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The Book of the Law (1st Part)
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or saying, They are many: if the ritual
be not ever unto me;: then expect the
direful judgments of Ra-Hoor-Khuit!

omit. Lophem

COMMENT

It is not true to say either that we are separate Stars, or One Star. Each Star is individual, yet each is bound to the others by Law. This Freedom under Law is one of the most difficult yet important doctrines of this Book. So too the ritual - our lives - must be unto Huith; for She is the Ultimate to which we tend, the asymptote of our curve. Failure in this one-pointedness sets up the illusion of duality, which leads to excision and destruction.

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The doctrine of the previous verses, which

appears not merely to allow sexual liberty in the ordinary sense, but even to advocate it in a sense which is calculated to shock the most abandoned libertine, can do no less than startle and alarm the magician, and that only the more so as he is familiar with the theory and practice of his art. "What is this, in the name of Adonai?" I hear him exclaim: "is it not the immemorial and unchallenged tradition that the exorcist who would apply himself to the most elementary operations of our Art is bound to prepare himself by a course of chastity? Is it not notorious that virginity is by its own virtue one of the most powerful means, and one of the most essential conditions, of all Magical works? This is no question of technical formula such as may, with propriety, be modulated in the event of an Equinox of the Gods. It is one of those eternal truths of Nature which persist, no matter what the

environment, in respect of place or period."

To these remarks I can but smile my most genial assent. The only objection that I can take to them is to point out that the connotation of the word 'chastity' may have been misunderstood from a scientific point of view, just as modern science has modified our conception of the relations of the earth and the sun without presuming to alter one jot or tittle of the observed facts of Nature. So we may assert that modern discoveries in physiology have rendered obsolete the Osirian conceptions of the sexual process which interpreted chastity as physical abstinence, small regard being paid to the mental and moral concomitants of the refusal to act, still less to the physical indications. The root of the error lies in the dogma of original sin, as a result of which pollution was actually excused as being in the nature of involuntary offence, just as if one were

to assert that a sleep-walker who has fallen over a precipice were any less dead than Empedocles or Sappho.

The doctrine of Thelema resolves the whole question in conformity with the facts observed by science and the proprieties prescribed by Magick. It must be obvious to the most embryonic tyro in alchemy that if there be any material substance soever endowed with Magical properties, one must class, *primus inter pares*, that vehicle of essential humanity which is the first matter of that Great Work wherein our race shares the divine prerogative of creating man in its own image, male and female.

It is evidently of minor importance whether the will to create be consciously formulated. Lot in his drunkenness served the turn of his two daughters, no less than Jupiter, who prolonged the night to forty-eight hours in order to give himself

time to beget Hercules.

Man is in actual possession of this supreme talisman. It is his "pearl of great price", in comparison with which all other jewels are but gewgaws. It is his prime duty to preserve the integrity of this substance. He must not allow its quality to be impaired either by malnutrition or by disease. He must not destroy it like Origen and Klingsor. He must not waste it like Onan.

But physiology informs us that we are bound to waste it, no matter what be our continence, so long as we are liable to sleep; and Nature, whether by precaution or by prodigality, provides us with so great an excess of the substance that the reproduction of the human race need not slacken, though the proportion of men to women were no more than 3 to the 1000. The problem of efficiency consequently appears practically insoluble.

We are now struck with the fact that Nuit

commands us to exercise the utmost freedom in our choice of the method of utilizing the services of this our first, our finest and our fieriest talisman; the license appears at first sight unconditioned in the most express and explicit terms that it is possible to employ. The caveat, "But always unto me", sounds like an afterthought. We are almost shocked when, in the following verse, we discover a menace, none the less dread because of the obscurity of its terms.

Our first consideration only adds to our sense of surprised repugnance. It becomes evident that one type of act is forbidden, with the penalty of falling altogether from the law of liberty to the code of crime; and our amazement and horror only increase as we recognize that this single gesture which is held damnable, is the natural exercise of the most fatidical function of nature, the innocent indulgence of irresistible impulse. We glance

back to the previous verse - we examine our charter. We are permitted to take our fill and will of love as we will, when, where and with whom we will, but there is nothing said about why we will. On the contrary, despite the infinite variety of lawful means, there is one end held lawful, and no more than one. The act has only one legitimate object; it must be performed unto Nuit. Further reflection reassures us to some extent, not directly, in the manner of the jurist, but indirectly, by calling our attention to the facts of Nature which underlie the ethics of the question. Nuit is that from which we have come, that to which we must return. Evasion of the issue is no more possible than was alternation of the antecedent. From Nuit we received this talisman, which conveys our physical identity through the ages of time. To Nuit, therefore, we owe it; and to defile any portion of that purest and divinest quintessence

of ourselves is evidently the supreme blasphemy. Nothing in nature can be misapplied. It is our first duty to ourselves to preserve the treasure entrusted to us: "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

The nature of man is individual. No two faces are identical, still less are two individuals. Unspeakable is the variety of form and immeasurable the diversity of beauty, but in all is the seal of unity, inasmuch as all cometh from the womb of Nuit - to it returneth all. The apprehension of this sublimity is the mark of divinity. Knowing this, all is liberty; ignorant of this, all is bondage. As no two individuals are identical, so also, there can be no identity between the quintessential expressions of the will of any two persons; and the expression of each person, in the first instance, as his purely physical prerogative, is his sexual gesture.

One cannot say that any significance of that gesture is forbidden, for "There is no law beyond Do what thou wilt". But this may and shall be said, that a significance which indicates ignorance or forgetfulness of the central truth of the Universe, is an acquiescence in that opacity caused by the confusion of the veils which conceal the soul from the consciousness, and thus create the illusion which the aspirant calls Sorrow, and the uninitiate, Evil.

