

PART TWO

THE ATU
(KEYS or TRUMPS)

II

O. THE FOOL¹.

This card is attributed to the letter Aleph, which means an Ox, but by its shape the Hebrew letter (so it is said) represents a plough-share; thus the significance is primarily Phallic. It is the first of the three Mother letters, Aleph, Mem, and Shin, which correspond in various interwoven fashions with all the triads that occur in these cards, notably Fire, Water, Air; Father, Mother, Son; Sulphur, Salt, Mercury; Rajas, Sattvas and Tamas.

The really important feature of this card is that its number should be O. It represents therefore the Negative above the Tree of Life, the source of all things. It is the Qabalistic Zero. It is the equation of the Universe, the initial and final balance of the opposites; Air, in this card, therefore quintessentially means a vacuum.

In the mediæval pack, the title of the card is Le Mat, adapted from the Italian Matto, madman or fool; the propriety of this title will be considered later. But there is another, or (one might say) a complementary, theory. If one assumes that the Tarot is of Egyptian origin, one may suppose that Mat (this card being the key card of the whole pack) really stands for Maut, the vulture goddess, who is an earlier and more sublime modification of the idea of Nuith than Isis.

There are two legends connected with the vulture. It is supposed to have a spiral neck; this may possibly have reference to the theory (recently revived by Einstein, but mentioned by Zoroaster in his Oracles) that the shape of the Universe, the form of that energy which is called the Universe, is spiral.

The other legend is that the vulture was supposed to reproduce her species by the intervention of the wind; in other words, the element of air is considered as the father of all manifested existence. There is a parallel in Anaximenes' school of Greek philosophy.

This card is therefore both the father and the mother, in the most abstract form of these ideas. This is not a confusion, but a deliberate identification of the male and the female, which is justified

¹Note that 'Fool' is derived from 'follis', a wind-bag. Even etymology gives the attribution to Air. Also, to puff out the cheeks is a gesture implying readiness to create, in the sign-language of Naples. Worse, some English Guardians of Democracy impute folly to others by the "Razzberry".

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by biology. The fertilized ovum is sexually neutral. It is only some unknown determinant in the course of development which decides the issue.

It is necessary to acclimatise oneself to this, at first sight strange, idea. As soon as one has made up one's mind to consider the feminine aspect of things, the masculine element should immediately appear in the same flash of thought to counterbalance it. This identification is complete in itself, philosophically speaking; it is only later that one must consider the question of the result of formulating Zero as "plus 1 plus minus 1". The result of so doing is to formulate the idea of Tetragrammaton.

THE FORMULA OF TETRAGRAMMATON

It is explained in this essay (see 16, 34, et al.) that the whole of the Tarot is based upon the Tree of Life, and that the Tree of Life is always cognate with Tetragrammaton. One may sum up the whole doctrine very briefly as follows:

The Union of the Father and the Mother produces Twins, the son going forward to the daughter, the daughter returning the energy to the father; by this cycle of change the stability and eternity of the Universe are assured.

It is necessary, in order to understand the Tarot, to go back in history to the Matriarchal (and exogamic) Age, to the time when succession was not through the first-born son of the King, but through his daughter. The king was therefore not king by inheritance, but by right of conquest. In the most stable dynasties, the new king was always a stranger, a foreigner; what is more, he had to kill the old king and marry that king's daughter. This system ensured the virility and capacity of every king. The stranger had to win his bride in open competition. In the oldest fairy-tales, this motive is continually repeated. The ambitious stranger is often a troubadour; nearly always he is disguised, often in a repulsive form. Beauty and the Beast is a typical tale. There is often a corresponding camouflage about the king's daughter, as in the case of Cinderella and the Enchanted Princess. The tale of Aladdin gives the whole of this fable in a very elaborate form, packed with technical tales of magic. Here

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then is the foundation of the legend of the Wandering Prince—and, note well, he is always “the fool of the family”. The connection between foolishness and holiness is traditional. It is no sneer that the family nitwit had better go into the church. In the East the madman is believed to be “possessed”, a holy man or prophet. So deep is this identity that it is actually embedded in the language. “Silly” means empty—the Vacuum of Air—Zero—“the silly buckets on the deck”. And the word is from the German *selig*, holy, blessed. It is the innocence of the Fool which most strongly characterizes him. It will be seen later how important is this feature of the story.

To ensure the succession, it was therefore devised: firstly, that the blood royal should really be the royal blood, and secondly, that this strain should be fortified by the introduction of the conquering stranger, instead of being attenuated by continual in-breeding.

In certain cases this theory was pushed very far; there was probably a great deal of chicanery about this disguised prince. It may well have been that the king, his father, furnished him with very secret letters of introduction; in short, that the old political game was old even in those primeval times.

The custom is therefore developed into the condition so admirably investigated by Frazer in the *Golden Bough*. (This Bough is no doubt a symbol of the King's Daughter herself). “The king's daughter is all glorious within; her raiment is of wrought gold.”

How did such a development come to pass?

There may have been a reaction against playing politics; there may have been a glorification, first of all of the ‘gentleman burglar’, finally of the mere gangster-boss, rather as we have seen in our own times, in the reaction against Victorianism. The “wandering prince” was closely examined as to his credentials; unless he were an escaped criminal he was not eligible to compete; nor was it sufficient for him to win the king's daughter in open competition, live in the lap of luxury until the old king died, and succeed him in peace; he was obliged to murder the old king with his own hand.

At first sight it would appear that the formula is the union of the extremely masculine, the big blond beast, with the extremely feminine, the princess who could not sleep if there was a pea beneath her seven feather beds. But all such symbolism defeats itself; the

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soft becomes the hard, the rough the smooth. The deeper one goes into the formula, the closer becomes the identification of the opposites. The Dove is the bird of Venus, but the dove is also a symbol of the Holy Ghost; that is, of the Phallus in its most sublimated form. There is therefore no reason for surprise in observing the identification of the father with the mother.

Naturally, when ideas so sublime become vulgarised, they fail to exhibit the symbol with lucidity. The great hierophant, confronted with a thoroughly ambiguous symbol, is compelled, just because of his office as hierophant—that is, one who manifests the mystery—to “diminish the message to the dog”. This he must do by exhibiting a symbol of the second order, a symbol suited to the intelligence of the second order of Initiates. This symbol, instead of being universal, and thus beyond ordinary expression, must be further adapted to the intellectual capacity of the particular set of people whom it is the business of the hierophant to initiate. Such truth accordingly appears to the vulgar as fable, parable, legend, even creed.

In the case of this comprehensive symbol of The Fool, there are, within actual knowledge, several quite distinct traditions, very clear; and, historically, very important.

These must be considered separately in order to understand the single doctrine from which all sprang.

The “Green Man” of the Spring Festival. “April Fool.” The Holy Ghost.

This tradition represents the original idea adapted to the understanding of the average peasant. The Green Man is a personification of the mysterious influence that produces the phenomena of spring. It is hard to say why it should be so, but it is so: there is a connection with the ideas of irresponsibility, of wantonness, of idealization, of romance, of starry dreaming.

The Fool stirs within all of us at the return of Spring, and because we are a little bewildered, a little embarrassed, it has been thought a salutary custom to externalise the subconscious impulse by ceremonial means. It was a way of making confession easy. Of all these festivals it may be said that they are representations in the simplest form, without introspection, of a perfectly natural pheno-

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menon. In particular are to be noted the custom of the Easter Egg and the "Poisson d'avril". (The Saviour Fish is discussed elsewhere in this essay. The precession of the Equinoxes has made Spring begin with the entry of the Sun into Aries the Ram, instead of Pisces the Fishes as was the case in the earliest times recorded.)

The "Great Fool" of the Celts (Dalua):

This is a considerable advance on those purely naturalistic phenomena above described; in the Great Fool is a definite doctrine. The world is always looking for a saviour, and the doctrine in question is philosophically more than a doctrine; it is a plain fact. Salvation, whatever salvation may mean, is not to be obtained on any *reasonable* terms. Reason is an impasse, reason is damnation; only madness, divine madness, offers an issue. The law of the Lord Chancellor will not serve; the law-giver may be an epileptic camel-driver like Mohammed, a megalomaniac provincial upstart like Napoleon, or even an exile, three-parts learned, one-part crazy, an attic-dweller in Soho, like Karl Marx. There is only one thing in common among such persons; they are all mad, that is, inspired. Nearly all primitive people possess this tradition, at least in a diluted form. They respect the wandering lunatic, for it may be that he is the messenger of the Most High. "This queer stranger? Let us entreat him kindly. It may be that we entertain an angel unawares".

Closely bound up with this idea is the question of paternity. A saviour is needed. What is the one thing certain about his qualifications? That he should not be an ordinary man. (In the Gospels people cavilled about the claim that Jesus was the Messiah because he came from Nazareth, a perfectly well-known town, because they knew his mother and his family; in brief, they argued that he did not qualify as a candidate for Saviour.) The saviour must be a peculiarly sacred person; that he should be a human being at all is hardly credible. At the very least, his mother must be a virgin; and, to match this wonder, his father cannot be an ordinary man; therefore, his father must be a god. But as a god is a gaseous vertebrate, he must be some materialisation of a god. Very good! Let him be the god Mars under the form of a wolf, or Jupiter as a bull, or a shower of gold, or a swan; or Jehovah in the form of a dove; or some

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other creature of phantasy, preferably disguised in some animal form. There are innumerable forms of this tradition, but they all agree on one point: the saviour can only appear as the result of some extraordinary accident, quite contrary to whatever is normal. The slightest suggestion of anything reasonable in this matter would destroy the whole argument. But as one must obtain some concrete picture, the general solution is to represent the saviour as the Fool. (Attempts to attain this condition appear in the Bible. Note the "coat of many colours" of Joseph and of Jesus; it is the man in motley¹ who brings his people out of bondage.)

It will be seen later how this idea is linked with that of the mystery of paternity, and also of the iridescence of the alchemical mercury in one of the stages of the Great Work.

"The Rich Fisherman": Percivale.

The legend of Percivale, integral of the mystery of the Saviour Fish-God, and of the Sangraal or Holy Grail, is of disputed origin. It appears certainly, first of all, in Brittany, the land best beloved of Magick, the land of Merlin, of the Druids, of the forest of Broceliande. Some scholars suppose that the Welsh form of this tradition, which lends much of its importance and its beauty to the Cycle of King Arthur, is even earlier. This is in this place irrelevant; but it is vital to realize that the legend, like that of The Fool, is purely pagan in origin, and comes to us through Latin-Christian recensions: there is no trace of any such matters in the Nordic mythologies. (Percivale and Galahad were "innocent": this is a condition of the Guardianship of the Grail). Note also that Monsalvat, mountain of Salvation, home of the Graal, the fortress of the Knights Guardians, is in the Pyrenees.

It may be best to introduce the figure of Parsifal in this place, because he represents the western form of the tradition of the Fool,

¹ Call him "Harlequin", and a Tetragrammaton evidently burlesquing the Sacred Family springs to sight: Pantaloon, the aged "antique-antic"; Clown and Harlequin, two aspects of the Fool; and Columbine, the Virgin. But, being burlesque, the tradition is confused and the deep meaning lost; just as the mediæval Mystery-Play of Pontius and Judas became the farce, with opportunist topical variants, "Punch and Judy".

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and because his legend has been highly elaborated by scholarly initiates. (The dramatic setting of Wagner's *Parsifal* was arranged by the then head of the O.T.O.)

Parsifal in his first phase is Der reine Thor, the Pure Fool. His first act is to shoot the sacred swan. It is the wantonness of innocence. In the second act, it is the same quality that enables him to withstand the blandishments of the ladies in the garden of Kundry. Klingsor, the evil magician, who thought to fulfil the conditions of life by self-mutilation, seeing his empire threatened, hurls the sacred lance (which he has stolen from the Mountain of Salvation) at Parsifal, but it remains suspended over the boy's head. Parsifal seizes it; in other words, attains to puberty. (This transformation will be seen in the other symbolic fables, below.)

In the third act, Parsifal's innocence has matured into sanctification; he is the initiated Priest whose function is to create; it is Good Friday, the day of darkness and death. Where shall he seek his salvation? Where is Monsalvat, the mountain of salvation, which he has sought so long in vain? He worships the lance: immediately the way, so long closed to him, is open; the scenery revolves rapidly, there is no need for him to move. He has arrived at the Temple of the Graal. All true ceremonial religion must be solar and phallic in character. It is the wound of Amfortas which has removed the virtue from the temple. (Amfortas is the symbol of the Dying God.)

Accordingly, to redeem the whole situation, to destroy death, to reconsecrate the temple, he has only to plunge the lance into the Holy Grail; he redeems not only Kundry, but himself. (This is a doctrine only appreciable in its fulness by members of the Sovereign Sanctuary of the Gnosis of the ninth degree of O.T.O.)

The Crocodile (Mako, son of Set; or Sebek).

This same doctrine of maximum innocence developing into maximum fertility is found in Ancient Egypt in the symbolism of the Crocodile god Sebek. The tradition is that the crocodile was unprovided with the means of perpetuating his species (compare what is said above about the vulture Maut). Not in spite of, but because of this, he was the symbol of the maximum of creative energy. (Freud, as will be seen later, explains this apparent antithesis.)

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Once again, the animal kingdom is invoked to fulfil the function of fathering the redeemer. On the banks of the Euphrates men worshipped Oannes, or Dagon, the fish god. The fish as a symbol of fatherhood, of motherhood, of the perpetuation of life generally, constantly recurs. The letter N. (Nun, N, in Hebrew means Fish) is one of the original hieroglyphs standing for this idea, apparently because of the mental reactions excited in the mind by the continual repetition of this letter. There are thus a number of gods, goddesses, and eponymous heroes, whose legends are functions of the letter N. (With regard to this letter, see Atu XIII.) It is connected with the North, and so with the starry heavens about the Pole Star; also with the North wind; and the reference is to the Watery signs. Hence the letter N. occurs in legends of the Flood and of fish gods. In Hebrew mythology, the hero concerned is Noah. Note also that the symbol of the Fish has been chosen to represent the Redeemer or Phallus, the god through whose virtue man passes through the waters of death. The common name for this god, in southern Italy to-day, and elsewhere, is *Il pesce*. So, also, his female counterpart, Kteis, is represented by the *Vesica Piscis*, the bladder of the fish, and this shape is continually exhibited in many church windows and in the episcopal ring.¹

In the mythology of Yucatan it was the "old ones covered with feathers that came up out of the sea". Some have seen in this tradition a reference to the fact that man is a marine animal; our breathing apparatus still possesses atrophied gills.

*Hoor-Pa-Kraat.*²

Arriving at highly sophisticated theogony, there appears a perfectly clear and concrete symbol of this doctrine. Harpocrates is the God of Silence; and this silence has a very special meaning.

¹ "IXΘYC, which means fish
And very aptly symbolizes Christ."

—*The Ring and the Book.*

The word is a Notarikon of Iesus Christos Theou Huios Soter (Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour.)

² The Fool is also, evidently, an aspect of Pan; but this idea is shewn in his fullest development by Atu XV, whose letter is the semi-vowel A'ain, cognate with Aleph.

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(See attached essay, Appendix.) The first is Kether, the pure Being invented as an aspect of pure Nothing. In his manifestation, he is not One, but Two; he is only One because he is O. He exists; Eheieh, his divine name, which signifies "I Am" or "I shall Be", is merely another way of saying that he Is Not; because One leads to nowhere, which is where it came from. So the only possible manifestation is in Two, and that manifestation must be in silence, because the number 3, the number of Binah—Understanding—has not yet been formulated. In other words, there is no Mother. All one has is the impulse of this manifestation; and that must take place in silence. That is to say, there is as yet no more than the impulse, which is unformulated; it is only when it is interpreted that it becomes the Word, the Logos. (See Atu I.)

