

more empiricism, no more system! The study of being and its compared realities! A metaphysic of Nature! Then away with mysticism! No more dreams in philosophy; philosophy is not poesy but pure mathematics of realities, physical and moral. Leave unto religion the freedom of its infinite aspirations, and let it leave in turn to science the exact conclusions of absolute experimentalism.

[Man is the son of his works; he is what he wills to be; he is the image of the God he makes; he is the realization of his own ideal.] Should that ideal lack basis, the whole edifice of his immortality collapses. Philosophy is not the ideal, but ought to serve as its foundation. The known is for us the measure of the unknown; by the visible we appreciate the invisible; sensations are to thoughts even as thoughts to aspirations. Science is a celestial trigonometry: one side of the absolute triangle is that Nature which is submitted to our investigations; the second is our soul, which embraces and reflects Nature; the third is the Absolute, in which our soul is magnified. No more atheism possible henceforward, for we pretend no longer to define God. God is for us the most perfect and best of intelligent beings, and the ascending hierarchy of beings demonstrates His existence amply.¹ Do not let us ask for more; but, to understand Him ever better, let us grow perfect by ascending towards Him. No more ideology; being is being, and cannot perfectionize save according to real laws of being. Observe, and do not prejudge; exercise our faculties, do not falsify them; enlarge the domain of life in life; behold truth in truth! Everything is possible to him who wills only what is true! Rest in Nature, study, know, then dare; dare to will, dare to act and be silent! No more hatred of anyone. Everyone reaps what he sows. The consequence of works is fatal: to judge and chastise the wicked is for the Supreme Reason. He who enters into a blind alley must retrace his steps or be broken. Warn him gently, if he can still hear you, but human liberty must take its course. We are not

¹ "God is the great silence of the infinite. The whole world speaks of Him and for Him, but He is represented by nothing that is said so well as by His silence and eternal calm."—*Le Livre des Sages*, p. 58.

the judges of one another. Life is a battle-field. Do not pause in the warfare on account of those who fall, but avoid trampling them. Then comes the victory, and the wounded on both sides, now brothers in suffering and before humanity, will meet in the ambulances of the conquerors.

Such are the consequences of the philosophical dogma of Hermes; such has been from all time the ethic of true adepts; such is the philosophy of the Rosicrucian inheritors of all the ancient wisdoms; such is the Secret Doctrine of those associations that are treated as subversive of the public order, and have ever been accused of conspiring against thrones and altars. The true adept, far from disturbing the public order, is its firmest supporter. He has too great a respect for liberty to desire anarchy: child of the light, he loves harmony and knows that darkness begets confusion. He accepts everything that is and denies only what is not. He wills true religion, practical, universal, full of faith, palpable, realized in all life; he wills it to have a wise and powerful priesthood, surrounded by all the virtues and all the prestige of faith. He wills the universal orthodoxy, the absolute, hierarchic, apostolic, sacramental, incontestable and uncontested catholicity. He wills an experimental philosophy, real, mathematical, modest in its conclusions, untiring in its researches, scientific in its progress. Who, therefore, can be against us if God and reason are with us? Does it matter if man prejudge and slander us? Our entire justification is in our thoughts and our works. We come not, like Oedipus, to destroy the sphinx of symbolism; we seek, on the contrary, to resuscitate it. The sphinx devours only blind interpreters; and he who slays it has not known how to divine it properly; it must be subdued, enchained and compelled to follow us. The sphinx is the living palladium of humanity, it is the conquest of the King of Thebes; it would have been the salvation of Oedipus, had Oedipus understood its whole enigma!

In the positive and material order, what must be concluded from this work? Is Magic a force which science may abandon to the boldest and wickedest? Is it a cheat and

falsehood invented by rogues to cozen the ignorant and feeble? Is Philosophical Mercury the exploitation of credulity by address? Those who understand us know already how to answer these questions. In these days, Magic can be no longer the art of fascinations and illusions: those only who wish to be deceived can be deceived now. But the narrow and rash incredulity of the last century is denied in totality by Nature herself. We are environed by prophecies and miracles; unbelief once denied them unwisely; now, science explains them. No, M. le Comte de Mirville, a lost spirit is not allowed to disturb the empire of God! No, things unknown cannot be explained by things impossible! No, invisible beings are not permitted to deceive, torment, seduce and even kill the living creatures of God, poor human beings, so ignorant, as it is, so weak, scarce able to combat their own delusions! Those who told you all this in your childhood, M. le Comte, have deceived you, and if you were child enough once to listen, be man enough now to disbelieve. [Man is himself the creator of his heaven and hell, and there are no demons except our own follies.] Minds chastised by truth are corrected by that chastisement, and dream no more of disturbing the world. If Satan exist, he can be only the most unfortunate, most ignorant, most humiliated and most impotent of beings. The existence of a universal agent of life, a living fire, an Astral Light, is demonstrated by facts. Magnetism enables us to understand today the miracles of old Magic; the facts of second sight, aspirations, sudden cures, thought-reading, are now admitted and familiar things, even for our children. But the tradition of the ancients has been lost; discoveries have been regarded as new; the last word is sought on observed phenomena; minds are agitated over meaningless manifestations; fascinations are experienced without being understood. We say, therefore, to table-turners: These prodigies are not novel; you can perform even greater wonders if you study the laws of Nature.¹ And what will follow a new acquaintance with

¹ "To perform miracles or persuade the multitude that one does so is much about the same thing, more especially in an age of mockery and trifling like our own."—*La Clef des Grands Mystères*, p. 215.

these powers? A new career opened to the activity and intelligence of man, the battle of life reorganized with arms more perfect and opportunity restored to the flower of intelligence of becoming once more the masters of all destinies, by providing true priests and great kings for the world to come!