The sexual act, even to the grossest of mankind, is the agent which dissipates the fog of self for one ecstatic moment. It is the instinctive feeling that the physical spasm is symbolic of that miracle of the Mass, by which the material wafer, composed of the passive elements, earth and water, is transmuted into the substance of the Body of God, that makes the wise man dread lest so sublime a sacrament suffer profanation. It is

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this that has caused him, in half-instinctive, half-intellectual half-comprehension of the nature of the truth, which has driven him to fence the act about with taboos. But a little knowledge is a dangerous thing. His fear has created phantoms, and his malobservation suggested precautions scarce worthy to be called empirical. We see him combat analogous difficulties in a precisely similar manner. History shows us the physician defending mankind against plague, with exorcisms on the one hand and useless herbs on the other. A charred stake is driven through the heart of a vampire, and his victim is protected with garlic. The strength of God, who can doubt? The strength of taste and of smell are known facts. So they measured strength against strength without considering whether the one was appropriate to the other, any more than as if one were to ward off the strength of steel swords by the strength of the

colour of one's armour. Modern science, by correct classification, has expounded the doctrine of the magical link. We no longer confuse the planes. We manipulate physical phenomena by physical means; mental by mental. We trace things to their true causes, and no longer seek to cut the Gordian knot of our ignorance by the sword of a postulated Pantheon.

Physiology leaves us in no doubt as to the power of our inherited talisman. And modern discoveries in psychology have made it clear enough that the sexual peculiarities of people are hieroglyphs, obscure yet not unintelligible, revealing their histories in the first place, in the second, their relations with environment in the present, and, in the third, their possibilities with regard to the modification of the future.

In these supremely important verses of the

Book of the Law, it becomes clear that Nuit is aware of all these facts, and that she regards them as no less than the combination of the lock of the strong room of the future. "This" (doctrine) "shall regenerate the world, the little world, my sister." The misunderstanding of sex, the ignorant fear like a fog, the ignorant lust like a miasma, these things have done more to keep back humanity from realization of itself, and from intelligent co-operation with its destiny, than any other dozen things put together. The vileness and falseness of religion itself have been the monsters aborted from the dark womb of its infernal mystery.

There is nothing unclean or degrading in any manifestation soever of the sexual instinct, because, without exception, every act is an impulsively projected image of the Will of the individual who, whether man or woman, is a star; the

Pennsylvanian with his pig no less than the Spirit with Mary; Sappho with Atthis and Apollo with Hyacinth as perfect as Daphnis with Chloe or as Galahad vowed to the Graal. The one thing needful, the all-perfect means of purification, consecration, and sanctification, is independent of the physical and moral accidents circumstantial of the particular incident, is the realization of love as a sacrament. The use of the physical means as a Magical Operation, whose formula is that by uniting two opposites, by dissolving both, annihilating both, to create a third thing which transcends that opposition, the phase of duality which constitutes the consciousness of imperfection, is perceived as the absolute negative whose apprehension is identical with that duality, is the accomplishment of the Great Work.

The anacephalepsis of these considerations

is this:

1. The accidents of any act of love, such as its protagonists and their peculiarities of expression on whatever plane, are totally immaterial to the magical import of the act. Each person is responsible to himself, being a star, to travel in his own orbit, composed of his own elements, to shine with his own light, with the colour proper to his own nature, to revolve and to rush with his own inherent motion, and to maintain his own relation with his own galaxy in its own place in the Universe. His existence is his sole and sufficient justification for his own matter and manner.

2. His only possible error is to withdraw himself from this consciousness of himself as both unique in himself and necessary to the norm of nature.

To bring down this doctrine to a practical

rule for every man or woman by which they may enjoy, in perfection their sexual life and make it what it rightly is, the holiest part of the religious life, I say 'holiest' because it redeems even physical grossness to partake with spiritual saintship, the intention of the Book of The Law is perfectly simple. Whatever your sexual predilections may be, you are free, by the Law of Thelema, to be the star you are, to go your own way rejoicing. It is not indicated here in this text, though it is elsewhere implied, that only one symptom warns that you have mistaken your true Will, and that is, if you should imagine that in pursuing your way you interfere with that of another star. It may, therefore, be considered improper, as a general rule, for your sexual gratification to destroy, deform, or displease any other star. Mutual consent to the act is the condition thereof. It must, of course, be understood that

such consent is not always explicit. There are cases when seduction or rape may be emancipation or initiation to another. Such acts can only be judged by their results.

The most important condition of the act, humanly speaking, is that the attraction should be spontaneous and irresistible; a leaping up of the will to create with lyrical frenzy. This first condition once recognized, it should be surrounded with every circumstance of worship. Study and experience should furnish a technique of love. All science, all art, every elaboration should emphasize and adorn the expression of the enthusiasm. All strength and all skill should be summoned to fulfil the frenzy, and life itself should be flung with a spendthrift gesture on the counter of the Merchant of Madness. On the steel of your helmet let there be gold inlaid with the motto "Excess".

The above indications are taken from a subsequent passage of the third chapter of this Book.