Now consider the traditional form of Harpocrates. He is a babe, that is to say, innocent, and not yet arrived at puberty; a simpler form of Parsifal, he is represented as rose pink in colour. It is dawn—the hint of light about to come, but not by any means that light; he has a lock of black hair curling around his ear, and that is the influence of the Highest descending upon the Brahmarandra Chakra. The ear is the vehicle of Akasha, Spirit. This is the only salient symbol; it is the only indication that he is not merely the bald baby, because it is the only colour in the blob of rose pink. But, on the other hand, his thumb is either against his lower lip or in his mouth; which it is, one cannot say. There is here a quarrel between two schools of thought; if he is pushing up his lower lip, he emphasizes silence as silence; if his thumb is in his mouth, it emphasizes the doctrine of Eheieh: "I shall Be". Yet in the end these doctrines are identical.

This babe is in an egg of blue, which is evidently the symbol of the Mother. This child has, in a way, not been born; the blue is the blue of space; the egg is sitting upon a lotus, and this lotus grows on the Nile. Now, the lotus is another symbol of the Mother, and the Nile is also a symbol of the Father, fertilizing Egypt, the Yoni. (But also the Nile is the home of Sebek the crocodile, who threatens Harpocrates.)

Yet Harpocrates is not always thus represented. He is shown by certain schools of thought as standing; he is standing upon the

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crocodiles of the Nile. (Refer above to the crocodile, the symbol of two exactly opposite things.) There is here an analogy. One is reminded of Hercules—the infant Hercules—who spun the wheel in the House of Women; of Hercules, who was a strong man, who was innocent, who was ultimately a madman, who destroyed his wife and children. It is a cognate symbol.

Harpocrates is (in one sense) the symbol of the Dawn on the Nile, and of the physiological phenomenon which accompanies the act of waking. One sees, at the other end of the octave of thought, the connection of this symbol with the succession to the royal power described above. The symbol of Harpocrates itself tends to be purely philosophical. He is also the mystical absorption of the work of creation; the Hé final of Tetragrammaton. Harpocrates is, in fact, the passive side of his twin, Horus. Yet at the same time he is a very fully-fledged symbol of this idea, which is wind, which is air, the impregnation of the Mother Goddess. He is immune from all attack because of his innocence; for in this innocence is perfect silence, which is the essence of virility.

The egg is not only Akasha,¹ but the original egg in the biological sense. This egg issues from the lotus, which is the symbol of the Yoni.

There is an Asiatic symbol cognate with Harpocrates, and though it does not come directly into this card it must be considered in connection with it. That symbol is the Buddha-Rupa. He is most frequently represented sitting on a lotus, and often there is behind him spread the hood of the Serpent; the shape of this hood is again the Yoni. (Note the usual ornaments of this hood; phallic and fructiform.)

The crocodile of the Nile is called Sebek or Mako—the Devourer. In the official rituals, the idea is usually that of the fisherman, who wishes protection from the assaults of his totem animal.

There is, however, an identity between the creator and the destroyer. In Indian mythology, Shiva fulfils both functions. In Greek mythology, the god Pan is addressed “Pamphage, Pangenerator”, all-devourer, all-begetter. (Note that the numerical value of the word Pan is 131, as is that of Samael, the Hebrew destroying angel.)

So also, in the initiated symbolism, the act of devouring is the

¹ The Black Egg of the element of Spirit in some Hindu schools of thought. From it the other elements Air, Water, Earth, Fire (in that order) proceed.

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equivalent of initiation; as the mystic would say, "My soul is swallowed up in God". (Compare the symbolism of Noah and the Ark, Jonah¹ and the Whale, and others.)

One must constantly keep in mind the bivalence of every symbol. Insistence upon either one or other of the contradictory attributions inherent in a symbol is simply a mark of spiritual incapacity; and it is constantly happening, because of prejudice. It is the simplest test of initiation that every symbol is understood instinctively to contain this contradictory meaning in itself. Mark well the passage in *The Vision and the Voice*, page 136:

"It is shown me that this heart is the heart that rejoiceth, and the serpent is the serpent of Da'ath, for herein all the symbols are interchangeable, for each one containeth in itself its own opposite. And this is the great Mystery of the Supernals that are beyond the Abyss. For below the Abyss, contradiction is division; but above the Abyss, contradiction is Unity. And there could be nothing true except by virtue of the contradiction that is contained in itself."

It is characteristic of all high spiritual vision that the formulation of any idea is immediately destroyed or cancelled out by the arising of the contradictory. Hegel and Nietzsche had glimmerings of the idea, but it is described very fully and simply in the Book of Wisdom or Folly. (See citation, below, Appendix.)

This point about the crocodile is very important, because many of the traditional forms of "The Fool" of the Tarot show the crocodile definitely. In the commonplace interpretation of the card, the Scholiasts say that the picture is that of a gay, careless youth, with a sack full of follies and illusions, dancing along the edge of a precipice, unaware that the tiger and crocodile shown in the card are about to attack him. It is the view of the Little Bethel. But, to initiate, this crocodile helps to determine the spiritual meaning of the card as the return to the original Qabalistic zero; it is the "Hé final" process in the magical formula of Tetragrammaton. By a flick of the wrist, she can be transmuted to reappear as the original Yod, and repeat the whole process from the beginning.

¹ Note the N of Jonah, and the meaning of the name: a dove.

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The innocence-virility formula is again suggested by the introduction of the crocodile, for that was one of the biological superstitions on which they founded their theogony—that the crocodile, like the vulture, had some mysterious method of reproduction.

Zeus Arrhenothelus.

In dealing with Zeus, one is immediately confronted with this deliberate confusion of the masculine and the feminine. In the Greek and Latin traditions the same thing happens. Dianus and Diana are twins and lovers; as soon as one utters the feminine, it leads on to the identification with the masculine, and vice versa, as must be the case in view of the biological facts of nature. It is only in Zeus Arrhenothelus that one gets the true Hermaphroditic nature of the symbol in unified form. This is a very important fact, especially for the present purpose, because images of this god recur again and again in alchemy. It is hardly possible to describe this lucidly; the idea pertains to a faculty of the mind which is "above the Abyss"; but all two-headed eagles with symbols clustering about them are indications of this idea. The ultimate sense seems to be that the original god is both male and female, which is, of course, the essential doctrine of the Qabalah; and the thing most difficult to understand about the later debased Old Testament tradition,¹ is that it represents Tetragrammaton as masculine, in spite of the two feminine components. Zeus became too popular, and, in consequence, too many legends gathered around him; but the important fact for this present purpose is that Zeus was peculiarly the Lord of Air.² Men who sought the origin of Nature in the earliest days tried to find this origin in one of the Elements. (The history of philosophy describes the controversy between Anaximander and Zenocrates; later, Empedocles.) It may be that the original authors of the Tarot were trying to promulgate

¹ It was a tribal necessity of the savage wanderers to have an uncivilized and simple Demiurge for god; the complexities and refinements of settled nations were to them mere weakness. Observe that the moment they got a Promised Land and a Temple, under Solomon, he went "an-whoring after strange women" and gods. This infuriated the Diehard prophets, and led within a few years to the breach between Judah and Israel, thence to a whole sequence of disasters.

² The earliest accounts relate the distribution of the three active elements as Dis (Pluto) to Fire, Zeus (Jupiter) to Air, and Poseidon (Neptune) to Water.

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the doctrine that the origin of everything was Air. Yet if this were so, it would upset the whole Tarot as we know it, since the order of origin makes Fire the first father. It is Air as Zero that reconciles the antinomy.

Dianus and Diana, it is true, were symbols of the air, and the Sanskrit Vedas say that the storm gods were the original gods. Yet, if the storm gods really presided over the formation of the Universe as we know it, they were certainly storms of fire; to this astronomers agree. But this theory certainly implies an identification of air and fire, and it seems as if they were thought of as before Light, that is, the Sun; before creative energy, that is, the phallus; and this idea continually suggests itself, that there is here some doctrine contrary to our own most reasonable doctrine: one in which the original confusion of the elements, the Tohu-Bohu, is to be put forward as the cause of order, instead of as a plastic mass on which order imposes itself.

No system truly Qabalistic makes air in the conventional sense the original element, though Akasha is the egg of spirit, the black or dark blue egg. This suggests a form of Harpocrates. In that case, by "air" one really means "spirit". However this may be, the actual symbol is perfectly clear, and should be applied to its proper place.

Dionysus Zagreus. Bacchus Diphues.

It is convenient to treat the two gods as one. Zagreus is only important to the present purpose because he possesses horns, and because (in the Eleusinian Mysteries) it is said that he was torn to pieces by the Titans. But Athena rescued his heart and carried it to his father, Zeus. His mother was Demeter; he is thus the fruit of the marriage of Heaven and Earth. This identifies him as the Vau of Tetragrammaton, but the legends of his "death" refer to initiation, which accords with the doctrine of the Devourer.

In this card, however, the traditional form is much more clearly expressive of Bacchus Diphues, who represents a more superficial form of worship; the ecstasy characteristic of the god is more magical than mystical. The latter demands the name Iacchus, whereas Bacchus had Semele for a mother, who was visited by Zeus in the form of a flash of lightning which destroyed her. But she was already pregnant by him, and Zeus saved the child. Until puberty, he was

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hidden in the "thigh" (i.e., the phallus) of Zeus. Hera, in revenge for her husband's infidelity with Semele, drove the boy mad. This is the direct connection with the card.

The legend of Bacchus is, first of all, that he was Diphues, double-natured, and this appears to mean more bisexual than hermaphroditic. His madness is also a phase of his intoxication, for he is pre-eminently the god of the vine. He goes dancing through Asia, surrounded by various companions, all insane with enthusiasm; they carry staffs headed with pine cones and entwined with ivy; they also clash cymbals, and in some legends are furnished with swords, or twined about with serpents. All the half-gods of the forest are the male companions of the Maenad women. In his pictures his drunken face, and the languid state of his lingam, connect him with the legend already mentioned about the crocodile. His constant attendant is the tiger; and, in all the best extant examples of the card, the tiger or panther is represented as jumping upon him from behind, while the crocodile is ready to devour him in front. In the legend of his journey through Asia, he is said to have ridden on an ass, which connects him with Priapus, who is said to have been his son by Aphrodite. It also reminds one of the triumphal entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. It is curious, too, that, at the fabled birth of Jesus, the Virgin Mother is represented as being between an ox and an ass, and one remembers that the letter Aleph means Ox.

In the worship of Bacchus there was a representative of the god, and he was chosen for his quality as a young and virile, but effeminate man. In the course of the centuries, the worship naturally became degraded; other ideas joined themselves to the original form; and, partly because of the orgiastic character of the ritual, the idea of the Fool took definite shape. Hence, he came to be represented with a Fool's cap, evidently phallic, and clad in motley, which again recalls the coat of many colours worn by Jesus, and by Joseph. This symbolism is not only Mercurial, but Zodiacal; Joseph and Jesus, with twelve brothers or twelve disciples, equally represent the sun in the midst of the twelve signs. It was only very much later that any alchemical significance was attributed to this, and that at a time when the Renaissance scholars made rather a point of finding something serious and important in symbols which were, in reality, quite frivolous.

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Baphomet.

There is no doubt that this mysterious figure is a magical image of this same idea, developed in so many symbols. Its pictorial correspondence is most easily seen in the figures of Zeus Arrhenothelus and Babalon, and in the extraordinarily obscene representations of the Virgin Mother which are found among the remains of early Christian iconology. The subject is dealt with at considerable length in Payne Knight, where the origin of the symbol and the meaning of the name is investigated. Von Hammer-Purgstall was certainly right in supposing Baphomet to be a form of the Bull-god, or rather, the Bull-slaying god, Mithras; for Baphomet should be spelt with an "r" at the end; thus it is clearly a corruption meaning "Father Mithras". There is also here a connection with the ass, for it was as an ass-headed god that he became an object of veneration to the Templars.

The Early Christians also were accused of worshipping an ass or ass-headed god, and this again is connected with the wild ass of the wilderness, the god Set, identified with Saturn and Satan. (See *infra*, Atu XV.) He is the South, as Nuit is the North: the Egyptians had a Desert and an Ocean in those quarters.

Summary.

It has seemed convenient to deal separately with these main forms of the idea of the Fool, but no attempt has been made, or should be made, to prevent the legends overlapping and coalescing. The variations of expression, even when contradictory in appearance, should lead to an intuitive apprehension of the symbol by a sublimation and transcendence of the intellectual. All these symbols of the Trumps ultimately exist in a region beyond reason and above it. The study of these cards has for its most important aim the training of the mind to think clearly and coherently in this exalted manner.

This has always been characteristic of the methods of Initiation as understood by the hierophants.

In the confused, dogmatic period of Victorian materialisation, it was necessary for science to discredit all attempts to transcend the rationalist mode of approach to reality; yet it was the progress of science itself that has reintegrated these differentials. From the very

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beginning of the present century, the practical science of the mechanician and the engineer has been forced further and further towards finding its theoretical justification in mathematical physics.

Mathematics has always been the most severe, abstract, and logical of the sciences. Yet even in comparatively early schoolboy mathematics, cognisance must be taken of the unreal and the irrational. Surds and infinite series are the very root forms of advanced mathematical thought. The apotheosis of mathematical physics is now the admission of failure to find reality in any single intelligible idea. The modern reply to the question "What is anything?" is that it is in relation to a chain of ten ideas, any one of which can only be interpreted in terms of the rest. The gnostics would undoubtedly have called this a "chain of ten aeons". These ten ideas must by no means be considered as aspects of some reality in the background. As the supposed straight line which was the framework of calculation has turned out to be a curve, so has the point which had always been taken as the type of existence, become the ring.

It is impossible to doubt that there is here a continually closer approximation of the profane science of the outer world to the sacred wisdom of the Initiate.

* * *

The design of the present card resumes the principal ideas of the above essays. The Fool is of the gold of air. He has the horns of Dionysus Zagreus, and between them is the phallic cone of white light representing the influence from the Crown¹ upon him. He is shown against the background of air, dawning from space; and his attitude is that of one bursting unexpectedly upon the world.

He is clad in green, according to the tradition of Spring; but his shoes are of the phallic gold of the sun.

In his right hand he bears the wand, tipped with a pyramid of white, of the All-Father. In his left hand he bears the flaming pine-cone, of similar significance, but more definitely indicating vegetable growth; and from his left shoulder hangs a bunch of purple grapes. Grapes represent fertility, sweetness, and the basis of ecstasy. This ecstasy is shown by the stem of the grapes developing into rainbow-hued spirals. The Form of the Universe. This suggests the Threefol

¹ Kether: see the position of the Path of Aleph on the Tree of Life.

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Veil of the Negative manifesting, by his intervention, in divided light. Upon this spiral whorl are other attributions of godhead; the vulture of Maut, the dove of Venus (Isis or Mary), and the ivy sacred to his devotees. There is also the butterfly of many-coloured air and the winged globe with its twin serpents, a symbol which is echoed and fortified by the twin infants embracing on the middle spiral. Above them hangs the benediction of three flowers in one. Fawning upon him is the tiger; and beneath his feet in the Nile with its lotus stems crouches the crocodile. Resuming all his many forms and many-coloured images in the centre of the figure, the focus of the microcosm is the radiant sun. The whole picture is a glyph of the creative light.

