do to invoke the Undines.

Nor is it lawful in all circumstances to invoke those Undines even where the case is hopeless; maybe it is necessary to you and to the child that it should die. An Exempt Adept on the right road will make no error here — an Adept Major is only too likely to do so. A through apprehension of this book will arm adepts of every grade against all the more serious blunders incidental to their unfortunate positions.

IV

Necromancy is of sufficient importance to demand a section to itself.

It is justifiable in some exceptional cases. Suppose the magician fail to obtain access to living Teachers, or should he need some

1. The value of the evidence that your operations have influenced the course of events is only to be assessed by the application of the Laws of probability. The MASTER THERION would not accept any one single case as conclusive, however improbable it might be. A man might make a correct guess at one chance in ten million, no less than at one in three. If one pick up a pebble, the chance was infinitely great against that particular pebble; yet whichever one was chosen, the same chance “came off”. It requires a series of events antecedently unlikely to deduce that design is a work, that the observed changes are causally, not casually, produced. The prediction of events is further evidence that they are effected by will. Thus, any man may fluke a ten shot at billiard, or even make a break of a few strokes. But chance cannot account for consistent success, even if moderate, when it extends over a long period of time. And the ability of the expert to “name his shot” manifests a knowledge of the relations of cause and effect which confirms the testimony of his empirical skill that his success is not chance and coincidence.

2. This cynical statement is an absurdity of Black Magic.

especial piece of knowledge which he has reason to believe died with some teacher of the past, it may be useful to evoke the "shade" of such a one, or read the "Akasic record" of his mind. ¹

If this be done it must be done properly very much on the lines of the evocation of Apollonius of Tyana, which Eliphaz Levi performed. ²

The utmost care must be taken to prevent personation of the "shade". It is of course easy, but can rarely be advisable, to evoke the shade of a suicide, or of one violently slain or suddenly dead. Of what use is such an operation, save to gratify curiosity or vanity?

One must add a word on spiritism, which is a sort of indiscriminate necromancy — one might prefer the word necrophilia — by amateurs. They make themselves perfectly passive, and, so far from employing any methods of protection, deliberately invite all and sundry spirits, demons, shells of the dead, all the excrement and filth of earth and hell, to squirt their slime over them. This invitation is readily accepted, unless a clean man be present with an aura good enough to frighten these foul denizens of the pit.

No spiritualistic manifestation has ever taken place in the

1. The only minds likely to be useful to the Magician belong to Adepts sworn to suffer reincarnation at short intervals, and the best elements of such minds are bound up in the "Unconscious Self" of the Adept, not left to wander idly about the Astral Plane. It will thus be more profitable to try to get into touch with the "Dead Teacher" in his present avatar. Moreover, Adepts are at pains to record their teachings in books, monuments, or pictures, and to appoint spiritual guardians to preserve such heirlooms throughout the generations. Whenever these are destroyed or lost, the reason usually is that the Adept himself judges that their usefulness is over, and withdraws the forces which protected them. The student is therefore advised to acquiesce; the sources of information available for him are probably selected by the Wardens of Mankind with a view to his real necessities. One must learn to trust one's Holy Guardian Angel to shape one's circumstances with skill. If one be but absorbed in the ardour of one's aspiration toward Him, short indeed is the time before Experience instils the certain conviction that His works and His ways are infinitely apt to one's needs.

2. See *Rituel et Dogme de la Haute Magie*; *Rituel*, ch. XIII.

presence even of FRATER PERDURABO; how much less in that of The MASTER THERION ! ¹

Of all the creatures He ever met, the most prominent of English spiritists (a journalist and pacifist of more than European fame) had the filthiest mind and the foulest mouth. He would break off any conversation to tell a stupid smutty story, and could hardly conceive of any society assembling for any other purpose than “phallic orgies”, whatever they may be. Utterly incapable of keeping to a subject, he would drag the conversation down again and again to the sole subject of which he really thought — sex and sex-perversions and sex and sex and sex and sex again.

This was the plain result of his spiritism. All spiritists are more or less similarly afflicted. They feel dirty even across the street; their auras are ragged, muddy and malodorous; they ooze the slime of putrefying corpses.

No spiritist, once he is wholly enmeshed in sentimentality and Freudian fear-phantasms, is capable of concentrated thought, of persistent will, or of moral character. Devoid of every spark of the divine light which was his birthright, a prey before death to the ghastly tenants of the grave, the wretch, like the mesmerized and living corpse of Poe’s Monsieur Valdemar, is a “nearly liquid mass of loathsome, of detestable putrescence.”

The student of this Holy Magick is most earnestly warned against frequenting their séances, or even admitting them to his presence.