The supreme and absolute injunction, the crux of your knightly oath, is that you lay your lance in rest to the glory of your Lady, the Queen of the Stars, Nuit. Your knighthood depends upon your refusal to fight in any lesser cause. That is what distinguishes you from the brigand and the bully. You give your life on Her Altar. You make yourself worthy of Her by your readiness to fight at any time, in any place, with any weapon, and at any odds. For Her, from Whom you come, of Whom you are, to Whom you go, your life is no more and no less than one continuous sacrament. You have no word but Her praise, no thought but love of Her. You have only one cry, of inarticulate ecstasy, the intense spasm, possession of Her, and Death, to Her. You have no act but the priest's gesture that makes your body Hers. The

wafer is the disk of the Sun, the star in Her body. Your blood is spilt from your heart with every beat of your pulse into her cup. It is the wine of Her life crushed from the grape of your sun-ripened vine. On this wine you are drunk. It washes your corpse that is as the fragment of the Host, broken by you, the Priest, into Her golden chalice. You, Knight and Priest of the Order of the Temple, saying Her mass, become God in Her, by love and death. This sort of love, though in its form it be with a horse like Caligula, with a mob like Messalina, with a giant like Heliogabalus, with a pollard like Nero, with a monster like Baudelaire, though with de Sade it gloat on blood, with Sacher-Masoch crave for whips and furs, with Yvette Guilbert crave the glove, or dote on babes like E. T. Reed of "Punch"; whether one love oneself disdaining every other like Narcissus, offer oneself loveless to every love like Catherine, or

find the body so vain as to enclose one's lust in the soul and make one lifelong spinthria unassuaged in the imagination like Aubrey Beardsley, the means matter no whit. Bach takes one way, Keats one, Goya one. The end is everything: that by the act, whatever it is, one worships, loves, possesses, and becomes Nuit.

The act of love can no more "trammel up his consequence" than any other act. As long as you possess the talisman, it must be used from time to time, whether you will or no. If you injure the quality, or diminish the quantity, of that quintessence, you blaspheme yourself, and betray the trust reposed in you when you accepted the obligation of that austere chivalrous Order called Manhood. The powers of the talisman are irresistible like every other natural force. Every time they are used, a child must be begotten. This child must be in your own image, a symbol of your nature,

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an expression of your true subconscious Will.

It is, of course, only once in many times that the conditions allow of the production of a human child. What happens when (either by chance or by design) that obvious effect is prevented? The materialist may imagine that with the destruction of the complex, it becomes harmless, its potentialities aborted, just as the violence of sulphuric acid comes to naught if it be neutralized by caustic soda. But he is a very poor materialist if he says so. The full possibilities of the acid must be accounted for in one way or another. If it does not dissolve a metal, it may carbonize a sugar, generate a gas, give off heat, or in one way or another fulfil absolutely every possibility which it inherited from the forces that went to make it. It is manifestly a contradiction of the laws of the Conservation of matter and energy, that a substance should lose by

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being transformed. It is contrary to Nature that a man, with potentialities which can transform the face of the earth, should become nothing but inert carrion when he happens to die. Everything that he was must inevitably persist; and if the manifestation be not to one set of senses, why then, to another! The idea of creation from nothing of something and the destruction of something to nothing, exploded with the theory of Phlogiston.

It stands plain, even to sceptical reason - indeed, most of all to the sceptic - that our talisman, one microscopic serpent of which can build for itself such a house as to rule men's bodies for a generation like Alexander, or their minds for an epoch like Plato, cannot be destroyed or diminished by any conceivable force.

When this talisman comes forth from its fortress, its action begins. The ancient Jewish Rabbins knew this, and taught that before Eve was

given to Adam, the demon Lilith conceived by the spilt of his dreams, so that the hybrid races of satyrs, elves and the like began to populate those secret places of the earth which are not sensible by the organs of the normal man.

I take it as certain that every offering of this talisman infallibly begets children on one plane or another of this our cosmos, whose matter is so varied in kind. Such a child must partake of its father's nature; and its character will be determined, partly by the environment in which it is bred to manifestation, lives, and ultimately changes in what we call death, and partly by the inmost will of the father, perhaps modified to some extent by his conscious will at the time of his slipping the leash.

This being so, it becomes tremendously important to a man that he should become conscious of his true inmost Will, of his essential nature. This

is the Great Work whose attainment constitutes adeptship, provided that the consciousness recognizes that its own dependence on circumstance makes it no more than a troubled image in foul water of the sun which is that Silent Self. If such a man wants to develop his powers, he must use this tremendous talisman to create in his own image.

Although this talisman has such miraculous might, it is also intensely sensitive. Put in an unsuitable environment, it may produce grotesque or malignant perversions of its father's Word. We are all aware that fine children are born of healthy mothers who are true and worthy mates of their husbands. The children of hate, of debauch, of sickness, nearly always bear witness in body and mind to the abuse of the talisman. Not only the sins of the father but those of the mother, yes, more, those of their social surroundings, are visited on the children to the third and fourth

generation. Nay, more, the mischief can never be mended. A man can destroy in a minute his kingdom, inherited from unnumbered dynasties of biological prudence.

It will also be admitted, without reference to Magick, that the abuse of the talisman leads to moral, mental and spiritual misfortune. Crime and insanity, as well as disease and debility, are constantly seen as the direct result of mismanaging the sexual life, either tactically, strategically, or both.

The Book of The Law emphasizes the importance of these considerations. The act of love must be spontaneous, in absolute freedom. The man must be true to himself. Romeo must not be thrust on Rosaline for family, social, or financial reasons. Desdemona must not be barred from Othello for reasons of race or religion. The homosexual must not blaspheme his nature and commit spiritual

suicide by suppressing love or attempting to pervert it, as ignorance and fear, shame and weakness, so often induce him to do. Whatever the act which expresses the soul, that act and no other is right.

But, on the other hand, whatever the act may be it is always a sacrament; and, however profaned, it is always efficient. To profane it is only to turn food into poison. The act must be pure and passionate. It must be held as the union with God in the heart of the Holy of Holies. One must never forget that a child will be born of that deed. One must choose the environment appropriate to the particular child which one wills to create. One must make sure that the conscious will is written, on the pure waters of a mind unstirred, in letters of fire, by the Sun of the Soul. One must not create confusion in the talisman, which belongs to the Silent Self, by letting the speaking self deny the purpose

which produced it. If one's true Will, the reason of one's incarnation, be to bring peace on earth, one must not perform an act of love with motives of jealousy or emulation.