I. THE JUGGLER

This card is referred to the letter Beth, which means a house, and is attributed to the planet Mercury. The ideas connected with this symbol are so complex and so multifarious that it seems better to attach to this general description certain documents which bear upon different aspects of this card. The whole will then form an adequate basis for the full interpretation of the card through study, meditation, and use.

The French title of this card in the mediæval pack is "Le Bâteleur", the Bearer of the Bâton.¹ Mercury is pre-eminently the bearer of the Wand: Energy sent forth. This card therefore represents the Wisdom, the Will, the Word, the Logos by whom the worlds were created. (See the Gospel according to St. John, chapter 1.) It represents the Will. In brief, he is the Son, the manifestation in act of the idea of the Father. He is the male correlative of the High Priestess. Let there be no confusion here on account of the fundamental doctrine of the Sun and Moon as the Second Harmonics to the Lingam and the Yoni; for, as will be seen in the citation from *The Paris Working*, (see Appendix) the creative Mercury is of the nature of the Sun. But Mercury is the Path leading from Kether to Binah, the Under-

¹ Variant: *LE PAGAD*. Origin unknown. Suggestions :

- (1) PChD, terror (esp. Panic fear) a title of Geburah. Also a thigh: i.e. membrum virile. By Arabic analogy, PACHD, causer of terror: Value 93 !!
- (2) Pagoda, a phallic memorial: Similar, and equally apt.

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standing; and thus He is the messenger of the gods, represents precisely that Lingam, the Word of creation whose speech is silence.

Mercury, however, represents action in all forms and phases. He is the fluidic basis of all transmission of activity; and, on the dynamic theory of the Universe, he is himself the substance thereof. He is, in the language of modern physics, that electric charge which is the first manifestation of the ring of ten indefinable ideas, as previously explained. He is thus continuous creation.

Logically also, being the Word, he is the law of reason or of necessity or chance, which is the secret meaning of the Word, which is the essence of the Word, and the condition of its utterance. This being so, and especially because he is duality, he represents both truth and falsehood, wisdom and folly. Being the unexpected, he unsettles any established idea, and therefore appears tricky. He has no conscience, being creative. If he cannot attain his ends by fair means, he does it by foul. The legends of the youthful Mercury are therefore legends of cunning. He cannot be understood, because he is the Unconscious Will. His position on the Tree of Life shows the third Sephira, Binah, Understanding, as not yet formulated; still less the false Sephira, Da'ath, knowledge.

From the above it will appear that this card is the second emanation from the Crown, and therefore, in a sense, the adult form of the first emanation, the Fool, whose letter is Aleph, the Unity. These ideas are so subtle and so tenuous, on these exalted planes of thought, that definition is impossible. It is not even desirable, because it is the nature of these ideas to flow one into the other. One cannot do more than say that any given hieroglyph represents a slight insistence upon some particular form of a pantomorphous idea. In this card, the emphasis is upon the creative and dualistic character of the path of Beth.

In the traditional card the disguise is that of a Juggler.

This representation of the Juggler is one of the crudest and least satisfactory in the mediæval pack. He is usually represented with a headdress shaped like the sign of infinity in mathematics (this is shown in detail in the card called the Two of Disks). He bears a wand with a knob at each end, which was probably connected with

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the dual polarity of electricity; but it is also the hollow wand of Prometheus that brings down fire from Heaven. On a table or altar, behind which he is standing, are the three other elemental weapons.

“With the Wand createth He.

With the Cup preserveth He.

With the Dagger destroyeth He.

With the Coin redeemeth He.

Liber Magi vv. 7-10.”

The present card has been designed principally upon the Graeco-Egyptian tradition; for the understanding of this idea was certainly further advanced when these philosophies modified each other, than elsewhere at any time.

The Hindu conception of Mercury, Hanuman, the monkey god, is abominably degraded. None of the higher aspects of the symbol are found in his cult. The aim of his adepts seems principally to have been the production of a temporary incarnation of the god by sending the women of the tribe every year into the jungle. Nor do we find any legend of any depth or spirituality. Hanuman is certainly little more than the Ape of Thoth.

The principal characteristic of Tahuti or Thoth, the Egyptian Mercury, is, firstly, that he has the head of the ibis. The ibis is the symbol of concentration, because it was supposed that this bird stood continuously upon one leg, motionless. This is quite evidently a symbol of the meditative spirit. There may also have been some reference to the central mystery of the Aeon of Osiris, the secret guarded so carefully from the profane, that the intervention of the male was necessary to the production of children. In this form of Thoth, he is seen bearing the phoenix wand, symbolising resurrection through the generative process. In his left hand is the Ankh, which represents a sandal-strap; that is to say, the means of progress through the worlds, which is the distinguishing mark of godhead. But, by its shape, this Ankh (*crux ansata*) is actually another form of the Rose and Cross, and this fact is perhaps not quite such an accident as modern Egyptologists, preoccupied with their attempted refutation of the Phallic school of Archæology, would have us suppose.

The other form of Thoth represents him primarily as Wisdom

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and the Word. He bears in his right hand the Style, in his left the Papyrus. He is the messenger of the gods; he transmits their will by hieroglyphs intelligible to the initiate, and records their acts; but it was seen from very early times that the use of speech, or writing, meant the introduction of ambiguity at the best, and falsehood at the worst; they therefore represented Thoth as followed by an ape, the cynocephalus, whose business was to distort the Word of the god; to mock, to simulate and to deceive. In philosophical language one may say: Manifestation implies illusion. This doctrine is found in Hindu philosophy, where the aspect of Tahuti of which we are speaking is called Mayan. This doctrine is also found in the central and typical image of the Mahayana school of Buddhism (really identical with the doctrine of Shiva and Shakti). A vision of this image will be found in the document entitled "The Lord of Illusion". (See Appendix.)

The present card endeavours to represent all the above conceptions. Yet no true image is possible at all; for, firstly, all images are necessarily false as such; and, secondly, the motion being perpetual, and its rate that of the limit, c , the rate of Light, any stasis contradicts the idea of the card: this picture is, therefore, hardly more than mnemonic jottings. Many of the ideas expressed in the design are well expounded in the extracts from *The Paris Working*. (See Appendix.)

II. THE HIGH PRIESTESS

This card is referred to the letter Gimel, which means a Camel. (The symbolism of the Camel is explained later.)

The card refers to the Moon. The Moon (being the general feminine symbol, the symbol of the second order corresponding to the Sun as the Yoni does to the Lingam) is universal, and goes from the highest to the lowest. It is a symbol which will recur frequently in these hieroglyphs. But in the earlier Trumps the concern is with Nature above the Abyss; the High Priestess is the first card which connects the Supernal Triad with the Hexad; and her path, as shown in the diagram, makes a direct connection between the Father in his highest aspect, and the Son in his most perfect manifestation. This path is

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in exact balance in the middle pillar. There is here, therefore, the purest and most exalted conception of the Moon. (At the other end of the scale is Atu xviii, q.v.)

The card represents the most spiritual form of Isis the Eternal Virgin; the Artemis of the Greeks. She is clothed only in the luminous veil of light. It is important for high initiation to regard Light not as the perfect manifestation of the Eternal Spirit, but rather as the veil which hides that Spirit. It does so all the more effectively because of its incomparably dazzling brilliance.¹ Thus she is light and the body of light. She is the truth behind the veil of light. She is the soul of light. Upon her knees is the bow of Artemis, which is also a musical instrument, for she is huntress, and hunts by enchantment.

Now, regard this idea as from behind the Veil of Light, the third Veil of the original Nothing. This light is the menstruum of manifestation, the goddess Nuith, the possibility of Form. This first and most spiritual manifestation of the feminine takes to itself a masculine correlative, by formulating in itself any geometrical point from which to contemplate possibility. This virginal goddess is then potentially the goddess of fertility. She is the idea behind all form; as soon as the influence of the triad descends below the Abyss, there is the completion of concrete idea.

The following chapter of the *Book of Lies* (*falsely so-called*), may assist the student to understand this doctrine by dint of meditation:

DUST DEVILS.

In the Wind of the mind arises the turbulence called I.

It breaks; down shower the barren thoughts.

All life is choked.

This desert is the Abyss wherein is the Universe.

The Stars are but thistles in that waste.

Yet this desert is but one spot accursèd in a world of bliss.

Now and again Travellers cross the desert; they come from the Great Sea, and to the Great Sea they go.

¹ The tradition of the best schools of Hindu mysticism has a precise parallelism. The final obstacle to full Enlightenment is exactly this Vision of Formless Effulgence.

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And as they go they spill water; one day they will irrigate the desert, till it flower.

See! Five footprints of a Camel! V.V.V.V.V.

(For the classical description of the Abyss, the student should consult Liber 418, *The Vision and the Voice*, especially the Tenth Æthyr. *The Equinox*, Vol. I, No. 5, Supplement.)

At the bottom of the card, accordingly, are shown nascent forms, whorls, crystals, seeds, pods, symbolising the beginnings of life. In the midst is the Camel which is mentioned in the chapter quoted above. In this card is the one link between the archetypal and formative worlds.

Thus far concerning this path, considered as issuing downwards from the Crown; but to the aspirant, that is, to the adept who is already in Tiphareth, to him who has attained to the Knowledge and Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel, this is the path which leads upwards; and this card, in one system entitled the Priestess of the Silver Star, is symbolic of the thought (or rather of the intelligible radiance) of that Angel. It is, in short, a symbol of the highest Initiation. Now it is a condition of Initiation that its keys are to be communicated by those who possess them to all true aspirants. This card is thus very peculiarly a glyph of the work of the A.:A.:. Some idea of the formula is given in this other chapter of the *Book of Lies*:

THE OYSTER

The Brothers of A.:A.: are one with the Mother of the Child.
The Many is as adorable to the One as the One is to the Many.
This is the Love of These; creation-parturition is the Bliss of the One; coition-dissolution is the Bliss of the Many.

The All, thus interwoven of These, is Bliss.

Naught is beyond Bliss.

The Man delights in uniting with the Woman; the Woman in parting from the Child.

The Brothers of A.:A.: are Women; the Aspirants to A.:A.: are Men.

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It is important to reflect that this card is wholly feminine, wholly virginal, for it represents the influence and the means of manifestation (or, from below, of attainment) in itself. It represents possibility in its second stage without any beginning of consummation.

It is especially to be observed that the three consecutive letters, Gimel, Daleth, Hé (Atu II, III, XVII) show the Feminine Symbol (Yin) in three forms composing a Triune Goddess. This Trinity is immediately followed by the three corresponding and complementary Fathers, Vau, Tzaddi, Yod (Atu IV, V, IX). The Trumps O and I are hermaphrodite. The remaining fourteen Trumps represent these Primordial Quintessences of Being in conjunction, function, or manifestation.

III. THE EMPRESS

This card is attributed to the letter Daleth, which means a door, and it refers to the planet Venus. This card is, on the face of it, the complement of The Emperor; but her attributions are much more universal.

On the Tree of Life, Daleth is the path leading from Chokmah to Binah, uniting the Father with the Mother. Daleth is one of the three paths which are altogether above the Abyss. There is furthermore the alchemical symbol of Venus, the only one of the planetary symbols which comprises all the Sephiroth of the Tree of Life. The doctrine implied is that the fundamental formula of the Universe is Love. [The circle touches the Sephiroth 1, 2, 4, 6, 5, 3; the Cross is formed by 6, 9, 10 and 7, 8.]

It is impossible to summarize the meanings of the symbol of the Woman, for this very reason, that she continually recurs in infinitely varied form. "Many-throned, many-minded, many-wiled, daughter of Zeus."

In this card, she is shown in her most general manifestation. She combines the highest spiritual with the lowest material qualities. For this reason, she is fitted to represent one of the three alchemical forms of energy, Salt. Salt is the inactive principle of Nature; Salt is matter which must be energized by Sulphur to maintain the whirling equilibrium of the Universe. The arms and torso of the figure con-

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sequently suggest the shape of the alchemical symbol of Salt. She represents a woman with the imperial crown and vestments, seated upon a throne, whose uprights suggest blue twisted flames symbolic of her birth from water, the feminine, fluid element. In her right hand she bears the lotus of Isis; the lotus represents the feminine, or passive power. Its roots are in the earth beneath the water, or in the water itself, but it opens its petals to the Sun, whose image is the belly of the chalice. It is, therefore, a living form of the Holy Grail, sanctified by the blood of the Sun. Perching upon the flamelike uprights of her throne are two of her most sacred birds, the sparrow and the dove; the nub of this symbolism must be sought in the poems of Catullus and Martial. On her robe are bees; also dominos, surrounded by continuous spiral lines; the signification is everywhere similar.

About her, for a girdle, is the Zodiac.

Beneath the throne is a floor of tapestry, embroidered with fleurs-de-lys and fishes; they seem to be adoring the Secret Rose, which is indicated at the base of the throne. The significance of these symbols has already been explained. In this card all symbols are cognate, because of the simplicity and purity of the emblem. There is here no contradiction; such opposition as there seems to be is only the opposition necessary to balance. And this is shown by the revolving moons.

The heraldry of the Empress is two-fold: on the one side, the Pelican of tradition feeding its young from the blood of its own heart; on the other, the White Eagle of the Alchemist.

With regard to the Pelican, its full symbolism is only available to Initiates of the Fifth degree of the O.T.O. In general terms, the meaning may be suggested by identifying the Pelican herself with the Great Mother and her offspring, with the Daughter in the formula of Tetragrammaton. It is because the daughter *is* the daughter of her mother that she can be raised to her throne. In other language, there is a continuity of life, an inheritance of blood, which binds all forms of Nature together. There is no break between light and darkness. *Natura non facit saltum*. If these considerations were fully understood, it would become possible to reconcile the Quantum theory with the Electro-magnetic equations.

The White Eagle in this trump corresponds to the Red Eagle

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in the Consort card, the Emperor. It is here necessary to work backwards. For in these highest cards are the symbols of perfection; both the initial perfection of Nature and the final perfection of Art; not only Isis, but Nephthys. Consequently, the details of the work pertain to subsequent cards, especially *Atu vi* and *Atu xiv*.

At the back of the card is the Arch or Door, which is the interpretation of the letter Daleth. This card, summed up, may be called the Gate of Heaven. But, because of the beauty of the symbol, because of its omniform presentation, the student who is dazzled by any given manifestation may be led astray. In no other card is it so necessary to disregard the parts, to concentrate upon the whole.

IV. THE EMPEROR

This card is attributed to the letter Tzaddi, and it refers to the sign of Aries in the Zodiac. This sign is ruled by Mars, and therein the Sun is exalted. The sign is thus a combination of energy in its most material form with the idea of authority. The sign TZ or TS implies this in the original, onomatopoeic form of language. It is derived from Sanskrit roots meaning Head and Age, and is found to-day in words like Cæsar, Tsar, Sirdar, Senate, Senior, Signor, Señor, Seigneur.

The card represents a crowned male figure, with imperial vestments and regalia. He is seated upon the throne whose capitals are the heads of the Himalayan wild ram, since Aries means a Ram. At his feet, couchant, is the Lamb and Flag, to confirm this attribution on the lower plane; for the ram, by nature, is a wild and courageous animal, lonely in lonely places, whereas when tamed and made to lie down in green pastures, nothing is left but the docile, cowardly, gregarious and succulent beast. This is the theory of government.