They are contagious as Syphilis, and more deadly and disgusting. **Unless your aura is strong enough to inhibit any manifestation of the loathly larvae that have taken up their habitation in them, shun them as you need not mere lepers!** ²

1. Even the earliest Initiations confer protection. Compare the fear felt by D. D. Home for Eliphas Levi. See Equinox I, X, “The Key of the Mysteries”.

2. It occurs in certain rare cases that a very unusual degree of personal purity combined with integrity and force of character provides even the ignorant with a certain natural defence, and attracts into his aura only intelligent and beneficent entities. Such persons may perhaps practise

Of the powers of the Sphinx much has been written.¹ Wisely they have been kept in the forefront of true magical instruction. Even the tyro can always rattle off that he has to know, to dare to will and to keep silence. It is difficult to write on this subject, for these powers are indeed comprehensive, and the interplay of one with the other becomes increasingly evident as one goes more deeply into the subject.

But there is one general principle which seems worthy of special emphasis in this place. These four powers are thus complex because they are the powers of the Sphinx, that is, they are functions of a single organism.

Now those who understand the growth of organisms are aware that evolution depends on adaptation to environment. If an animal which cannot swim is occasionally thrown into water, it may escape by some piece of good fortune, but if it is thrown into water continuously it will drown sooner or later, unless it learns to swim.

Organisms being to a certain extent elastic, they soon adapt themselves to a new environment, provided that the change is not so sudden as to destroy that elasticity.

Now a change in environment involves a repeated meeting of new conditions, and if you want to adapt yourself to any given set of conditions, the best thing you can do is to place yourself cautiously and persistently among them. That is the foundation of all education.

The old-fashioned pedagogues were not all so stupid as some modern educators would have us think. The principle of the system was to strike the brain a series of constantly repeated blows until the proper reaction became normal to the organism.

It is not desirable to use ideas which excite interest, or may come

spiritualism without obvious bad results, and even with good results, within limits. But such exceptions in no wise invalidate the general rule, or in any way serve as argument against the magical theory outlined above with such mild suasion.

1. In Liber CXI (Aleph) the subject is treated with profound and all-comprehensive wisdom.

in handy later as weapons, in this fundamental training of the mind. It is much better to compel the mind to busy itself with root ideas which do not mean very much to the child, because you are not trying to excite the brain, but to drill it. **For this reason, all the best minds have been trained by preliminary study of classics and mathematics.**

The same principle applies to the training of the body. The original exercises should be of a character to train the muscles generally to perform any kind of work, rather than to train them for some special kind of work, concentration on which will unfit them for other tasks by depriving them of the elasticity which is the proper condition of life.¹

In Magick and meditation this principle applies with tremendous force. It is quite useless to teach people how to perform magical operations, when it may be that such operations, when they have learned to do them, are not in accordance with their wills. What must be done is to drill the Aspirant in the hard routine of the elements of the Royal Art.

So far as mysticism is concerned, the technique is extremely simple, and has been very simply described in Part I of this Book 4. **It cannot be said too strongly that any amount of mystical success whatever is no compensation for slackness with regard to the technique. There may come a time when Samadhi itself is no part of the business of the mystic. But the character developed by the original training remains an asset.** In other words, the person who has made himself a first-class brain capable of elasticity is competent to

1. Some few forms of exercise are exempt from these strictures. Rock-climbing, in particular, trains every muscle in an endless variety of ways. It moreover compels the learner to use his own judgment, to rely on himself, to develop resource, and to depend upon his own originality to attack each new problem that presents itself. This principle may be extended to all departments of the education of children. They should be put into contact with all kinds of truth, and allowed to make their own reflections thereon and reactions thereto, without the least attempt to bias their judgment. Magical pupils should be trained on similar lines. They should be made to work alone from the first, to cover the whole ground impartially, to devise their own experiments and draw their own conclusions.

attack any problem soever, when he who has merely specialized has got into a groove, and can no longer adapt and adjust himself to new conditions.

The principle is quite universal. You do not train a violonist to play the Beethoven Concerto; you train him to play every conceivable consecution of notes with perfect ease, and you keep him at the most monotonous drill possible for years and years before you allow him to go on the platform. You make of him an instrument perfectly able to adjust itself to any musical problem that may be set before him. This technique of Yoga is the most important detail of all our work. The MASTER THERION has been himself somewhat to blame in representing this technique as of value simply because it leads to the great rewards, such as Samadhi. He would have been wiser to base His teaching solely on the ground of evolution. But probably He thought of the words of the poet :

*“You dangle a carrot in front of her nose,
And she goes wherever the carrot goes.”*

For, after all, one cannot explain the necessity of the study of Latin either to imbecile children or to stupid educationalists; for, not having learned Latin, they have not developed the brains to learn anything.

The Hindus, understanding these difficulties, have taken the God-Almighty attitude about the matter. If you go to a Hindu teacher, he treats you as less than an earthworm. You have to do this, and you have to do that, and you are not allowed to know why you are doing it.¹

After years of experience in teaching, The MASTER THERION is not altogether convinced that this is not the right attitude.