One must fortify one's body to the utmost, and protect it from every disaster, so that the substance of the talisman may be as perfect as possible. One must calm the mind, increasing its knowledge, organizing its powers, resolving its tangles, so that it may truly apprehend the Silent Self, judge partial pleas and unbalanced opinions, while supporting the concentration of the Will by its fortified frontiers, and, with unanimous enthusiasm, acclaiming the Lordship of the thought which expresses the act. The Will must seal itself upon the substance of the talisman. It must be, in alchemical language, the Sulphur which fixes the Mercury which determines the nature of the Salt. The whole man,

from his inmost Godhead to the tip of his tiniest eye-lash, must be one engine, cumbered with nothing useless, nothing inharmonic; a thunder-bolt from the hand of Jove. It must give itself utterly in the one act of love. It must cease to know itself as anything but the Will. It must not have the will; it must transform itself completely to be the Will.

Last of all, the act must be supreme. It must do and it must die. From that death it must rise again, purged of that Will, having accomplished it so perfectly that nothing is left thereof in its elements. It must have emptied itself into the vehicle. So shall the child be whole of spirit.

But this is not enough. The ground in which the seed is cast must be suitable for its reception. The climate must be favourable, the soil must be prepared, and the enemies of the young child that

seek its life must be driven beyond range of malice. These points are obvious enough, if applied to the ordinary affair of breeding children. One needs the right woman, and the right conditions for her. It applies even more closely to other acts, for woman is protected by generations of biological adaption, whereas spiritual children are more easily diseased and deformed, being of subtler and more sensitive matter. So infinitely varied are the possibilities of creation that each adept must work out each problem for himself as best he can. There are magical methods of making a link between the force generated and the matter on which it is desired to act; but these are, for the most part, best communicated by private instruction and developed by personal practice. The crude description is a bare frame-work, and (even so) more often misleads than not.

But the general rule is to arrange all the

conditions beforehand with intent to facilitate the manifestation of the thing willed, and to prevent the dangers of abortion by eliminating discordant elements.

For instance: a man seeking to regain health should assist his Magical Will by taking all possible hygienic and medical measures proper to amend his malady. A man wishing to develop his genius as a sculptor will devote himself to study and training, will surround himself with beautiful forms, and, if possible, live in a place where nature herself testifies to the touch of the thumb of the Great Architect.

He will choose the object of his passion at the nod of his Silent Self. He will not allow the prejudice, either of sense, emotion, or rational judgment, to obscure the Sun of his Soul. In the first place, mutual magnetism, despite the masks of mind, should be unmistakable. Unless it exists, a

puissant purity of passion, there is no Magical basis for the Sacrament. Yet, such magnetism is only the first condition. Where two people become intimate, each crisis of satisfaction between the terminals leaves them in a proximity which demands mutual observation; and the intense clarity of the mind which results from the discharge of the electric force makes such observation abnormally critical. The higher the type of mind, the more certain this is, and the greater the danger of finding some antipathetic trifle which experience tells us will one day be the only thing left to observe; just as a wart on the nose is remembered when the rest of the face is forgotten.

The object of Love must therefore be one with the lover in something more than the Will to unite magnetically; it must be in passionate partnership with the Will of which the Will-to-love is only the Magical symbol. Perhaps no two wills can be

identical, but at least they can be so sympathetic that the manifestations are not likely to clash. It is not enough to have a partner of the passive type who bleats "Thy will be done" - that ends in contempt, boredom and distrust. One wants a passion that can blend with one's own. Where this is the case, it does not matter so much whether the mental expression is syndromic; it is, indeed, better when two entirely different worlds of thought and experience have led to sister conclusions. But it is essential that the habit of mind should be sympathetic, that the machinery should be constructed on similar principles. The psychology of the one should be intelligible to the other.

Social position and physical appearance and habits are of far less importance, especially in a society which has accepted the Law of Thelema. Tolerance itself produces suavity, and suavity soon relieves the strain on tolerance. In any

case, most people, especially women, adapt themselves adroitly enough to their environment. I say "Especially women", for women are nearly always conscious of an important part of their true Will; the bearing of children. To them nothing else is serious in comparison, and they dismiss questions which do not bear on this as trifles, adopting the habits required of them in the interest of the domestic harmony which they recognize as a condition favourable to reproduction.

I have outlined ideal conditions. Rarely indeed can we realize even a third of our possibilities. Our Magical engine is mighty indeed when its efficiency reaches 50% of its theoretical horse-power. But the enormous majority of mankind have no idea whatever of taking Love as a sacred and serious thing, of using the eye of the microscopist, or the heart and brain of the artist. Their ignorance and their shame have made Love a

carcass of pestilence; and Love has avenged the outrage by crushing their lives when they pull down the temple upon them.

The chance of finding a suitable object of Love has been reduced well nigh to zero by substituting for the actual conditions, as stated in the above paragraphs, a totally artificial and irrelevant series; the restrictions on the act itself, marriage, opinion, the conspiracy of silence, criminal laws, financial fetters, selections limited by questions of race, nationality, caste, religion, social and political cliquishness, even family exclusiveness. Out of the millions of humanity the average person is lucky if he can take his pick of a couple of score of partners.

I will here add one further pillar to my temple. It happens only too often that two people, absolutely fitted in every way to love

each other, are totally debarred from expressing themselves by sheer ignorance of the technique of the act. What Nature declares as the climax of the Mass, the manifestation of God in the flesh, when the flesh is begotten, is so gross, clumsy and brutal that it disappoints and disgusts. They are horribly conscious that something is wrong. They do not know how to amend it. They are ashamed to discuss it. They have neither the experience to guide nor the imagination to experiment. Countless thousands of delicate-minded lovers turn against Love and blaspheme Him. Countless millions, not quite so fixed in refinement, accept the fact, acquiesce in the foulness, till Love is degraded to guilty grovelling. They are dragged in the dirt of the night-cart which ought to have been their "chariot of fire and the horses thereof".