The Emperor is also one of the more important alchemical cards; with *Atu II* and *III*, he makes up the triad: Sulphur, Mercury, Salt. His arms and head form an upright triangle; below, crossed legs represent the Cross. This figure is the alchemical symbol of Sulphur (see *Atu X*). Sulphur is the male fiery energy of the Universe, the *Rajas* of Hindu philosophy. This is the swift creative energy, the initiative of all Being. The power of the Emperor is a general-

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ization of the paternal power; hence such symbols as the Bee and the Fleur-de-lys, which are shown on this card. With regard to the quality of this power, it must be noted that it represents sudden, violent, but impermanent activity. If it persists too long, it burns and destroys. Distinguish from the Creative Energy of Aleph and Beth: this card is below the Abyss.

The Emperor bears a sceptre (surmounted by a ram's head for the reasons given above) and an orb surmounted by a Maltese cross, which signifies that his energy has reached a successful issue, that his government has been established.

There is one further symbol of importance. His shield represents the two-headed eagle crowned with a crimson disk. This represents the red tincture of the alchemist, of the nature of gold, as the white eagle shown in Atu III pertains to his consort, the Empress, and is lunar, of silver.

It is finally to be observed that the white light which descends upon him indicates the position of this card in the Tree of Life. His authority is derived from Chokmah, the creative Wisdom, the Word, and is exerted upon Tiphareth, the organized man.

V. THE HIEROPHANT

This card is referred to the letter Vau, which means a Nail; of this instrument nine appear at the top of the card; they serve to fix the oriel behind the main figure of the picture.

The card is referred to Taurus; therefore the Throne of the Hierophant is surrounded by elephants, which are of the nature of Taurus; and he is actually seated upon a bull. Around him are the four beasts or Kerubs, one in each corner of the card; for these are the guardians of every shrine. But the main reference is to the particular arcanum which is the principal business, the essential, of all magical work; the uniting of the microcosm with the macrocosm. Accordingly, the oriel is diaphanous; before the Manifestor of the Mystery is a hexagram representing the macrocosm. In its centre is a pentagram, representing a dancing male child. This symbolizes the law of the new Aeon of the Child Horus, which has supplanted that Aeon of the "Dying God" which governed the world for two thousand

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years. Before him is the woman girt with a sword; she represents the Scarlet Woman in the hierarchy of the new Aeon. This symbolism is further carried out in the oriel where, behind the phallic head-dress, the rose of five petals is in blossom.

The symbolism of the snake and dove refers to this verse of the *Book of the Law*—chap. I, verse 57: “there are love and love. There is the dove, and there is the serpent”.

This symbol recurs in the trump numbered XVI.

The background of the whole card is the dark blue of the starry night of Nuit, from whose womb all phenomena are born.

Taurus, the sign of the Zodiac represented by this card, is itself the Bull Kerub; that is, Earth in its strongest and most balanced form.

The ruler of this sign is Venus; she is represented by the woman standing before the hierophant.

Chapter III of the *Book of the Law*, verse xi, reads:

“Let the woman be girt with a sword before me.” This woman represents Venus as she now is in this new aeon; no longer the mere vehicle of her male counterpart, but armed and militant.

In this sign the Moon is “exalted”; her influence is represented not only by the woman, but by the nine nails.

It is impossible at the present time to explain this card thoroughly, for only the course of events can show how the new current of initiation will work out.

It is the aeon of Horus, of the Child. Though the face of the Hierophant appears benignant and smiling, and the child himself seems glad with wanton innocence, it is hard to deny that in the expression of the initiator is something mysterious, even sinister. He seems to be enjoying a very secret joke at somebody’s expense. There is a distinctly sadistic aspect to this card; not unnaturally, since it derives from the Legend of Pasiphae, the prototype of all the legends of Bull-gods. These still persist in such religions as Shaivism, and (after multiple degradations) in Christianity itself.

The symbolism of the Wand is peculiar; the three interlaced rings which crown it may be taken as representative of the three Aeons of Isis, Osiris and Horus with their interlocking magical formulae. The upper ring is marked with scarlet for Horus; the two lower rings with green for Isis, and pale yellow for Osiris, respectively.

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All these are based upon deep indigo, the colour of Saturn, the Lord of Time. For the rhythm of the Hierophant is such that he moves only at intervals of 2,000 years.

VI. THE LOVERS [OR: THE BROTHERS]

This card and its twin, XIV, Art, are the most obscure and difficult of the Atu. Each of these symbols is in itself double, so that the meanings form a divergent series, and the integration of the Card can only be regained by repeated marriages, identifications, and some form of Hermaphroditism.

Yet the attribution is the essence of simplicity. Atu VI refers to Gemini, ruled by Mercury. It means The Twins. The Hebrew letter corresponding is Zain, which means a Sword, and the framework of the card is therefore the Arch of Swords, beneath which the Royal Marriage takes place.

The Sword is primarily an engine of division. In the intellectual world—which is the world of the Sword suit—it represents analysis. This card and Atu XIV together compose the comprehensive alchemical maxim: *Solve et coagula*.

This card is consequently one of the most fundamental cards in the Tarot. It is the first card in which more than one figure appears. [The Ape of Thoth in Atu I is only a shadow.] In its original form, it was the story of Creation.

Here is appended, for its historical interest, the description of this card in its primitive form from *Liber 418*.

“There is an Assyrian legend of a woman with a fish, and also there is a legend of Eve and the Serpent, for Cain was the child of Eve and the Serpent, and not of Eve and Adam; and therefore when he had slain his brother, who was the first murderer, having sacrificed living things to his demon, had Cain the mark upon his brow, which is the mark of the Beast spoken of in the Apocalypse, and is the sign of Initiation.

“The shedding of blood is necessary, for God did not hear the children of Eve until blood was shed. And that is external religion; but Cain spake not with God, nor had the mark of initiation upon his brow, so that he was shunned of all men, until he had shed blood.

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And this blood was the blood of his brother. This is a mystery of the sixth key of the Tarot, which ought not to be called The Lovers, but The Brothers.

“In the middle of the card stands Cain; in his right hand is the Hammer of Thor with which he hath slain his brother, and it is all wet with his blood. And his left hand he holdeth open as a sign of innocence. On his right hand is his mother Eve, around whom the serpent is entwined with his hood spread behind her head; and on his left hand is a figure somewhat like the Hindoo Kali, but much more seductive. Yet I know it to be Lilith. And above him is the Great Sigil of the Arrow, downward, but it is struck through the heart of the child. This child also is Abel. And the meaning of this part of the card is obscure, but that is the correct drawing of the Tarot card; and that is the correct magical fable from which the Hebrew scribes, who were not complete Initiates, stole their legend of the Fall and the subsequent events.”

It is very significant that almost every sentence in this passage seems to reverse the meaning of the previous one. This is because reaction is always equal and opposite to action. This equation is, or should be, simultaneous in the intellectual world, where there is no great time-lag; the formulation of any idea creates its contradictory at almost the same moment. The contradictory of any proposition is implicit in itself. This is necessary to preserve the equilibrium of the Universe. The theory has been explained in the essay on Atu I, the Juggler, but must now be again emphasized in order to interpret this card.

The key is that the Card represents the Creation of the World. The Hierarchs held this secret as of transcendent importance. Consequently, the Initiates who issued the Tarot, for use during the Aeon of Osiris, superseded the original card above described in “The Vision and the Voice”. They were concerned to create a new Universe of their own; they were the fathers of Science. Their methods of working, grouped under the generic term Alchemy, have never been made public. The interesting point is that all developments of modern science in the last fifty years have given intelligent and instructed people the opportunity of reflecting that the whole trend of science has been to return to alchemical aims and (*mutatis mutandis*) methods.

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The secrecy observed by the alchemists was made necessary by the power of persecuting Churches. Bitterly as bigots fought among themselves, they were all equally concerned to destroy the infant Science, which, as they instinctively recognized, would put an end to the ignorance and faith on which their power and wealth depended.

The subject of this card is Analysis, followed by Synthesis. The first question asked by science is: "Of what are things composed?" This having been answered, the next question is: "How shall we recombine them to our greater advantage?" This resumes the whole policy of the Tarot.

The hooded figure which occupies the centre of the Card is another form of The Hermit, who is further explained in Atu IX. He is himself a form of the god Mercury, described in Atu I; he is closely shrouded, as if to signify that the ultimate reason of things lies in a realm beyond manifestation and intellect. (As elsewhere explained, only two operations are ultimately possible—analysis and synthesis). He is standing in the Sign of the Enterer, as if projecting the mysterious forces of creation. About his arms is a scroll, indicative of the Word which is alike his essence and his message. But the Sign of the Enterer is also the Sign of Benediction and of Consecration; thus his action in this card is the Celebration of the Hermetic Marriage. Behind him are the figures of Eve, Lilith and Cupid. This symbolism has been incorporated in order to preserve in some measure the original form of the card, and to show its derivation, its heirship, its continuity with the past. On the quiver of Cupid is inscribed the word *Thelema*, which is the Word of the Law. (See *Liber AL*, chap. 1, verse 39.) His shafts are *quanta* of Will. It is thus shown that this fundamental formula of magical working, analysis and synthesis, persists through the Aeons.

One may now consider the Hermetic Marriage itself.

This part of the Card has been simplified from "the Chymical Marriage of Christian Rosenkreutz", a masterpiece too lengthy and diffuse to quote usefully in this place. But the essence of the analysis is the continuous see-saw of contradictory ideas. It is a glyph of duality. The Royal persons concerned are the Black or Moorish King with a golden crown, and the White Queen with a silver crown. He is accompanied by the Red Lion, and she by the White Eagle.

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These are symbols of the male and female principles in Nature; they are therefore equally, in various stages of manifestation, Sun and Moon, Fire and Water, Air and Earth. In chemistry they appear as acid and alkali, or (more deeply) metals and non-metals, taking those words in their widest philosophical sense to include hydrogen on the one hand and oxygen on the other. In this aspect, the hooded figure represents the Protean element of carbon, the seed of all organic life.

The symbolism of male and female is carried on still further by the weapons of the King and Queen; he bears the Sacred Lance, and she the Holy Grail; their other hands are joined, as consenting to the Marriage. Their weapons are supported by twin children, whose positions are counterchanged; for the white child not only holds the Cup, but carries roses, while the black child, holding his father's Lance, carries also the club, an equivalent symbol. At the bottom of the whole is the result of the Marriage in primitive and pantomorphic form; it is the winged Orphic egg. This egg represents the essence of all that life which comes under this formula of male and female. It carries on the symbolism of the Serpents with which the King's robe is embroidered, and of the Bees which adorn the mantle of the Queen. The egg is grey, mingling white and black; thus it signifies the co-operation of the three Supernals of the Tree of Life. The colour of the Serpent is purple, Mercury in the scale of the Queen. It is the influence of that God manifested in Nature, whereas the wings are tinged with crimson, the colour (in the King scale) of Binah the great Mother. In this symbol is therefore a complete glyph of the equilibrium necessary to begin the Great Work. But, as to the final mystery, that is left unsolved. Perfect is the plan to produce life, but the nature of this life is concealed. It is capable of taking any possible form; but what form? That is dependent upon the influences attendant on gestation.

The figure in the air presents some difficulty. The traditional interpretation of the figure is that he is Cupid; and it is not at first clear what Cupid has to do with Gemini. No light is thrown upon this point by consideration of the position of the path upon the Tree of Life, for Gemini leads from Binah to Tiphareth. There accordingly arises the whole question of Cupid. Roman gods usually

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represent a more material aspect of the Greek gods from whom they are derived; in this case, Eros. Eros is the son of Aphrodite, and tradition varies as to whether his father was Ares, Zeus or Hermes—that is, Mars, Jupiter or Mercury. His appearance in this card suggests that Hermes is the true sire; and this view is confirmed by the fact that it is not altogether easy to distinguish him from the child Mercury, for they have in common wantonness, irresponsibility, and the love of playing tricks. But in this image are peculiar characteristics. He carries a bow and arrows in a golden quiver. (He is sometimes represented with a torch.) He has golden wings, and is blindfolded. From this, it may appear that he represents the intelligent (and, at the same time, unconscious) will of the soul to unite itself with all and sundry, as has been explained in the general formula with regard to the agony of separateness.

No very special importance is attached to Cupid in alchemical figures. Yet, in one sense, he is the source of all action; the libido to express Zero as Two. From another point of view, he may be regarded as the intellectual aspect of the influence of Binah upon Tiphareth, for (in one tradition) the title of the card is “The Children of the Voice, the Oracle of the Mighty Gods”. From this point of view, he is a symbol of inspiration, descending upon the hooded figure, who is, in this instance, a prophet operating the conjunction of the King and Queen. His arrow represents the spiritual intelligence necessary in alchemical operations, rather than the mere hunger to perform them. On the other hand, the arrow is peculiarly a symbol of direction, and it is, therefore, proper to put the word “Thelema” in Greek letters on the quiver. It is also to be observed that the opposite card, Sagittarius, means the Bearer of the Arrow, or Archer, a figure who does not appear in any form in Atu XIV. These two cards are so complementary that they cannot be studied separately, for full interpretation.

VII. THE CHARIOT

Atu VII refers to the zodiacal sign of Cancer, the sign into which the Sun moves at the Summer Solstice.¹

¹ Note that Cheth—Cheth 8—Yod 10—Tau 400—has the value of 418. This

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Cancer is the cardinal sign of the element of Water,² and represents the first keen onrush of that element. Cancer also represents the path which leads from the great Mother Binah to Geburah, and is thus the influence of the Supernals descending through the Veil of Water (which is blood) upon the energy of man, and so inspires it. It corresponds, in this way, to The Hierophant, which, on the other side of the Tree of Life, brings down the fire of Chokmah. (See diagram.)

The design of this present card has been much influenced by the Trump portrayed by Eliphaz Levi.

The canopy of the Chariot is the night-sky-blue of Binah. The pillars are the four pillars of the Universe, the regimen of Tetragrammaton. The scarlet wheels represent the original energy of Geburah which causes the revolving motion.

This chariot is drawn by four sphinxes composed of the four Kerubs, the Bull, the Lion, the Eagle and the Man. In each sphinx these elements are counter-changed; thus the whole represents the sixteen sub-elements.

The Charioteer is clothed in the amber-coloured armour appropriate to the sign. He is throned in the chariot rather than conducting it, because the whole system of progression is perfectly balanced. His only function is to bear the Holy Grail.

Upon his armour are ten Stars of Assiah, the inheritance of celestial dew from his mother.

He bears as a crest the Crab appropriate to the sign. The vizor of his helmet is lowered, for no man may look upon his face and live. For the same reason, no part of his body is exposed.

Cancer is the house of the Moon; there are thus certain analogies between this card and that of the High Priestess. But, also, Jupiter is exalted in Cancer, and here one recalls the card called Fortune (Atu X) attributed to Jupiter.

The central and most important feature of the card is its centre—

is one of the most important of the key-numbers of Liber AL. It is the number of the word of the Aeon, ABRAHADABRA, the cypher of the Great Work. (See *The Equinox of the Gods*, p. 138. Also *The Temple of Solomon the King*.) On this word alone a complete volume could, and should, be written.

² Hence St. John Baptist's Day, and the various ceremonials connected with water.

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the Holy Grail. It is of pure amethyst, of the colour of Jupiter, but its shape suggests the full moon and the Great Sea of Binah.

In the centre is radiant blood; the spiritual life is inferred; light in the darkness. These rays, moreover, revolve, emphasizing the Jupiterian element in the symbol.