Here Ends the Ritual of Transcendental Magic

an involuntary admission of the secret divinity of the Crucified, and lastly, the sign of the work accomplished, the cycle terminated, the intermediary TAU, which resumes for the first time, before the final denary, the signs of the sacred alphabet.¹

¹ This is exceedingly obscure, and "an intermediary TAU" is of course nonsense in Hebrew. But Lévi is trying to say that the Hanged Man is suspended from a gallows like a TAU, though his symbol is referable otherwise to the letter Lamed, according to his invented tabulation, which happens, however, to be wrong. He calls it intermediate because it is midway in his Tarot sequence, according to which the TAU proper of the alphabet answers to the symbol of the World, being the last of the Trumps Major.

XIII N N¹

NECROMANCY

EX IPSIS MORS

WE have said that the images of persons and things are preserved in the Astral Light. Therein also can be evoked the forms of those who are in our world no longer, and by this means are accomplished those mysteries of Necromancy which are so contested and at the same time so real.² The Kabalists who have discoursed concerning the world of spirits have described simply what they have seen in their evocations. Éliphas Lévi Zahed,³ who writes this book, has evoked, and he has seen. Let us state, in the first place, what the masters have written on their visions or intuitions in that which they term the light of glory. We read in the Hebrew book concerning the *Revolution of Souls* that there are three classes of souls—the daughters of Adam, the daughters of angels and the daughters of sin. According to the same work, there are also three kinds of spirits—captive, wandering and free. Souls are sent forth in couples; at the same time certain souls of men are born widowed, for their spouses are held captive by Lilith and Naémah, queens of the stryges: they are souls condemned to expiate the temerity of a celibate's vow. Hence, when a man renounces the love of women from his infancy, he makes the bride who was destined for him a slave to the demons of debauch. Souls grow and multiply in heaven, as bodies do upon earth. Immaculate souls are the daughters of the kisses of angels.

¹ "Thirteen is the number of death and birth, of property and inheritance, of association and the family, of war and treaties."—*La Clef des Grands Mystères*, p. 49.

² According to *La Science des Esprits*, p. 245. Necromancy is horrible and constitutes "a crime against Nature".

³ These Hebrew names translated into French are Alphonse Louis Constant.—NOTE of ÉLIPHAS LÉVI.

Nothing can enter heaven save that which comes from heaven. Hence, after death, the divine spirit which animated man ascends by itself above and leaves two corpses below, one upon earth, the other in the atmosphere; one terrestrial and elementary, the other aerial and sidereal, one already inert, the other still animated by the universal movement of the soul of the world, yet destined to die slowly, absorbed by the astral forces which produced it. The terrestrial body is visible; the other is unseen by the eyes of earthly and living bodies, nor can it be beheld except by the application of the Astral Light to the TRANSLUCID, which conveys its impressions to the nervous system and thus influences the organ of sight, so that it perceives the forms which are preserved and the words which are written in the book of vital light.

When a man has lived well the astral body evaporates like a pure incense ascending towards the superior regions; but should he have lived in sin, his astral body, which holds him prisoner, still seeks the object of its passions and wishes to return to life. It torments the dreams of young girls, bathes in the stream of spilt blood and floats about the places where the pleasures of its life elapsed. It watches over treasures which it possessed and buried; it expends itself in painful efforts to make fresh material organs and so live again. But the stars draw it up and absorb it; it feels its intelligence weaken, its memory gradually vanishes, all its being dissolves. . . . Its former vices rise up before it, assume monstrous shapes and pursue it; they attack and devour it. . . . The unfortunate creature thus loses successively all the members which have ministered to his iniquities; then he dies a second time and for ever, because he loses his personality and his memory. Souls which are destined to live, but are not yet purified completely, remain captive for a longer or shorter period in the astral body, wherein they are burned by the odic light, which seeks to absorb and dissolve them. It is in order to escape from this body that suffering souls sometimes enter the organisms of the living and dwell therein in that state which Kabalists term embryonic. Now, it is these aerial bodies which are