This whole trouble comes from humanity's horror

of Love. For the last hundred years, every first-rate writer on morals has sent forth his lightnings and thunders, hailstones and coals of fire, to burn up Gomorrah and Sodom where Love is either shameful and secret, or daubed with dung of sentiment in order that the swinish citizens may recognize their ideal therein. We do not tell the artist that his art is so sacred, so disgusting, so splendid and so disgraceful that he must not on any account learn the use of the tools of his trade, and study in school how to see with his eye, and record what he sees with his hand. We do not tell the man who would heal disease that he must not know his subject, from anatomy to Pathology; or bid him undertake to remove an appendix from a valued Archbishop the first time he takes scalpel in hand.

But love is an art no less than Rembrandt's, a science no less than Lister's. The mind must make the heart articulate, and the body the temple

of the soul. The animal instinct in man is the twin of the ape's or the bull's. Yet this is the one thing lawful in the code of the bourgeois. He is right to consider the act, as he knows it, degrading. It is, indeed for him, an act ridiculous, obscene, gross, beastly; a wallowing unworthy either of the dignity of man or of the majesty of the God within him. So is the guzzling and the swilling of the savage as he crams his enemy's raw liver into his mouth, or tilts the bottle of trade gin, and gulps. Because his meal is loathly, must we insist that any methods but his are criminal? How did we come to Laperouse and Nichol from the cannibal's cauldron unless by critical care and vigorous research?

The act of Love, to the bourgeois, is a physical relief like defaecation, and a moral relief from the strain of the drill of decency; a joyous relapse into the brute he has to pretend

he despises. It is a drunkenness which drugs his shame of himself, yet leaves him deeper in disgust. It is an unclean gesture, hideous and grotesque. It is not his own act, but forced on him by a giant who holds him helpless; he is half madman, half automaton when he performs it. It is a gawky stumbling across a black foul bog, oozing a thousand dangers. It threatens him with death, disease, disaster in all manner of forms. He pays the coward's price of fear and loathing when pedlar Sex holds out his Rat-Poison in the lead-paper wrapping he takes for silver; he pays again with vomiting and with colic when he has gulped it in his greed.

All this he knows, only too well; he is right, by his own lights, to loathe and fear the act, to hide it from his eyes, to swear he knows it not. With tawdry rags of sentiment, sacksful of greasy clouts, he swathes the corpse of Love, and,

smirking, sputters that Love had never a naked limb; then as the brute in him stirs sleepily, he plasters Love with mire, and leering grunts that Love was never a God in the Temple Man, but a toothsome lump of carrion in the corner of his own sty.

But we of Thelema, like the artist, the true lover of Love, shameless and fearless, seeing God face to face alike in our own souls within and in all Nature without, though we use, as the bourgeois does, the word Love, we hold not the word "too often profaned for us to profane it;" it burns inviolate in its sanctuary, being reborn immaculate with every breath of life. But by 'Love' we mean a thing which the eye of the bourgeois hath not seen, nor his ear heard; neither hath his heart conceived it. We have accepted Love as the meaning of Change, Change being the Life of all Matter soever in the Universe. And we have

accepted Love as the mode of Motion of the Will to Change. To us every act, as implying Change, is an act of Love. Life is a dance of delight, its rhythm an infinite rapture that never can weary or stale. Our personal pleasure in it is derived not only from our own part in it, but from our conscious apprehension of its total perfections. We study its structure, we expand ourselves as we lose ourselves in understanding it, and so becoming one with it. With the Egyptian initiate we exclaim "There is no part of us that is not of the Gods"; and add the antistrophe: "There is no part of the Gods that is not also of us."

Therefore, the Love that is Law is no less Love in the petty personal sense; for Love that makes two One is the engine whereby even the final Two, Self and Not-Self, may become One, in the mystic marriage of the Bride, the Soul, with Him appointed from eternity to espouse her; yea, even

the Most High, God All-in-All, the Truth.

Therefore we hold Love holy, our heart's religion, our mind's science. Shall He not have His ordered Rite, His priests and poets, His makers of beauty in colour and form to adorn Him, His makers of music to praise Him? Shall not His theologians, divining His nature, declare Him? Shall not even those who but sweep the courts of His temple, partake thereby of His person? And shall not our science lay hands on Him, measure Him, discover the depths, calculate the heights, and decipher the laws of His nature?

Also: to us of Thelema, thus having trained our hearts and minds to be expert engineers of the sky-cleaver Love, the ship to soar to the Sun, to us the act of Love is the consecration of the body to Love. We burn the body on the altar of Love, that even the brute may serve the Will of the Soul. We must then study the art of Bodily Love. We

must not balk or bungle. We must be cool and competent as surgeons; brain, eye and hand the perfectly trained instruments of Will.

We must study the subject openly and impersonally, we must read text-books, listen to lectures, watch demonstrations, earn our diplomas ere we enter practice.

We do not mean what the bourgeois means when we say "the act of love". To us it is not the gross gesture as of a man in a seizure, a snorting struggle, a senseless spasm, and a sudden revulsion of shame, as it is to him.

We have an art of expression; we are trained to interpret the soul and the spirit in terms of the body. We do not deny the existence of the body, or despise it; but we refuse to regard it in any other light than this: it is the organ of the Self. It must nevertheless be ordered according to its own laws; those of the mental or moral

Self do not apply to it. We love; that is, we will to unite: then the one must study the other, divine every butterfly thought as it flits, and offer the flower it most fancies. The vocabulary of Love is small, and its terms are hackneyed; to seek new words and phrases is to be affected, stilted. It chills.