VIII. ADJUSTMENT

This card in the old pack was called Justice. This word has none but a purely human and therefore relative sense; so it is not to be considered as one of the facts of Nature. Nature is not just, according to any theological or ethical idea; but Nature is exact.

This card represents the sign of Libra, ruled by Venus; in it Saturn is exalted. The equilibrium of all things is hereby symbolized. It is the final adjustment in the formula of Tetragrammaton, when the daughter, redeemed by her marriage with the Son, is thereby set up on the throne of the mother; thus, finally, she "awakens the Eld of the All-Father."

In the greatest symbolism of all, however, the symbolism beyond all planetary and Zodiacal considerations, this card is the feminine complement of the Fool, for the letters Aleph Lamed constitute the secret key of the *Book of the Law*, and this is the basis of a complete qabalistic system of greater depth and sublimity than any other. The details of this system have not yet been revealed. It has been thought right, nevertheless, to hint at its existence by equating the designs of these two cards. Not only therefore, because Libra is a sign of Venus, but because she is the partner of the Fool, is the Goddess represented as dancing, with the suggestion of Harlequin.

The figure is that of a young and slender woman poised exactly upon toetip. She is crowned with the ostrich plumes of Maat, the Egyptian goddess of Justice, and on her forehead is the Uraeus serpent, Lord of Life and Death. She is masked, and her expression shows her secret intimate satisfaction in her domination of every element of dis-equilibrium in the Universe. This condition is symbolized by the Magic Sword which she holds in both hands, and the balances or spheres in which she weighs the Universe, Alpha the

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First balanced exactly against Omega the Last. These are the Judex and Testes of Final Judgment; the Testes, in particular, are symbolic of the secret course of judgment whereby all current experience is absorbed, transmuted, and ultimately passed on, by virtue of the operation of the Sword, to further manifestation. This all takes place within the diamond formed by the figure which is the concealed *Vesica Piscis* through which this sublimated and adjusted experience passes to its next manifestation.

She poises herself before a throne composed of spheres and pyramids (four in number, signifying Law and Limitation) which themselves maintain the same equity that she herself manifests, though on a completely impersonal plane, in the framework within which all operations take place. Outside this again, at the corner of the card, are indicated balanced spheres of light and darkness, and constantly equilibrated rays from these spheres form a curtain, the interplay of all those forces which she sums up and adjudicates.

One must go more deeply into philosophy; the Trump represents The Woman Satisfied. Equilibrium stands apart from any individual prejudices; therefore the title, in France, should rather be *Justesse*. In this sense, Nature is scrupulously just. It is impossible to drop a pin without exciting a corresponding reaction in every Star. The action has disturbed the balance of the Universe.

This woman-goddess is Harlequin; she is the partner and fulfilment of The Fool. She is the ultimate illusion which is manifestation; she is the dance, many-coloured, many-wiled, of Life itself. Constantly whirling, all possibilities are enjoyed, under the phantom show of Space and Time: all things are real, the soul is the surface, precisely because they are instantly compensated by this Adjustment. All things are harmony and beauty; all things are Truth: because they cancel out.

She is the goddess Maat; she bears upon her nemyss the ostrich feathers of the Twofold Truth.

From this Crown, so delicate that the most faintest breath of thought must stir it, depend, by chains of Cause, the Scales wherein Alpha, the first, is poised in perfect equilibrium with Omega, the last. The scales of the balance are the Two Witnesses in whom shall every word be established. She is therefore to be understood as

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assessing the virtue of every act and demanding exact and precise satisfaction.

More than this, she is the complete formula of the Dyad; the word AL is the title of the *Book of the Law*, whose number is 31, the most secret of the numerical keys of that Book. She represents Manifestation, which may always be cancelled out by equilibration of opposites.

She is wrapped in a cloak of mystery, the more mysterious because diaphanous; she is the sphinx without a secret, because she is purely a matter of calculation. In Eastern philosophy she is Karma.

Her attributions develop this thesis. Venus rules the sign of the Balance; and that is to show the formula: "Love is the law, love under will". But Saturn represents above all the element of Time, without which adjustment cannot take place, for all action and reaction take place in time, and therefore, time being itself merely a condition of phenomena, all phenomena are invalid because uncompensated.

The Woman Satisfied. From the cloak of the vivid wantonness of her dancing wings issue her hands; they hold the hilt of the Phallic sword of the magician. She holds the blade between her thighs.

This is again a hieroglyph of "Love is the law, love under will". Every form of energy must be directed, must be applied with integrity, to the full satisfaction of its destiny.

IX. THE HERMIT

This card is attributed to the letter Yod, which means the Hand. Hence, the hand, which is the tool or instrument par excellence, is in the centre of the picture. The letter Yod is the foundation of all the other letters of the Hebrew alphabet, which are merely combinations of it in various ways.

The letter Yod is the first letter of the name Tetragrammaton, and this symbolizes the Father, who is Wisdom; he is the highest form of Mercury, and the Logos, the Creator of all worlds. Accordingly, his representative in physical life is the spermatozoon; this is why the card is called The Hermit.

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The figure of the Hermit himself recalls the shape of the letter Yod, and the colour of his cloak is the colour of Binah, in whom he gestates.

In his hand he holds a Lamp whose centre is the Sun, portrayed in the likeness of the Sigil of the great King of Fire (Yod is the secret Fire). It seems that he is contemplating—in a certain sense, adoring—the Orphic egg (greenish in colour) because it is conterminous with the Universe, while the snake which surrounds it is many-coloured to signify the iridescence of Mercury. For he is not only creative, but is the fluidic essence of Light, which is the life of the Universe.

The highest symbolism of this card is, therefore, Fertility in its most exalted sense, and this is reflected in the attribution of the card to the sign of Virgo, which is another aspect of the same quality. Virgo is an earthy sign, and is referred especially to Corn, so that the background of the card is a field of wheat.

Virgo represents the lowest, most receptive, most feminine form of earth, and forms the crust over Hades. Yet not only is Virgo ruled by Mercury, but Mercury is exalted therein. Compare the Ten of Disks, and the general doctrine that the climax of the Descent into Matter is the signal for the redintegration by Spirit. It is the Formula of the Princess, the mode of fulfilment of the Great Work.

This card recalls the Legend of Persephone, and herein is a dogma. Concealed within Mercury is a light which pervades all parts of the Universe equally; one of his titles is Psychopompos, the guide of the soul through the lower regions. These symbols are indicated by his Serpent Wand, which is actually growing out of the Abyss, and is the spermatozoon developed as a poison, and manifesting the foetus. Following him is Cerberus, the three-headed Hound of Hell whom he has tamed. In this Trump is shewn the entire mystery of Life in its most secret workings. Yod \equiv Phallus \equiv Spermatozoon \equiv Hand \equiv Logos \equiv Virgin. There is perfect Identity, not merely Equivalence, of the Extremes, the Manifestation, and the Method.

X. FORTUNE

This card is attributed to the planet Jupiter, “the Greater Fortune” in astrology. It corresponds to the letter Kaph,¹ which means

¹ Kaph 20 Pé 80 = 100, Qoph, Pisces. The initials K Ph are those of κρείς and φαλλος.

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the palm of the hand, in whose lines, according to another tradition, the fortune of the owner may be read. It would be narrow to think of Jupiter as *good* fortune; he represents the element of luck. The incalculable factor.

This card thus represents the Universe in its aspect as a continual change of state. Above, the firmament of stars. These appear distorted in shape, although they are balanced, some being brilliant and some dark. From them, through the firmament, issue lightnings; they churn it into a mass of blue and violet plumes. In the midst of all this is suspended a wheel of ten spokes, according to the number of the Sephiroth, and of the sphere of Malkuth, indicating governance of physical affairs.

On this wheel are three figures, the Sworded Sphinx, Hermanubis, and Typhon; they symbolize the three forms of energy which govern the movement of phenomena.

The nature of these qualities requires careful description. In the Hindu system are three Gunas—Sattvas, Rajas and Tamas. The word "Guna" is untranslatable. It is not quite an element, a quality, a form of energy, a phase, or a potential; all of these ideas enter into it. All the qualities that can be predicated of anything may be ascribed to one or more of these Gunas: Tamas is darkness, inertia, sloth, ignorance, death and the like; Rajas is energy, excitement, fire, brilliance, restlessness; Sattvas is calm, intelligence, lucidity and balance. They correspond to the three principal Hindu castes.

One of the most important aphorisms of Hindu philosophy is: "the Gunas revolve". This means that, according to the doctrine of continual change, nothing can remain in any phase where one of these Gunas is predominant; however dense and dull that thing may be, a time will come when it begins to stir. The end and reward of the effort is a state of lucid quietude, which, however, tends ultimately to sink into the original inertia.

The Gunas are represented in European philosophy by the three qualities, sulphur, mercury and salt, already pictured in Atu I, III and IV. But in this card the attribution is somewhat different. The Sphinx is composed of the four Kerubs, shown in Atu V, the bull, the lion, the eagle and the man. These correspond, furthermore,

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to the four magical virtues, to Know, to Will, to Dare, and to Keep Silence.¹ This Sphinx represents the element of sulphur, and is exalted, temporarily, upon the summit of the wheel. She is armed with a sword of the short Roman pattern, held upright between the paws of the lion.

Climbing up the left-hand side of the wheel is Hermanubis, who represents the alchemical Mercury. He is a composite god; but in him the simian element predominates.

On the right hand side, precipitating himself downward, is Typhon, who represents the element of salt. Yet in these figures there is also a certain degree of complexity, for Typhon was a monster of the primitive world, personifying the destructive power and fury of volcanos and typhoons. In the legend, he attempted to obtain supreme authority over both gods and men; but Zeus blasted him with a thunderbolt. He is said to be the father of stormy, hot and poisonous winds; also of the Harpies. But this card, like Atu XVI, may also be interpreted as a Unity of supreme attainment and delight. The lightnings which destroy, also beget; and the wheel may be regarded as the Eye of Shiva, whose opening annihilates the Universe, or as a wheel upon the Car of Jaganath, whose devotees attain perfection at the moment that it crushes them.

A description of this card, as it appears in *The Vision and the Voice*, with certain inner meanings, is given in an Appendix.

XI. LUST

This Trump was formerly called Strength. But it implies far more than strength in the ordinary sense of the word. Technical analysis shows that the Path corresponding to the card is not the Strength of Geburah, but the influence from Chesed upon Geburah, the Path balanced both vertically and horizontally on the Tree of Life (see diagram). For this reason it has been thought better to

¹ These are the four elements, summed in a fifth, Spirit, to form the Pentagram; and the Magical Virtue corresponding is Ire, to go. "To go" is the token of Godhead, as explained in reference to the sandal-strap or Ankh, the Crux Ansata, which in its turn is identical with the astrological symbol of Venus, comprising the 10 Sephiroth. (See diagram.)

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change the traditional title. Lust implies not only strength, but the joy of strength exercised. It is vigour, and the rapture of vigour.

“Come forth, o children, under the stars, & take your fill of love! I am above you and in you. My ecstasy is in yours. My joy is to see your joy.”

“Beauty and strength, leaping laughter and delicious languor, force and fire, are of us.”

“I am the Snake that giveth Knowledge & Delight and bright glory, and stir the hearts of men with drunkenness. To worship me take wine and strange drugs whereof I will tell my prophet, & be drunk thereof! They shall not harm ye at all. It is a lie, this folly against self. The exposure of innocence is a lie. Be strong, o man! lust, enjoy all things of sense and rapture: fear not that any God shall deny thee for this.”

“Behold! these be grave mysteries; for there are also of my friends who be hermits. Now think not to find them in the forest or on the mountain; but in beds of purple, caressed by magnificent beasts of women with large limbs, and fire and light in their eyes, and masses of flaming hair about them; there shall ye find them. Ye shall see them at rule, at victorious armies, at all the joy; and there shall be in them a joy a million times greater than this. Beware lest any force another, King against King! Love one another with burning hearts; on the low men trample in the fierce lust of your pride, in the day of your wrath.”

“There is a light before thine eyes, o prophet, a light undesired, most desirable.

“I am uplifted in thine heart; and the kisses of the stars rain hard upon thy body.

“Thou art exhaust in the voluptuous fulness of the inspiration; the expiration is sweeter than death, more rapid and laughterful than a caress of Hell’s own worm.”

This Trump is assigned to the sign of Leo in the Zodiac. It is the Kerub of Fire, and is ruled by the Sun. It is the most powerful of the twelve Zodiacal cards, and represents the most critical of all the operations of magick and of alchemy. It represents the act of

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the original marriage as it occurs in nature, as opposed to the more artificial form portrayed in Atu VI; there is in this card no attempt to direct the course of the operation.

The main subject of the card refers to the most ancient collection of legends or fables. It is necessary here to go a little into the magical doctrine of the succession of the Aeons, which is connected with the procession of the Zodiac. Thus, the last Aeon, that of Osiris, is referred to Aries and Libra, as the previous Aeon, that of Isis, was especially connected with the signs of Pisces and Virgo, while the present, that of Horus, is linked with Aquarius and Leo. The central mystery in that past Aeon was that of Incarnation; all the legends of god-men were founded upon some symbolic story of that kind. The essential of all such stories was to deny human fatherhood to the hero or god-man. In most cases, the father is stated to be a god in some animal form, the animal being chosen in accordance with the qualities that the authors of the cult wished to see reproduced in the child.

Thus, Romulus and Remus were twins begotten upon a virgin by the god Mars, and they were suckled by a wolf. On this the whole magical formula of the city Rome was founded.

Reference has already been made in this essay to the legends of Hermes and Dionysus.

The father of Gautama Buddha was said to be an elephant with six tusks, appearing to his mother in a dream.

There is also the legend of the Holy Ghost in the form of a dove, impregnating the Virgin Mary. There is here a reference to the dove of Noah's Ark, bringing glad tidings of the salvation of the world from the waters. (The dwellers in the Ark are the foetus, the waters the amniotic fluid.)

Similar fables are to be found in every religion of the Aeon of Osiris: it is the typical formula of the Dying God.

In this card, therefore, appears the legend of the woman and the lion, or rather lion-serpent. (This card is attributed to the letter Teth, which means a serpent.)

The seers in the early days of the Aeon of Osiris foresaw the Manifestation of this coming Aeon in which we now live, and they regarded it with intense horror and fear, not understanding the

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precession of the Aeons, and regarding every change as catastrophe. This is the real interpretation of, and the reason for, the diatribes against the Beast and the Scarlet Woman in the XIII, XVII and XVIII-th chapters of the Apocalypse; but on the Tree of Life, the path of Gimel, the Moon, descending from the highest, cuts the path of Teth, Leo, the house of the Sun, so that the Woman in the card may be regarded as a form of the Moon, very fully illuminated by the Sun, and intimately united with him in such wise as to produce, incarnate in human form, the representative or representatives of the Lord of the Aeon.

She rides astride the Beast; in her left hand she holds the reins, representing the passion which unites them. In her right she holds aloft the cup, the Holy Grail aflame with love and death. In this cup are mingled the elements of the sacrament of the Aeon. The *Book of Lies* devotes one chapter to this symbol.

Waratah-Blossom

Seven are the veils of the dancing-girl in the harem of IT.
Seven are the names, and seven are the lamps beside Her bed.
Seven eunuchs guard Her with drawn swords; No man may come
nigh unto Her.

In Her wine-cup are seven streams of the blood of the Seven
Spirits of God.