1. This does not conflict with the “go-as-you-please” plan put forward in the previous note. An autocratic Adept is indeed a blessing to the disciple, not because he is able to guide the pupil “aright” in the particular path which happens to suit his personality, but because he can compel the beginner to grind away at the weariest work and thus acquire all-round ability, and prevent him from picking out the plums which please him from the Pie of Knowledge, and making himself sick of a surfeit of sweets to the neglect of a balanced diet of wholesome nourishment.

When people begin to argue about things instead of doing them, they become absolutely impossible. Their minds begin to work about it and about, and they come out by the same door as in they went. They remain brutish, voluble, and uncomprehending.

The technique of Magick is just as important as that of mysticism, but here we have a very much more difficult problem, because the original unit of Magick, the Body of Light, is already something unfamiliar to the ordinary person. Nevertheless, this body must be developed and trained with exactly the same rigid discipline as the brain in the case of mysticism. The essence of the technique of Magick is the development of the body of Light, which must be extended to include all members of the organism, and indeed of the cosmos.

The most important drill practices are :

1. The fortification of the Body of Light by the constant use of rituals, by the assumption of God-forms, and by the right use of the Eucharist.

2. The purification and consecration and exaltation of that Body by the use of rituals of invocation.

3. The education of that Body by experience. It must learn to travel on every plane; to break down every obstacle which may confront it. This experience must be as systematic and regular as possible; for it is of no use merely to travel to the spheres of Jupiter and Venus, or even to explore the 30 Aethyrs, neglecting unattractive meridians.¹

1. The Aspirant should remember that he is a Microcosm. "*Universus sum et Nihil universi a me alienum puto*" should be his motto. He should make it his daily practice to travel on the Astral Plane, taking in turn each of the most synthetic sections, the Sephiroth and the Paths. These being thoroughly understood, and an Angel in each pledged to guard or to guide him at need, he should start on a new series of expeditions to explore the subordinate sections of each. He may then practice Rising on the Planes from these spheres, one after the other in rotation. When he is thoroughly conversant with the various methods of meeting unexpected emergencies, he may proceed to investigate the regions of the Qliphoth and the Demonic Forces. It should be his aim to obtain a comprehensive knowledge of the entire Astral Plane, with impartial love of truth for its own sake; just as a child learns the geography of the whole planet, though he may have no intention of ever leaving his native land.

The object is to possess a Body which is capable of doing easily any particular task that may lie before it. There must be no selection of special experience which appeals to one's immediate desire. One must go steadily through all the possible pylons.

FRATER PERDURABO was very unfortunate in not having magical teachers to explain these things to Him. He was rather encouraged in unsystematic working. Very fortunate, on the other hand, was He to have found a Guru who instructed Him in the proper principles of the technique of Yoga, and He, having sufficient sense to recognize the universal application of those principles, was able to some extent to repair His original defects. But even to this day, despite the fact this His original inclination is much stronger towards Magick than towards mysticism, he is much less competent in Magick.¹ A trace of this can be seen even in His method of combining the two divisions of our science, for in that method He makes concentration bear the Cross of the Work.

This is possibly an error, probably a defect, certainly an impurity of thought, and the root of it is to be found in His original bad discipline with regard to Magick.

If the reader will turn to the account of his astral journeys in the Second Number of the First Volume of the Equinox, he will find that these experiments were quite capricious. Even when, in Mexico, He got the idea of exploring the 30 Aethyrs systematically, He abandoned the vision after only 2 Aethyrs had been investigated.

1. Reconsideration of these remarks, at the request of a loyal colleague, compels Him to admit that this may not be the case. It is true that He has been granted all Mystical Attainment that is theoretically possible, while His powers in Magick seem to be uneven and imperfect. Despite this, it may yet be that He has compassed the Possible. For Mystical Attainments are never mutually exclusive; the trance of Sorrow (for example) is not incompatible with the Beatific Vision, or the "Universal Joke". But in Magick any one Operation debars its performer from accomplishing some other. The reason of this is that the Oath of any Work bonds the Magician once and for all to be the principles implied therein. See Chapter XVI Part I. Further, it is obviously possible to reach the essence of anything without interfering with other things which obstruct each other. Cross-country journeys are often scarcely practicable.

Very different is His record after the training in 1901 e. v. had put Him in the way of discipline.¹

At the conclusion of this part of this book, one may sum up the whole matter in these words : **There is no object whatever worthy of attainment but the regular development of the being of the Aspirant by steady scientific work; he should not attempt to run before he can walk; he should not wish to go somewhere until he knows for certain whither he wills to go.**

1. Recent developments have enabled Him to correct these conditions, so that this Book (as now finally revised for the Press) may be considered practically free from serious defect in this particular.