But the language of the body is never exhausted; one may talk for an hour by means of an eye-lash. There are intimate, delicate things, shadows of the leaves of the Tree of the Soul that dance in the breeze of Love, so subtle that neither Keats nor Heine in words, neither Brahms nor Debussy in music, could give them body. It is the agony of every artist, the greater he the more fierce his despair, that he cannot compass expression. And what they cannot do, not once in a life of ardour, is done in all fulness by the body that, loving, hath learnt the lesson of how to love.

Addendum: More generally, any act soever may be used to attain any end soever by the magician who knows how to make the necessary links.

7

2

53. This shall regenerate the world, the little
world my sister, my heart ² and my tongue,
unto whom I send this kiss. Also, o scribe
and prophet, though thou be of the princes,
it shall not assuage thee nor absolve thee.
But ecstasy be thine and joy of earth! 'ever
To me! To me!

COMMENT

It is clear that this 'kiss' (i.e. this Book) will regenerate Earth by establishing the Law of Liberty. 'My heart and my tongue' seems a mere phrase of endearment; but has possibly some deep significance which at present escapes me.

The second paragraph is perhaps in answer to some unspoken thought of my own that my work was accomplished. No: though I be 'of the princes' with the right to enter into my reward, it is my destiny to continue my Work.¹

-
1. "Assuage thee": satisfy thine aspiration to attainment. "Absolve thee": relieve thee from further duty.

Use asterisk

54. Change not as much as the style of a letter;
for behold! thou, o prophet, shalt not behold
all these mysteries hidden therein.

COMMENT

The subject changes most abruptly, perhaps answering some unspoken comment of the scribe on the capital T's in 'To me'.

This injunction was most necessary, for had I been left to myself, I should have wanted to edit the Book ruthlessly. I find in it what I consider faults of style, and even of grammar; much of the matter was at the time of writing most antipathetic. But the Book proved itself greater than the scribe; again and again have the 'mistakes' proved themselves to be devices for transmitting a Wisdom beyond the scope of ordinary language.

55. The child of thy bowels, he shall behold
them.

7

* italico

56. Expect him not from the East, nor from the
West: for from no expected house cometh
that child. Aum! all words are sacred
and all prophets true; save only that they
understand a little; solve the first half
of the equation, leave the second unattacked.
But thou hast all in the clear light, and
some, though not all, in the dark.

COMMENT

All previous systems have been sectarian,
based on a traditional cosmography both gross and
incorrect. Our system is based on absolute science
and philosophy. We have "all in the clear light",
that of Reason, because our Mysticism is based on
an absolute Scepticism. But at the time of this
writing I had very little mystic experience indeed,
as my record shows. The Fact is that I was far,
far from the Grade even of Master of the Temple.

So I could not properly understand this Book;
how then could I effectively promulgate it? I
comprehended but dimly that it contained my Word;
for the Grade of Magus then seemed to me unthink-
ably high above me. Also, let me say that the
all True Secrets of this Grade ~~are~~ ^{are} unfathomable and
awful beyond all expression; the process of
initiation thereto was continuous over years, and
contained the most sublime mystic experiences -
beyond any yet recorded by man - as mere incidents
in its terrific Pageant.

The "equation" is the representation of Truth
by Word.

57. 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.

All these old letters of my Book are
aright, but Y is not the Star. This
also is secret: my prophet shall reveal
it to the wise.

Check Hebrews

COMMENT

"Love is the law, love under will", is an interpretation of the general law of Will. It is dealt with fully in the Book Aleph.

I here insert a few pertinent passages from that Book.

"This is the evident and final Solvent of the Knot Philosophical concerning Fate and Freewill,

that it is thine own Self, omniscient and omnipotent, sublime in Eternity, that first didst order the Course of thine own Orbit, so that that which befallerh thee by Fate is indeed the necessary Effect of thine own Will. These two, then, that like Gladiators have made War in Philosophy through these many Centuries, are made One by the Love under Will which is the Law of Thelema.

O my Son, there is no Doubt that resolveth not in Certainty and Rapture at the Touch of the Wand of our Law, and thou apply it with Wit. Do thou grow constantly in the Assimilation of the Law, and thou shalt be made perfect.

Behold, there is a Pageant of Triumph as each Star, free from Confusion, sweepeth free in its right Orbit; all Heaven acclaimeth thee as thou goest, transcendental in Joy and in Splendour; and thy Light is as a Beacon to them that Wander afar, strayed in the Night. Amen."

The "old comment" covers the rest of this verse sufficiently for the present purpose.

I see no harm in revealing the mystery of Tzaddi to 'the wise'; others will hardly understand my explanations.

Tzaddi is the letter of The Emperor, the Trump IV, and He is the Star, the Trump XVII. Aquarius and Aries are therefore counterchanged, revolving on the pivot of Pisces, just as, in the Trumps VIII and XI, Leo and Libra do about Virgo. This last revelation makes our Tarot attributions sublimely, perfectly, flawlessly symmetrical.

The fact of its so doing is a most convincing proof of the superhuman Wisdom of the author of this Book to those who have laboured for years, in vain, to elucidate the problems of the Tarot.

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plain with
page 63.

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

COMMENT

These joys are principally (1) the Beatific Vision, in which Beauty is constantly present to the recipient of Her grace, together with a calm and unutterable joy; (2) the Vision of Wonder, in which the whole Mystery of the Universe is constantly understood and admired for its Ingenium and Wisdom. (1) is referred to Tiphereth, the Grade of Adept; (2) to Binah, the grade of Master of the Temple.

The certainty concerning death is conferred by the Magical Memory, and various Experiences without which Life is unintelligible.

"Peace unutterable" is given by the Trance in which Matter is destroyed; "rest" by that which finally equilibrates Motion.

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"Ecstasy" refers to a Trance which combines these.