Seven are the heads of THE BEAST whereon She rideth.
The head of an Angel: the head of a Saint: the head of a Poet:
the head of an Adulterous Woman: the head of a Man of Valour:
the head of a Satyr: and the head of a Lion-Serpent.

Seven letters hath Her holiest name; and it is



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This is the Seal upon the Ring that is on the Forefinger of IT:
and it is the Seal upon the Tombs of them whom She hath slain.

Here is Wisdom. Let him that hath Understanding count the
Number of Our Lady; for it is the Number of a Woman; and
Her Number is

An Hundred and Fifty and Six.

There is a further description in *The Vision and the Voice*. (See Appendix.)

There is in this card a divine drunkenness or ecstasy. The woman is shown as more than a little drunk, and more than a little mad; and the lion also is aflame with lust. This signifies that the type of energy described is of the primitive, creative order; it is completely independent of the criticism of reason. This card portrays the will of the Aeon. In the background are the bloodless images of the saints, on whom this image travels, for their whole life has been absorbed into the Holy Grail.

“Now ye shall know that the chosen priest & apostle of infinite space is the prince-priest the Beast; and in his woman called the Scarlet Woman all power is given. They shall gather my children into their fold; they shall bring the glory of the stars into the hearts of men.

“For he is ever a sun, and she a moon. But to him is the winged secret flame, and to her the stooping starlight.”

This sacrament is the physical-magical formula for attaining initiation, for the accomplishment of the Great Work. It is in alchemy the process of distillation, operated by internal ferment, and the influence of the Sun and Moon.

Behind the figures of the Beast and his Bride are ten luminous rayed circles; they are the Sephiroth latent and not yet in order, for every new Aeon demands a new system of classification of the Universe.

At the top of the card is shown an emblem of the new light, with ten horns of the Beast, which are serpents, sent forth in every direction to destroy and re-create the world.

Further study of this card may be made by close examination of *Liber XV (Magick, pp. 345 sqq.)*.

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XII. THE HANGED MAN

This card, attributed to the letter Mem, represents the element of Water. It would perhaps be better to say that it represents the spiritual function of water in the economy of initiation; it is a baptism which is also a death. In the Aeon of Osiris, this card represented the supreme formula of adeptship; for the figure of the drowned or hanged man has its own special meaning. The legs are crossed so that the right leg forms a right angle with the left leg, and the arms are stretched out at an angle of 60° , so as to form an equilateral triangle; this gives the symbol of the Triangle surmounted by the Cross, which represents the descent of the light into the darkness in order to redeem it. For this reason there are green disks—green, the colour of Venus, signifies Grace—at the terminations of the limbs and of the head. The air above the surface of the water is also green, infiltrated by rays of the white light of Kether. The whole figure is suspended from the Ankh, another way of figuring the formula of the Rose and Cross, while around the left foot is the Serpent, creator and destroyer, who operates all change. (This will be seen in the card which next follows.)

It is notable that there is an apparent increase of darkness and solidity in proportion as the redeeming element manifests itself; but the colour of green is the colour of Venus, of the hope that lies in love. That depends upon the formulation of the Rose and Cross, of the annihilation of the self in the Belovèd, the condition of progress. In this inferior darkness of death, the serpent of new life begins to stir.

In the former Aeon, that of Osiris, the element of Air, which is the nature of that Aeon, is not unsympathetic either to Water or to Fire; compromise was a mark of that period. But now, under a Fiery lord of the Aeon, the watery element, so far as water is below the Abyss, is definitely hostile, unless the opposition is the right opposition implied in marriage. But in this card the only question is of the "redemption" of the submerged element, and therefore everything is reversed. This idea of sacrifice is, in the final analysis, a wrong idea.

"I give unimaginable joys on earth: certainty, not faith, while in life, upon death; peace unutterable, rest, ecstasy; nor do I demand aught in sacrifice."

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“Every man and every woman is a star.”

The whole idea of sacrifice is a misconception of nature, and these texts of the *Book of the Law* are the answer to it.

But water is the element of Illusion; one may regard this symbol as an evil legacy from the old Aeon; to use an anatomical analogy, it is a spiritual vermiform appendix.

It was the water, and the Dwellers of the Water that slew Osiris; it is the crocodiles that threaten Hoor-Pa-Kraat.

This card is beautiful in a strange, immemorial, moribund manner. It is the card of the Dying God; its importance in the present pack is merely that of the Cenotaph. It says: “If ever things get bad like that again, in the new Dark Ages which appear to threaten, this is the way to put things right.” But if things have to be put right, it shows that they are very wrong. It should be the chiefest aim of the wise to rid mankind of the insolence of self-sacrifice, of the calamity of chastity; faith must be slain by certainty, and chastity by ecstasy.

In the *Book of the Law* it is written: “Pity not the fallen! I never knew them. I am not for them. I console not: I hate the consoled and the consoler.”

Redemption is a bad word; it implies a debt. For every star possesses boundless wealth; the only proper way to deal with the ignorant is to bring them to the knowledge of their starry heritage. To do this, it is necessary to behave as must be done in order to get on good terms with animals and children: to treat them with absolute respect; even, in a certain sense, with worship.

* * *

Note on the Precession of the Aeons. “The Hanged Man” is an invention of the Adepts of the I.N.R.I.—I.A.O. formula; in the Aeon previous to the Osirian, that of Isis (Water), he is “The Drowned Man”. The two uprights of the gallows shewn in the Mediaeval packs were, in the parthenogenetic system of explaining and ruling Nature, the bottom of the Sea and the keel of the Ark. In this Aeon all birth was considered an emanation, without male intervention, of the Mother or Star-Goddess, Nuit; all death a return to Her. This explains the original attribution of the Atu to Water, and the sound M the

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return to Eternal Silence, as in the word AUM. This card is therefore specially sacred to the Mystic, and the attitude of the figure is a ritual posture in the Practice called "The Sleep of Shiloam".

* * *

The Alchemical import of this card is so alien to all dogmatic implications that it has seemed better to deal quite separately with it. Its technical qualities are independent of all doctrines soever; here is a matter of strictly scientific bearings. The student will be prudent to read in connexion with these remarks Chapter XII of *Magick*.

The Atu represents the sacrifice of "a male child of perfect innocence and high intelligence"—these words were chosen with the utmost care. The meaning of his attitude has already been described, and of the fact that he is hanged from an Ankh, an equivalent of the Rosy Cross; in some early cards the gallows is a Pylon, or the branch of a Tree, by shape suggesting the letter Daleth (ד) Venus, Love.

His background is an unbounded grill of small squares; these are the Elemental Tablets which exhibit the names and sigilla of all the energies of Nature. Through his Work a Child is begotten, as shewn by the Serpent stirring in the Darkness of the Abyss below him.

Yet the card in itself is essentially a glyph of Water; Mem is one of the three great Mother Letters, and its value is 40, the might of Tetragrammaton fully developed by Malkuth, the symbol of the Universe under the Demiourgos. Moreover, Water is peculiarly the Mother Letter, for both Shin and Aleph (the other two) represent masculine ideas; and, in Nature, Homo Sapiens is a marine mammal, and our intra-uterine existence is passed in the Amniotic Fluid. The legend of Noah, the Ark and the Flood, is no more than a hieratic presentation of the facts of life. It is then to Water that the Adepts have always looked for the continuation (in some sense or other) and to the prolongation and perhaps renovation of life.

The legend of the Gospels, dealing with the Greater Mysteries of the Lance and the Cup (those of the god Iacchus=Iao) as superior to the Lesser Mysteries (those of the God Ion=Noah, and the N-

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gods in general) in which the Sword slays the god that his head may be offered on a Plate, or Disk, says: And a soldier with a spear pierced his side; and thereforth there came out blood and water. This Wine, collected by the Beloved Disciple and the Virgin-Mother, waiting beneath the Cross or Tree for that purpose, in a Cup or Chalice; this is the Holy Grail or Sangréal (Sangraal) of Monsalvat, the Mountain of Salvation. [Grail (gréal) actually means a dish: O.F. graal, greal, grasal, probably corrupted from late Latin gradale, itself a corrupt form of crater, a bowl.] This Sacrament is exalted in the Zenith in Cancer; see Atu VII.

It is most necessary for the Student to go round and round this Wheel of symbolism until the figures melt imperceptibly the one into the other in an intoxicating dance of ecstasy; not until he has attained that is he able to partake of the Sacrament, and accomplish for himself—and for all men!—the Great Work.

But let him also remember the practical secret cloistered in all these wind-swept corridors of music, the actual preparation of the Stone of the Wise, the Medicine of Metals, and the Elixir of Life!

XIII. DEATH

This card is attributed to the letter Nun, which means a fish; the symbol of life beneath the waters; life travelling through the waters. It refers to the Zodiacal sign of Scorpio, which is ruled by Mars, the planet of fiery energy in its lowest form, which is therefore necessary to provide the impulse. In alchemy, this card explains the idea of putrefaction, the technical name given by its adepts to the series of chemical changes which develops the final form of life from the original latent seed in the Orphic egg.

This sign is one of the two most powerful in the Zodiac, but it has not the simplicity and intensity of Leo. It is formally divided into three parts; the lowest is symbolized by the Scorpion, which was supposed by early observers of Nature to commit suicide when finding itself ringed with fire, or otherwise in a desperate situation. This represents putrefaction in its lowest form. The strain of environment has become intolerable, and the attacked element willingly

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subjects itself to change; thus, potassium thrown upon water becomes ignited, and accepts the embrace of the hydroxyl radicle.

The middle interpretation of this sign is given by the serpent, who is, moreover, the main theme of the sign.¹ The serpent is sacred, Lord of Life and Death, and its method of progression suggests the rhythmical undulation of those twin phases of life which we call respectively life and death. The serpent is also, as previously explained, the principal symbol of male energy. From this it will be seen that this card is, in a very strict sense, the completion of the card called Lust, Atu XI, and Atu XII represents the solution or dissolution which links them.

The highest aspect of the card is the Eagle, which represents exaltation above solid matter. It was understood by the early chemists that, in certain experiments, the purest (i.e., most tenuous) elements present were given off as gas or vapour. There are thus represented in this card the three essential types of putrefaction.

The card itself represents the dance of death; the figure is a skeleton bearing a scythe, and both the skeleton and the scythe are importantly Saturnian symbols. This appears strange, as Saturn has no overt connection with Scorpio; but Saturn represents the essential structure of existing things. He is that elemental nature of things which is not destroyed by the ordinary changes which occur in the operations of Nature. Furthermore, he is crowned with the crown of Osiris; he represents Osiris in the waters of Amennti. Yet more, he is the original secret male creative God: see Atu XV. "Redeunt Saturnia regna." It was only the corruption of the Tradition, the confusion with Set, and the Cult of the Dying God, misunderstood, deformed and distorted by the Black Lodge, that turned him into a senile and fiendish symbol.

With the sweep of his scythe he creates bubbles in which are

¹ The Qabalists embodied in the Book of Genesis, Caps I and II, this doctrine of regeneration. NChSh, the Serpent in Eden, has the value 358: so also MShIch, Messiah. He is, accordingly, in the secret doctrine, the Redeemer. The thesis may be developed at great length. Later in the Legend, the doctrine reappears in slightly different symbolism as the story of the Flood, elsewhere in this Essay explained. Of course, the Fish is identical in essence with the Serpent; for Fish=NVN=Scorpio=Serpent. Also, Teth, the letter of Leo, means Serpent. But Fish is also the Vesica, or Womb, and Christ—and so on. This symbol resumes the *whole* Secret Doctrine.

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beginning to take shape the new forms which he creates in his dance; and these forms dance also.

In this card the symbol of the fish is paramount; the fish (*Il pesce*, as they call him in Naples and many other places) and the serpent are the two principal objects of worship in cults which taught the doctrines of resurrection or re-incarnation. Thus we have Oannes and Dagon, fish gods, in western Asia; in many other parts of the world are similar cults. Even in Christianity, Christ was represented as a fish. The Greek work IXThUS, "which means fish And very aptly symbolizes Christ", as Browning reminds one, was supposed to be a notariqon, the initials of a sentence meaning "Jesus Christ Son of God, Saviour". Nor is it an accident that St. Peter was a fisherman. The Gospels, too, are full of miracles involving fish, and the fish is sacred to Mercury, because of its cold-bloodedness, its swiftness and its brilliance. There is moreover the sexual symbolism. This again recalls the function of Mercury as the guide of the dead, and as the continuing elastic element in nature.

This card must then be considered as of greater importance and catholicity than would be expected from the plain Zodiacal attribution. It is even a compendium of universal energy in its most secret form.

XIV. ART

This card is the complement and the fulfilment of Atu VI, Gemini. It pertains to Sagittarius, the opposite to Gemini in the Zodiac, and therefore, "after another manner," one with it. Sagittarius means the Archer; and the card is (in its simplest and most primitive form) a picture of Diana the Huntress. Diana is primarily one of the lunar goddesses, though the Romans rather degraded her from the Greek "virgin Artemis", who is also the Great Mother of Fertility, Diana of the Ephesians, Many-Breasted. (A form of Isis—see Atu II and III.) The connection between the Moon and the Huntress is shewn by the shape of the bow, and the occult significance of Sagittarius is the arrow piercing the rainbow; the last three paths of the Tree of Life make the word Qesheth, a rainbow, and Sagittarius bears the arrow which pierces the rainbow, for his path leads from the Moon of Yesod

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to the Sun of Tiphareth. (This explanation is highly technical; but this is necessary because the card represents an important scientific formula, which cannot be expressed in language suited to common comprehension.)

This card represents the Consummation of the Royal Marriage which took place in Atu VI. The black and white personages are now united in a single androgyne figure. Even the Bees and the Serpents on their robes have made an alliance. The Red Lion has become white, and increased in size and importance, while the White Eagle, similarly expanded, has become red. He has exchanged his red blood for her white gluten. (It is impossible to explain these terms to any but advanced students of alchemy.)

The equilibrium and counter-change are carried out completely in the figure itself; the white woman has now a black head; the black king, a white one. She wears the golden crown with a silver band, he, the silver crown with a golden fillet; but the white head on the right is extended in action by a white arm on the left which holds the cup of the white gluten, while the black head on the left has the black arm on the right, holding the lance which has become a torch and pours forth its burning blood. The fire burns up the water; the water extinguishes the fire.

The robe of the figure is green, which symbolizes vegetable growth: this is an alchemical allegory. In the symbolism of the fathers of science, all "actual" objects were regarded as dead; the difficulty of transmuting metals was that the metals, as they occur in nature, were in the nature of excrements, because they did not grow. The first problem of alchemy was to raise mineral to vegetable life; the adepts thought that the proper way to do this was to imitate the processes of nature. Distillation, for instance, was not an operation to be performed by heating something in a retort over a flame; it had to take place naturally, even if months were required to consummate the Work. (Months, at that period of civilization, were at the disposal of enquiring minds.)

A great deal of what people now consider ignorance, being themselves ignorant of what the men of old time thought, comes from this misapprehension. At the bottom of this card, for example, are seen Fire and Water harmoniously mingled. But this is only a

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crude symbol of the spiritual idea, which is the satisfaction of the desire of the incomplete element of one kind to satisfy its formula by assimilation of its equal and opposite.

This state of the great Work therefore consisted in the mingling of the contradictory elements in a cauldron. This is here represented as golden or solar, because the Sun is the Father of all Life, and (in particular) presides over distillation. The fertility of the Earth is maintained by rain and sun; the rain is formed by a slow and gentle process, and is rendered effective by the co-operation of air, which is itself alchemically the result of the Marriage of Fire and Water. So also the formula of continued life is death, or putrefaction. Here it is symbolized by the *caput mortuum* on the cauldron, a raven perched upon a skull. In agricultural terms, this is the fallow earth.

There is a particular interpretation of this card which is only to be understood by Initiates of the Ninth Degree of the O.T.O; for it contains a practical magical formula of such importance as to make it impossible to communicate it openly.

Rising from the cauldron, as the result of the operation performed therein, is a stream of light which becomes two rainbows; they form the cape of the androgyne figure. In the centre, an arrow shoots upwards. This is connected with the general symbolism previously explained, the spiritualization of the result of the Great Work.

The rainbow is moreover symbolical of another stage in the alchemical process. At a certain period, as a result of putrefaction, there is observed a phenomenon of many-coloured lights (The "coat of many colours" said to have been worn by Joseph and Jesus, in the ancient legends, refers to this. See also Atu O, the Motley of the Green Man, Dreamer-Redeemer).

To sum up, the whole of this card represents the hidden content of the Egg described in Atu VI. It is the same formula, but in a more advanced stage. The original duality has been completely compensated; but after birth comes growth; after growth, puberty; and after puberty, purification.

In this card, therefore, is foreshadowed the final stage of the Great Work. Behind the figure, its edges tinged with the rainbow, which has now arisen from the twin rainbows forming the cape of the

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figure, is a glory bearing an inscription VISITA INTERIORA TERRAE RECTIFICANDO INVENIES OCCULTUM LAPIDEM. "Visit the interior parts of the earth: by rectification thou shalt find the hidden stone." Its initials make the word V.I.T.R.I.O.L., the Universal Solvent, to be discussed later. (Its value is $726 = 6 \times 11^2 = 33 \times 22$.)

This "hidden stone" is also called the Universal Medicine. It is sometimes described as a stone, sometimes as a powder, sometimes as a tincture. It divides again into two forms, the gold and the silver, the red and the white; but its essence is always the same, and its nature is not to be understood except by experience. It is because the alchemists were dealing with substances on the borderland of "matter" that they are so difficult to understand. The subject-matter of chemistry and physics in modern times is what they would have called the study of dead things; for the real difference between living things and dead is, in the first instance, their behaviour.

The initials of the alchemical motto given above form the word Vitriol. This has nothing to do with the sulphates of either hydrogen, iron or copper, as might be supposed from modern usage. It represents a balanced combination of the three alchemical principles, Sulphur, Mercury and Salt. These names have no connection with substances so named by the vulgar; they have already been described in Atu I, III and IV.

The counsel to "visit the interior of the earth" is a recapitulation (on a higher plane) of the first formula of the Work which has been the so constant theme of these essays. The important word in the injunction is the central word RECTIFICANDO; it implies the right leading of the new living substance in the path of the True Will. The stone of the Philosophers, the Universal Medicine, is to be a talisman of use in any event, a completely elastic and completely rigid vehicle of the True Will of the alchemists. It is to fertilize and bring to manifested Life the Orphic Egg.

The Arrow, both in this card and in Atu VI, is of supreme importance. The Arrow is, in fact, the simplest and purest glyph of Mercury, being the symbol of directed Will. It is right to emphasize this fact by a quotation from the Fourth Aethyr, LIT, in *The Vision and the Voice*. (See Appendix.)

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XV. THE DEVIL

This card is attributed to the letter 'Ayin, which means an Eye, and it refers to Capricornus in the Zodiac. In the Dark Ages of Christianity, it was completely misunderstood. Eliphaz Levi studied it very deeply because of its connection with ceremonial magic, his favourite subject; and he re-drew it, identifying it with Baphomet, the ass-headed idol of the Knights of the Temple.¹ But at this time archæological research had not gone very far; the nature of Baphomet was not fully understood. (See Atu O, above.) At least he succeeded in identifying the goat portrayed upon the card with Pan.

On the Tree of Life, Atu XIII and XV are symmetrically placed; they lead from Tiphareth, the human consciousness, to the spheres in which Thought (on the one hand) and Bliss (on the other) are developed. Between them, Atu XIV leads similarly to the sphere which formulates Existence. (See note on Atu X and arrangement.) These three cards may therefore be summed up as a hieroglyph of the processes by which idea manifests as form.

This card represents creative energy in its most material form; in the Zodiac, Capricornus occupies the Zenith. It is the most exalted of the signs; it is the goat leaping with lust upon the summits of earth. The sign is ruled by Saturn, who makes for selfhood and perpetuity. In this sign, Mars is exalted, showing in its best form the fiery, material energy of creation. The card represents Pan Pangenetor, the All-Begetter. It is the Tree of Life as seen against a background of the exquisitely tenuous, complex, and fantastic forms of madness, the divine madness of spring, already foreseen in the meditative madness of winter; for the Sun turns northwards on entering this sign. The roots of the Tree are made transparent, in order to show the innumerable leapings of the sap; before it stands the Himalayan goat, with an eye in the centre of his forehead, representing the god Pan upon the highest and most secret mountains of the earth. His creative energy is veiled in the symbol of the Wand of the Chief Adept, crowned with the winged globe and the twin serpents of Horus and Osiris.

¹ The Early Christians also were accused of worshipping an Ass, or ass-headed god. See Browning, *The Ring and the Book* (The Pope).

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“Hear me, Lord of the Stars,
For thee have I worshipped ever
With stains and sorrows and scars,
With joyful, joyful Endeavour.
Hear me, O lilywhite goat
Crisp as a thicket of thorns,
With a collar of gold for thy throat,
A scarlet bow for thy horns.”

The sign of Capricornus is rough, harsh, dark, even blind; the impulse to create takes no account of reason, custom, or foresight. It is divinely unscrupulous, sublimely careless of result. “thou hast no right but to do thy will. Do that, and no other shall say nay. For pure will, unassuaged of purpose, delivered from the lust of result, is every way perfect.” AL. I, 42-4.

It is further to be remarked that the trunk of the Tree pierces the heavens; about it is indicated the ring of the body of Nuith. Similarly, the shaft of the Wand goes down indefinitely to the centre of earth. “If I lift up my head, I and my Nuit are one. If I droop down mine head, and shoot forth venom, then is rapture of the earth, and I and the earth are one.” (AL. II, 26).

The formula of this card is then the complete appreciation of all existing things. He rejoices in the rugged and the barren no less than in the smooth and the fertile. All things equally exalt him. He represents the finding of ecstasy in every phenomenon, however naturally repugnant; he transcends all limitations; he is Pan; he is All.

It is important to notice some other correspondences. The three vowel-consonants of the Hebrew alphabet, Aleph, Yod, 'Ayin, these three letters form the sacred name of God, I A O. These three Atu, IX, O, and XV, thus offer a threefold explanation of the male creative energy; but this card especially represents the masculine energy at its most masculine. Saturn, the ruler, is Set, the ass-headed god of the Egyptian deserts; he is the god of the south. The name refers to all gods containing these consonants, such as Shaitan, or Satan. (See *Magick* pp. 336-7). Essential to the symbolism are the surroundings — barren places, especially high places. The cult of the mountain is an exact parallel. The Old Testament is full of attacks

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upon kings who celebrated worship in "high places"; this, although Zion itself was a mountain! This feeling persisted, even to the days of the Witches' Sabbath, held, if possible, on a desolate summit, but (if none were available) at least in a wild spot, uncontaminated by the artfulness of men.

Note that Shabbathai, the "sphere of Saturn", is the Sabbath. Historically, the animus against witches pertains to the fear of the Jews; whose rites, supplanted by the Christian forms of Magic, had become mysterious and terrible. Panic suggested that Christian children were stolen, sacrificed, and eaten. The belief persists to this day.

In every symbol of this card there is the allusion to the highest things and most remote. Even the horns of the goat are spiral, to represent the movement of the all-pervading energy. Zoroaster defines God as "having a spiral force". Compare the more recent, if less profound, writings of Einstein¹.

XVI. THE TOWER [OR: WAR]

This card is attributed to the letter Pé, which means a mouth; it refers to the planet Mars. In its simplest interpretation it refers to the manifestation of cosmic energy in its grossest form. The picture shows the destruction of existing material by fire. It may be taken as the preface to Atu XX, the Last Judgment, i.e., the Coming of a New Aeon. This being so, it seems to indicate the quintessential quality of the Lord of the Aeon².

At the bottom part of the card, therefore, is shown the destruction of the old-established Aeon by lightning, flames, engines of war. In the right-hand corner are the jaws of Dis, belching flame at the root of the structure. Falling from the tower are broken figures of the garrison. It will be noticed that they have lost their human shape. They have become mere geometrical expressions.

This suggests another (and totally different) interpretation of the

¹ Compare Saturn, at one end of the Seven Sacred Wanderers, with the Moon at the other: the aged man and the young girl—see "The Formula of Tetragrammaton". They are linked as no other two planets, since $3^2=9$, and each contains in itself the extremes of its own idea. (See also Appendix: Atu xxi.)

² See Liber AL. III. 3-9; 11-13; 17-18; 23-29; 46; 49-60; 70-72.

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card. To understand this, it is necessary to refer to the doctrines of Yoga, especially those most widely current in Southern India, where the cult of Shiva, the Destroyer, is paramount. Shiva is represented as dancing upon the bodies of his devotees. To understand this is not easy for most western minds. Briefly, the doctrine is that the ultimate reality (which is Perfection) is Nothingness. Hence all manifestations, however glorious, however delightful, are stains. To obtain perfection, all existing things must be annihilated. The destruction of the garrison may therefore be taken to mean their emancipation from the prison of organized life, which was confining them. It was their unwisdom to cling to it.

The above should make it clear that magical symbols must always be understood in a double sense, each contradictory of the other. These ideas blend naturally with the higher and deeper significance of the card.

There is a direct reference to this card in the *Book of the Law*. In Chapter I, verse 57, the goddess Nuith speaks: "Invoke me under my stars! Love is the law, love under will. Nor let the fools mistake love; for there are love and love. There is the dove, and there is the serpent. Choose ye well! He, my prophet, hath chosen, knowing the law of the fortress, and the great mystery of the House of God".¹

The dominating feature of this card is the Eye of Horus. This is also the Eye of Shiva, on the opening of which, according to the legend of this cult, the Universe is destroyed.

Besides this, there is a special technical magical meaning, which is explained openly only to initiates of the Eleventh degree of the O.T.O.; a grade so secret that it is not even listed in the official documents. It is not even to be understood by study of the Eye in Atu XV. Perhaps it is lawful to mention that the Arab sages and the Persian poets have written, not always guardedly, on the subject.

Bathed in the effulgence of this Eye (which now assumes even a third sense, that indicated in Atu XV) are the Dove bearing an olive branch and the Serpent: as in the above quotation. The Serpent is portrayed as the Lion-Serpent Xnoubis or Abraxas. These represent the two forms of desire; what Schopenhauer would have called the

¹For this reason the ancient title, to-day not very intelligible, has been retained. Otherwise, it might have been called War.

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Will to Live and the Will to Die. They represent the feminine and masculine impulses; the nobility of the latter is possibly based upon recognition of the futility of the former. This is perhaps why the renunciation of love in all the ordinary senses of the word has been so constantly announced as the first step towards initiation. This is an unnecessarily rigid view. This Trump is not the only card in the Pack, nor are the "will to live" and the "will to die" incompatible. This becomes clear as soon as life and death are understood (See Atu XIII) as phases of a single manifestation of energy.

XVII. THE STAR

This card is attributed to the letter Hé, as has been explained elsewhere. It refers to the Zodiacal sign of Aquarius, the water-bearer. The picture represents Nuith, our Lady of the Stars. For the full meaning of this sentence it is necessary to understand the first chapter of the *Book of the Law*.

The figure of the goddess is shown in manifestation, that is, not as the surrounding space of heaven, shown in Atu XX, where she is the pure philosophical idea continuous and omniform. In this card she is definitely personified as a human-seeming figure; she is represented as bearing two cups, one golden, held high above her head, from which she pours water upon it. (These cups resemble breasts, as it is written: "the milk of the stars from her paps; yea, the milk of the stars from her paps").

The Universe is here resolved into its ultimate elements. (One is tempted to quote from the Vision of the Lake Pasquaney, "Nothingness with twinkles . . . but *what* twinkles!") Behind the figure of the goddess is the celestial globe. Most prominent among its features is the seven-pointed Star of Venus, as if declaring the principal characteristic of her nature to be Love. (See again the description in Chapter I of the *Book of the Law*). From the golden cup she pours this ethereal water, which is also milk and oil and blood, upon her own head, indicating the eternal renewal of the categories, the inexhaustible possibilities of existence.

The left hand, lowered, holds a silver cup, from which also she pours the immortal liquor of her life. (This liquor is the Amrita of the

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Indian philosophers, the Nepenthe and Ambrosia of the Greeks, the Alkahest and Universal Medicine of the Alchemists, the Blood of the Grail; or, rather, the nectar which is the mother of that blood. She pours it upon the junction of land and water. This water is the water of the great Sea of Binah; in the manifestation of Nuith on a lower plane, she is the Great Mother. For the Great Sea is upon the shore of the fertile earth, as represented by the roses in the right hand corner of the picture. But between sea and land is the "Abyss", and this is hidden by the clouds, which whirl as a development of her hair: "my hair the trees of Eternity". (AL. I, 59).

In the left-hand corner of the picture is the star of Babalon; the Sigil of the Brotherhood of the A.: A.: For Babalon is yet a further materialization of the original idea of Nuith; she is the Scarlet Woman, the sacred Harlot who is the lady of Atu XI. From this star, behind the celestial sphere itself, issue the curled rays of spiritual light. Heaven itself is no more than a veil before the face of the immortal goddess.

It will be seen that every form of energy in this picture is spiral. Zoroaster says, "God is he, having the head of a hawk; having a spiral force". It is interesting to notice that this oracle appears to anticipate the present Aeon, that of the hawk-headed Lord, and also of the mathematical conception of the shape of the Universe as calculated by Einstein and his school. It is only in the lower cup that the forms of energy issuing forth show rectilinear characteristics. In this may be discovered the doctrine which asserts that the blindness of humanity to all the beauty and wonder of the Universe is due to this illusion of straightness. It is significant that Riemann, Bolyai and Lobatchewsky seem to have been the mathematical prophets of the New Revelation. For the Euclidian geometry depends upon the conception of straight lines, and it was only because the Parallel Postulate was found to be incapable of proof that mathematicians began to conceive that the straight line had no true correspondence with reality¹.

In the first chapter of the *Book of the Law*, the conclusion is of

¹ The straight line is no more than the limit of any curve. For instance, it is an ellipse whose foci are an "infinite" distance apart. In fact, such use of the Calculus is the one certain way of ensuring "straightness".

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practical importance. It gives the definite formula for the attainment of truth.

“I give unimaginable joys on earth: certainty, not faith, while in life, upon death; peace unutterable, rest, ecstasy; nor do I demand aught in sacrifice.”

“But to love me is better than all things: if under the night-stars in the desert thou presently burnest mine incense before me, invoking me with a pure heart, and the Serpent flame therein, thou shalt come a little to lie in my bosom. For one kiss wilt thou then be willing to give all; but whoso gives one particle of dust shall lose all in that hour. Ye shall gather goods and store of women and spices; ye shall wear rich jewels; ye shall exceed the nations of the earth in splendour & pride; but always in the love of me, and so shall ye come to my joy. I charge you earnestly to come before me in a single robe, and covered with a rich headdress. I love you! I yearn to you! Pale or purple, veiled or voluptuous, I who am all pleasure and purple, and drunkenness of the innermost sense, desire you. Put on the wings, and arouse the coiled splendour within you: come unto me!