"Nor do I demand aught in sacrifice" - The ritual of worship is Samadhi. But see later, verse 61.

9

8

59. My incense is of resinous woods and gums;
and there is no blood therein; because of
my hair the trees of Eternity.

COMMENT

It seems possible that Our Lady describes Her hair as "the trees of Eternity" because of the tree-like structure of the Cosmos. This is observed in the 'Star-Sponge' Vision. I must explain this by giving a comparatively full account of this vision.

The 'Star-Sponge' Vision.

There is a vision of a peculiar character which has been of cardinal importance in my interior life, and to which constant reference is made in my magical diaries. So far as I know, there is no extant description of this vision anywhere, and I was surprised on looking through my records to find that I had given no clear account of it myself. The reason apparently is that it is so

necessary a part of myself that I unconsciously assume it to be a matter of common knowledge, just as one assumes that everybody knows that one possesses a pair of lungs, and therefore abstains from mentioning the fact directly, although perhaps alluding to the matter often enough.

It appears very essential to describe this vision as well as is possible, considering the difficulty of language, and the fact that the phenomena involve logical contradictions, the conditions of consciousness being other than those obtaining normally.

The vision developed gradually. It was repeated on so many occasions that I am unable to say at what period it may be called complete. The beginning, however, is clear enough in my memory.

I was on a retirement in a cottage overlooking Lake Pasquaney in New Hampshire. I lost consciousness of everything but an universal space

in which were innumerable bright points, and I realized this as a physical representation of the Universe, in what I may call its essential structure. I exclaimed: "Nothingness, with twinkles!" I concentrated upon this vision, with the result that the void space which had been the principal element of it diminished in importance; space appeared to be ablaze, yet the radiant points were not confused, and I thereupon completed my sentence with the exclamation "But what Twinkles!"

The next stage of this vision led to an identification of the blazing points with the stars of the firmament, with ideas, souls, etc. I perceived also that each star was connected by a ray of light with each other star. In the world of ideas, each thought possessed a necessary relation with each other thought; each such relation is of course a thought in itself; each such ray is itself a star. It is here that logical difficulty

first presents itself. The seer has a direct perception of infinite series. Logically, therefore, it would appear as if the entire space must be filled up with a homogeneous blaze of light. This however is not the case. The space is completely full; yet the monads which fill it are perfectly distinct. The ordinary reader might well exclaim that such statements exhibit symptoms of mental confusion. The subject demands more than cursory examination. I can do no more than refer the critic to the Hon. Bertrand Russell's "Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy", where the above position is thoroughly justified, as also certain positions which follow. At the time I had not read this book; and I regard it as a striking proof of the value of mystical attainment, that its results should have led a mind such as mine, whose mathematical training was of the most elementary character, to the immediate

consciousness of some of the most profound and important mathematical truths; to the acquisition of the power to think in a manner totally foreign to the normal mind, the rare possession of the greatest thinkers in the world.

A further development of the vision brought the consciousness that the structure of the universe was highly organized, that certain stars were of greater magnitude and brilliancy than the rest. I began to seek similes to help me to explain myself. Several such attempts are mentioned later in this note. Here again are certain analogies with some of the properties of infinite series. The reader must not be shocked at the idea of a number which is not increased by addition or multiplication, a series of infinite series, each one of which may be twice as long as its predecessor, and so on. There is no "mystical humbug" about this. As Mr. Russell

shows, truths of this order are more certain than the most universally accepted axioms; in fact, many axioms accepted by the intellect of the average man are not true at all. But in order to appreciate these truths, it is necessary to educate the mind to thought of an order which is at first sight incompatible with rationality.

I may here digress for a moment in order to demonstrate how this vision led directly to the understanding of the mechanism of certain phenomena which have hitherto been dismissed with a shrug of the shoulders as incomprehensible.

Example No. 1. I began to become aware of my own mental processes; I thought of my consciousness as the Commander-in-Chief of an army. There existed a staff of specialists to deal with various contingencies. There was an intelligence department to inform me of my environment. There was a council which determined the relative

importance of the data presented to them - it required only a slight effort of imagination to think of this council as in debate; I could picture to myself some tactically brilliant proposal being vetoed by the Quarter-Master-General. It was only one step to dramatize the scene, and it flashed upon me in a moment that here was the explanation of 'double personality': that illusion was no more than a natural personification of internal conflict, just as the savage attributes consciousness to trees and rocks.

Example No. 2. While at Montauk I had put my sleeping bag to dry in the sun. When I went to take it in, I remarked, laughingly, "Your bedtime, Master Bag," as if it were a small boy and I its nurse. This was entirely frivolous, but the thought flashed into my mind that after all the bag was in one sense a part of myself. The two ideas came together with a snap, and I understood

the machinery of a man's delusion that he is a teapot.

These two examples may give some idea to the reader of the light which mystical attainment throws upon the details of the working of the human mind.

Further developments of this vision emphasized the identity between the Universe and the mind. The search for similes deepened. I had a curious impression that the thing I was looking for was somehow obvious and familiar. Ultimately it burst upon me with fulminating conviction that the simile for which I was seeking was the nervous system. I exclaimed: "The mind is the nervous system," with all the enthusiasm of Archimedes, and it only dawned on me later, with a curious burst of laughter at my naivete, that my great discovery amounted to a platitude.

From this I came to another discovery: I

perceived why platitudes were stupid. The reason was that they represented the summing up of trains of thought, each of which was superb in every detail at one time. A platitude was like a wife after a few years; she has lost none of her charms, and yet one prefers some perfectly worthless woman.