“At all my meetings with you shall the priestess say—and her eyes shall burn with desire as she stands bare and rejoicing in my secret temple—To me! To me! calling forth the flame of the hearts of all in her love-chant.

“Sing the rapturous love-song unto me! Burn to me perfumes! Wear to me jewels! Drink to me, for I love you! I love you!

“I am the blue-lidded daughter of Sunset; I am the naked brilliance of the voluptuous night-sky.

“To me! To me!

“The Manifestation of Nuit is at an end.”

XVIII. THE MOON

The Eighteenth Trump is attributed to the letter Qoph, which represents Pisces in the Zodiac. It is called the Moon.

Pisces is the last of the Signs; it represents the last stage of winter. It might be called the Gateway of Resurrection (the letter Qoph means the back of the head, and is connected with the potencies of the cerebellum). In the system of the old Aeon, the resurrection of

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the Sun was not only from winter, but from night; and this card represents midnight.

“There is a budding morrow in midnight”, wrote Keats. For this reason there appears at the bottom of the card, underneath the water which is tinged with graphs of abomination, the sacred Beetle, the Egyptian Khephra, bearing in his mandibles the Solar Disk. It is this Beetle that bears the Sun in his Silence through the darkness of Night and the bitterness of Winter.

Above the surface of the water is a sinister and forbidding landscape. We see a path or stream, serum tinged with blood, which flows from a gap between two barren mountains; nine drops of impure blood, drop-shaped like Yods, fall upon it from the Moon.

The Moon, partaking as she does of the highest and the lowest, and filling all the space between, is the most universal of the Planets. In her higher aspect, she occupies the place of the Link between the human and divine, as shown in *Atu II*. In this Trump, her lowest avatar, she joins the earthy sphere of *Netzach* with *Malkuth*, the culmination in matter of all superior forms. This is the waning moon, the moon of witchcraft and abominable deeds. She is the poisoned darkness which is the condition of the rebirth of light.

This path is guarded by *Tabu*. She is uncleanness and sorcery. Upon the hills are the black towers of nameless mystery, of horror and of fear. All prejudice, all superstition, dead tradition and ancestral loathing, all combine to darken her face before the eyes of men. It needs unconquerable courage to begin to tread this path. Here is a weird, deceptive life. The fiery sense is baulked. The moon has no air. The knight upon this quest has to rely on the three lower senses: touch, taste and smell.¹ Such light as there may be is deadlier than darkness, and the silence is wounded by the howling of wild beasts.

To what god shall we appeal for aid? It is *Anubis*, the watcher in the twilight, the god that stands upon the threshold, the jackal god of *Khem*, who stands in double form between the Ways. At his feet, on watch, wait the jackals themselves, to devour the carcasses of those who have not seen Him, or who have not known His Name.

This is the threshold of life; this is the threshold of death. All is

¹ See the *Book of Lies* Cap. πβ, Bortsch.

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doubtful, all is mysterious, all is intoxicating. Not the benign, solar intoxication of Dionysus, but the dreadful madness of pernicious drugs; this is a drunkenness of sense, after the mind has been abolished by the venom of this Moon. This is that which is written of Abraham in the *Book of the Beginning*: "An horror of great darkness came upon him." One is reminded of the mental echo of subconscious realization, of that supreme iniquity which mystics have constantly celebrated in their accounts of the Dark Night of the Soul. But the best men, the true men, do not consider the matter in such terms at all. Whatever horrors may afflict the soul, whatever abominations may excite the loathing of the heart, whatever terrors may assail the mind, the answer is the same at every stage: "How splendid is the Adventure!"

XIX. THE SUN

This card represents, in heraldic language, "the Sun, charged with a rose, on a mount vert".¹

This is one of the simplest of the cards; it represents Heru-ra-ha, the Lord of the New Aeon, in his manifestation to the race of men as the Sun spiritual, moral, and physical. He is the Lord of Light, Life, Liberty and Love. This Aeon has for its purpose the complete emancipation of the human race.

The rose represents the flowering of the solar influence. Around the whole picture we see the signs of the Zodiac in their normal position, Aries rising in the East, and so on. Freedom brings sanity. The Zodiac is a kind of childish representation of the body of Nuith, a differentiation and classification, a chosen belt, one girdle of Our Lady of infinite space. Convenience of description excuses the device.

The green mound represents the fertile earth, its shape, so to speak, aspiring to the heavens. But around the top of the mound is a wall, which indicates that the aspiration of the new Aeon does not mean the absence of control. Yet outside this wall are the twin children who (in one form or another) have so frequently recurred in this whole symbolism. They represent the male and female, eternally young, shameless and innocent. They are dancing in the light, and

¹ Cf. the Coat-of-Arms of the family of the Author of this book.

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yet they dwell upon the earth. They represent the next stage which is to be attained by mankind, in which complete freedom is alike the cause and the result of the new access of solar energy upon the earth. The restriction of such ideas as sin and death in their old sense has been abolished, At their feet are the most sacred signs of the old Aeon, the combination of the Rose and Cross from which they are arisen, yet which still forms their support.

The card itself symbolizes this broadening of the idea of the Rose and Cross. The Cross is now expanded into the Sun, from which, of course, it is originally derived. Its rays are twelve—not only the number of the signs of the Zodiac, but of the most sacred title of the most holy Ancient Ones, who are Hua. (The word HUA, “he”, has the numerical value of 12.) The limitation of mundane law, which is always associated with the number Four, has disappeared. Gone are the four arms of a Cross limited by law; the creative energy of the Cross expands freely; its rays pierce in every direction the body of Our Lady of the Stars.

With regard to the wall, it should be noted that it completely encircles the top of the mound; this is to emphasize that the formula of the Rose and Cross is still valid in terrestrial matters. But there is now, as was not previously the case, a close and definite alliance with the celestial.

It is also most important to observe that the formula of the Rose and Cross (indicated by the wall-girt mound) has completed the fire-change into “something rich and strange”; for the mound is green, where one would expect it to be red, and the wall red, where one would expect it to be green or blue. The indication of this symbolism is that it must be one of the great advances in adjustment of the new Aeon to work out simply and without prejudice the formidable problems which have been raised by the growth of civilization.

Man has advanced so far from the social system, though it was not a system, of the cave man, from the primitive conception of property in human flesh. Man has advanced so far from crude anatomical classification of the soul of any given human being; he has accordingly landed himself in the most dreadful mire of psychopathology and psycho-analysis. Tiresome and tough are the prejudices of the people that date morally from about 25,000 B.C.

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Largely owing to their own intransigence, those people have been born under a different spiritual law; they find themselves not only persecuted by their ancestors, but bewildered by their own uncertainty of foothold. It must be the task of the pioneers of the new Aeon to put this right.

XX. THE AEON

In this card it has been necessary to depart completely from the tradition of the cards, in order to carry on that tradition.

The old card was called The Angel: or, The Last Judgment. It represented an Angel or Messenger blowing a trumpet, attached to which was a flag, bearing the symbol of the Aeon of Osiris. Below him the graves were opening, the dead rising up. There were three of them. The central one had his hands raised with right angles at the elbows and shoulders, so as to form the letter Shin, which refers to Fire. The card therefore represented the destruction of the world by Fire. This was accomplished in the year of the vulgar era 1904, when the fiery god Horus took the place of the airy god Osiris in the East as Hierophant (see Atu V). At the beginning, then, of this new Aeon, it is fit to exhibit the message of that angel who brought the news of the new Aeon to earth. The new card is thus of necessity an adaptation of the Stélé of Revealing.

Around the top of the card is the body of Nuith, the star-goddess, who is the category of unlimited possibility; her mate is Hadit, the ubiquitous point-of-view, the only philosophically tenable conception of Reality. He is represented by a globe of fire, representing eternal energy; winged, to show his power of Going. As a result of the marriage of these two, the child Horus is born. He is, however, known under his special name, Heru-ra-ha. A double god; his extraverted form is Ra-hoor-khuit; and his passive or introverted form Hoor-pa-kraat. (See above, the Formula of Tetragrammaton). He is also solar in character, and is therefore shown coming forth in golden light.

The whole of this symbolism is thoroughly explained in the *Book of the Law*.

It should, by the way, be noted that the name Heru is identical with Hru, who is the great Angel set over the Tarot. This new Tarot

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may therefore be regarded as a series of illustrations to the *Book of the Law*; the doctrine of that Book is everywhere implicit.

At the bottom of the card we see the letter Shin itself in a form suggestive of a flower; the three Yods are occupied by three human figures arising to partake in the Essence of the new Aeon. Behind this letter is a symbolic representation of the Sign of Libra; this is the forth-shadowing of the Aeon which is to follow this present one, presumably in about 2,000 years—"the fall of the Great Equinox; when Hrumachis shall arise and the double-wanded one assume my throne and place". The present Aeon is too young to give a more definite representation of this future event. But in this connection attention must be drawn to the figure of Ra-hoor-khuit: "I am the Lord of the Double Wand of Power; the wand of the Force of Coph Nia; but my left hand is empty, for I have crushed an Universe; & nought remains." There are many other details with regard to the Lord of the Aeon which should be studied in the *Book of the Law*.

It is also important to study very thoroughly, and meditate upon, this Book, in order to appreciate the spiritual, moral, and material events which have marked the catastrophic transition from the Aeon of Osiris. The time for the birth of an Aeon seems to be indicated by great concentration of political power with the accompanying improvements in the means of travel and communication, with a general advance in philosophy and science, with a general need of consolidation in religious thought. It is very instructive to compare the events of the five hundred years preceding and following the crisis of approximately 2,000 years ago, with those of similar periods centred in 1904 of the old era. It is a thought far from comforting to the present generation, that 500 years of Dark Ages are likely to be upon us. But, if the analogy holds, that is the case. Fortunately, to-day we have brighter torches and more torch-bearers.

XXI. THE UNIVERSE

The first and most obvious characteristic of this card is that it comes at the end of all, and is therefore the complement of the Fool. It is attributed to the letter Tau. The two cards together accordingly

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spell the word Ath, which means Essence. All reality is consequently compromised in the series of which these two letters form the beginning and the end. This beginning was Nothing; the end must therefore be also Nothing, but Nothing in its complete expansion, as previously explained. The number 4, rather than the number 2, was chosen as the basis of this expansion, partly no doubt for convenience, to enlarge the "universe of discourse"; partly to emphasize the idea of limitation.

The letter Tau means the Sign of the Cross, that is, of extension; and this extension is symbolized as four-fold because of the convenience of constructing the revolving symbol of Tetragrammaton. In the case of the number 2, the only issue is the return to the unity or to the negative. No continuous process can be conveniently symbolized; but the number 4 lends itself, not only to this rigid extension, the hard facts of nature, but also to the transcendence of space and time by a continuously self-compensating change.

The letter Tau is attributed to Saturn, the outermost and slowest of the seven sacred planets; because of these dull, heavy qualities, the element of earth was thrust upon the symbol. The original three elements, Fire, Air, Water, sufficed for primitive thought; Earth and Spirit represent a later accretion. Neither is to be found in the original twenty-two Paths of the Sepher Yetzirah. The world of Assiah, the material world, does not appear except as a pendant to the Tree of Life.

In the same way, the element of Spirit is attributed to the letter Shin, as an additional ornament, somewhat in the same way as Kether is said to be symbolized by the topmost point of the Yod of Tetragrammaton. It is constantly necessary to distinguish between the symbols of philosophical theory and those more elaborate symbols based upon them which are necessary in practical work.

Saturn and Earth have certain qualities in common—heaviness, coldness, dryness, immobility, dulness and the like. Yet Saturn appears in Binah in respect of its blackness in the Queen's scale, which is the scale of Observed Nature; but always, as soon as the end of a process is reached, it returns automatically to the beginning.

In Chemistry, it is the heaviest elements that are unable in terrestrial conditions to support the strain and stress of their internal

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structure; consequently, they radiate particles of the most tenuous character and the highest activity. In an essay written in Cefalù, Sicily, on the second law of Thermo-dynamics, it was suggested that at the absolute zero of the air thermometer, an element heavier than uranium might exist, of such a nature that it was capable of reconstituting the entire series of elements. It was a chemical interpretation of the equation, $0=2$.

It becomes then reasonable to argue from analogy that since the end must beget the beginning, the symbolism will follow; hence, blackness is also attributed to the sun, according to a certain long-hidden tradition. One of the shocks for candidates in the "Mysteries" was the revelation "Osiris is a *black* god".

Saturn, therefore, is masculine; he is the *old* god, the god of fertility, the sun in the south; but equally the Great Sea, the great Mother; and the letter Tau upon the Tree of Life appears as an emanation from the moon of Yesod, the foundation of the Tree and representative of the reproductive process and of the equilibrium between change and stability, or rather their identification. The influence of the path descends upon the earth, Malkuth, the daughter. Here again appears the doctrine of "setting the daughter upon the throne of the Mother". In the card itself there is consequently a glyph of the completion of the Great Work in its highest sense, exactly as the Atu of the Fool symbolizes its beginning. The Fool is the negative issuing into manifestation; the Universe is that manifestation, its purpose accomplished, ready to return. The twenty cards that lie between these two exhibit the Great Work and its agents in various stages. The image of the Universe in this sense is accordingly that of a maiden, the final letter of Tetragrammaton.

In the present card she is represented as a dancing figure. In her hands she manipulates the radiant spiral force, the active and passive, each possessing its dual polarity. Her dancing partner is shown as Heru-Ra-Ha of Atu XIX. "The Sun, Strength & Sight, Light; these are for the servants of the Star & the Snake." This final form of the image of the Magical Formula of the God combines and transforms so many symbols that description is difficult, and would be nugatory. The proper method of study of this card—indeed of all, but of this especially—is long-continued meditation. The Universe,

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so states the theme, is the Celebration of the Great Work accomplished.

In the corners of the card are the four Kerubim showing the established Universe; and about her is an ellipse composed of seventy-two circles for the quinarys of the Zodiac, the Shemhamphorasch.

In the centre of the lower part of the card is represented the skeleton plan of the building of the house of Matter. It shews the ninety-two known chemical elements, arranged according to their rank in the hierarchy. (The design is due to the genius of the late J. W. N. Sullivan: see *The Bases of Modern Science*.)

In the centre, a wheel of Light initiates the form of the Tree of Life, shewing the ten principal bodies of the solar system. But this Tree is not visible except to those of wholly pure heart.

1. The primum mobile, represented by Pluto. (Compare the doctrine of the alpha particles of radium.)
2. The sphere of the Zodiac or fixed stars, represented by Neptune.
3. Saturn.
The Abyss. This is represented by Herschel, the planet of disintegration and explosion.
4. Jupiter.
5. Mars.
6. The Sun.
7. Venus.
8. Mercury.
9. The Moon.
10. The Earth. (The Four Elements).

All these symbols swim and dance in a complex but continuous ambience of loops and whorls. The general colour of the traditional card is subfusc; it represents the confusion and darkness of the material world. But the New Aeon has brought fullness of Light; in the Minutum Mundum, Earth is no longer black, or of mixed colours, but is pure bright green. Similarly, the indigo of Saturn is derived from the blue velvet of the midnight sky, and the maiden of the dance represents the issue from this, yet through this, to the Eternal. This card is to-day as bright and glowing as any in the Pack.