I now found myself able to retrace the paths of thought which ultimately come together in a platitude. I would start with some few simple ideas and develop them. Each stage in the process was like the joy of a young eagle soaring from height to height in ever increasing sunlight as dawn breaks, foaming, over the purple hem of the garment of ocean, and, when the many coloured rays of rose and gold and green gathered themselves together and melted into the orb'd glory of the sun, with a rapture that shook the soul with unimaginable ecstasy, that sphere of rushing light

was recognized as a common-place idea, accepted unquestioningly and treated with drab indifference because it had so long been assimilated as a natural and necessary part of the order of Nature. At first I was shocked and disgusted to discover that a series of brilliant researches should culminate in a commonplace. But I soon understood that what I had done was to live over again the triumphant career of conquering humanity; that I had experienced in my own person the succession of winged victories that had been sealed by a treaty of peace whose clauses might be summed up in some such trite expression as "Beauty depends upon form".

It would be quite impracticable to go fully into the subject of this vision of the Star-Sponge, if only because its ramifications are omniform. It must suffice to reiterate that it has been the basis of most of my work for the last five years, and to remind the reader that

the essential form of it is "Nothingness with
twinkles".

7

60. My number is 11, as all their numbers who
are of us. The Five Pointed Star, with
a Circle in the Middle, ²and the circle is
Red. My colour is black to the blind,
but the blue ²and gold are seen of the see-
ing. Also I have a secret glory for them
that love me.

7

61. 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 Ser-
pent flame therein, thou shalt come a little
to lie in my bosom. For one kiss wilt thou
then be willing to give all; but whose
gives one particle of dust shall lose all
in that hour. Ye shall gather goods and
stores of women and spices; ye shall wear
rich jewels; ye shall exceed the nations
of earth in splendour ~~and~~ 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!

7

2

62. At all my meetings with you shall the priest-
ess 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.

COMMENT

It is evident that Our Lady, in her Personality, contemplates some more or less open form of worship suited for the laity. With the establishment of the Law something of this sort may become possible. It is only necessary to kill out the sense of 'sin', with its false shame and its fear of nature.

P.S. The Gnostic Mass is intended to supply this need. Liber XV. It has been said continuously in California for some years.

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63. 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!

COMMENT

All those acts which excite the divine in man are proper to the Rite of Invocation.

Religion, as understood by the vile Puritan, is the very opposite of all this. He - it - seems to wish to kill his - its - soul by forbidding every expression of it, and every practice which might awaken it to expression. To hell with this Verbotenism!

In particular, let me exhort all men and all women, for they are Stars! Heed well this holy Verse!

True Religion is intoxication, in a sense. We are told elsewhere to intoxicate the innermost, not the outermost; but I think that the word "wine" should be taken in its widest sense as

meaning that which brings out the soul. Climate, soil, and race change conditions; each man or woman must find and choose the fit intoxicant. Thus hashish in one or other of its forms seems to suit the Moslem, to go with dry heat; opium is right for the Mongol; whiskey for the dour temperament and damp cold climate of the Scot.

Sex-expression, too, depends on climate and so on, so that we must interpret the Law to suit a Socrates, a Jesus, and a Burton, or a Marie Antoinette and a de Lamballe, as well as our own Don Juans and Faustines.

With this expansion, to the honour and glory of Them, of Their Natures, we acclaim therefore our helpers, Dionysus, Aphrodite, Apollo, Wine, Woman, and song.

Intoxication, that is, ecstasy, is the key to Reality. It is explained in 'Energized Enthusiasm' (Equinox I, IX) that there are three

Gods whose function is to bring the Soul to the Realization of its own glory: Dionysus, Aphrodite, Apollo; Wine, Woman, and song.

The ancients, both in the highest civilizations, as in Greece and Egypt, and in the most primitive savagery, as among the Buriats and the Papuans, were well aware of this, and made their religious ceremonies 'orgia', Works. Puritan foulness, failing to understand what was happening, degraded the word 'orgies' to mean debauches. It is the old story of the Fox who lost his tail. If you cannot do anything, call it impossible; or, if that be evidently absurd, call it wicked!

It is critics who deny poetry, people without capacity for Ecstasy and Will who call Mysticism moonshine and Magick delusion. It is manless old cats, geldings, and psychopaths, who pretend to detest Love, and persecute Free Women and Free Men.

Verbotenism has gone so far in certain slave-communities that the use of wine is actually prohibited by law!

I wish here to emphasise that the Law of Thelema definitely enjoins us, as a necessary act of religion, to "drink sweet wines and wines that foam". Any free man or woman who resides in any community where this is verboten has a choice between two duties: insurrection and emigration.

The furtive disregard of Restriction is not Freedom. It tends to make men slaves and hypocrites, and to destroy respect for Law.

Have no fear: two years after Vodka was verboten, Russia, which had endured a thousand lesser tyrannies with patience, rose in Revolution.

Religious ecstasy is necessary to man's soul. Where this is attained by mystical practices, directly, as it should be, people need no

substitutes. Thus the Hindus remain contentedly sober, and care nothing for the series of Invaders who have occupied their country from time to time and governed them. But where the only means of obtaining this ecstasy, or a simulacrum of it, known to the people, is alcohol, they must have alcohol. Deprive them of wine, or beer, or whatever their natural drink may be, and they replace it by morphia, cocaine, or something easier to conceal, and to take without detection.

Stop that, and it is Revolution. As long as a man can get rid of his surplus Energy in enjoyment, he finds life easy, and submits. Deprive him of Pleasure, of Ecstasy, and his mind begins to worry about the way in which he is exploited and oppressed. Very soon he begins furtively to throw bombs; and, gathering strength, to send his tyrants to the gallows.

64. I am the blue-lidded daughter of Sunset;
I am the naked brilliance of the voluptu-
ous night-sky.

65. To me! To me!

7

66. The Manifestation of Nult is at an end.

9

L. Dickinson
cl- De Pelicourt
Prose Heath
Ripley, Surrey