evoked by Necromancy. We enter into communion with larvae, with dead or perishing substances, by this operation. The beings in question, for the most part, cannot speak except by a ringing in our ears produced by the nervous shock to which I have referred, and commonly they can reason only by reflecting our thoughts and our reveries. To behold these strange forms we must put ourselves in an abnormal condition akin to sleep or death; in other words, we must magnetize ourselves and enter into a kind of lucid and waking somnambulism. Then Necromancy has real results, and the evocations of Magic can produce actual visions. We have said that in the Great Magical Agent, which is the Astral Light, there are preserved all impressions of things, all images formed either by rays or reflections. In this same light our dreams come to us; it is this which befools the insane and misguides their dormant judgement in pursuit of the most bizarre phantoms. To insure vision without illusion in such light, a powerful will must help us to isolate reflections and attract rays only. To dream awake is to see in the Astral Light, and the orgies of the Sabbath, described by so many sorcerers in their criminal trials, came to them solely in this manner. The preparations and the substances used to obtain this result were often horrible, as we shall see in the "Ritual", but the result itself was never doubtful. They saw, they heard, they handled the most abominable, most fantastic, most impossible things.¹ We shall return to this subject in our fifteenth chapter; at the present moment we are concerned only with evocation of the dead.

In the spring of the year 1854 I had undertaken a journey to London, that I might escape from internal disquietude and devote myself, without interruption, to science. I had letters of introduction to persons of eminence who were anxious for revelations from the supernatural world. I made the acquaintance of several and discovered in them,

¹ "Black Magic is the occult continuation of proscribed rites belonging to the ancient world. Immolation is the basis of the Mysteries of Nigromancy, and bewitchments are magical sacrifices where the magnetism of evil is substituted for stake and knife. In religion it is faith which saves; in Black Magic it is faith which kills. . . . Black Magic is the religion of death."—*Le Grand Arcane*, p.53.

amidst much that was courteous, a depth of indifference or trifling. They asked me forthwith to work wonders, as if I were a charlatan, and I was somewhat discouraged, for, to speak frankly, far from being inclined to initiate others into the mysteries of Ceremonial Magic, I had shrunk all along from its illusions and weariness. Moreover, such ceremonies necessitated an equipment which would be expensive and hard to collect. I buried myself therefore in the study of the transcendent Kabbalah, and troubled no further about English adepts, when, returning one day to my hotel, I found a note awaiting me. This note contained half of a card, divided transversely, on which I recognized at once the seal of Solomon. It was accompanied by a small sheet of paper, on which these words were pencilled: "Tomorrow, at three o'clock, in front of Westminster Abbey, the second half of this card will be given you." I kept this curious assignation. At the appointed spot I found a carriage drawn up, and as I held unaffectedly the fragment of card in my hand, a footman approached, making a sign as he did so, and then opened the door of the equipage. It contained a lady in black, wearing a thick veil; she motioned to me to take a seat beside her, showing me at the same time the other half of the card. The door closed, the carriage drove off, and the lady raising her veil I saw that my appointment was with an elderly person, having grey eyebrows and black eyes of unusual brilliance, strangely fixed in expression. "Sir," she began, with a strongly marked English accent, "I am aware that the law of secrecy is rigorous amongst adepts; a friend of Sir B—— L——, who has seen you, knows that you have been asked for phenomena, and that you have refused to gratify such curiosity. You are possibly without the materials; I should like to show you a complete magical cabinet, but I must exact beforehand the most inviolable silence. If you will not give me this pledge upon your honour, I shall give orders for you to be driven to your hotel." I made the required promise and keep it faithfully by not divulging the name, position or abode of this lady, whom I soon recognized as an initiate, not exactly of the first order, but still of a most exalted grade. We had a

Sir
Bulwer
Lytton

number of long conversations, in the course of which she insisted always upon the necessity of practical experience to complete initiation. She showed me a collection of magical vestments and instruments, lent me some rare books which I needed; in short, she determined me to attempt at her house the experiment of a complete evocation, for which I prepared during a period of twenty-one days, scrupulously observing the rules laid down in the thirteenth chapter of the "Ritual".

The preliminaries terminated on 24 July; it was proposed to evoke the phantom of the divine Apollonius and interrogate it upon two secrets, one which concerned myself and one which interested the lady. She had counted on taking part in the evocation with a trustworthy person, who, however, proved nervous at the last moment, and, as the triad or unity is indispensable for Magical Rites, I was left to my own resources. The cabinet prepared for the evocation was situated in a turret; it contained four concave mirrors and a species of altar having a white marble top, encircled by a chain of magnetized iron. The Sign of the Pentagram, as given in the fifth chapter of this work, was graven and gilded on the white marble surface; it was inscribed also in various colours upon a new white lambskin stretched beneath the altar. In the middle of the marble table there was a small copper chafing-dish, containing charcoal of alder and laurel wood; another chafing-dish was set before me on a tripod. I was clothed in a white garment, very similar to the alb of our catholic priests, but longer and wider, and I wore upon my head a crown of vervain leaves, intertwined with a golden chain. I held a new sword in one hand, and in the other the "Ritual". I kindled two fires with the requisite prepared substances, and began reading the evocations of the "Ritual" in a voice at first low, but rising by degrees. The smoke spread, the flame caused the objects upon which it fell to waver, then it went out, the smoke still floating white and slow about the marble altar; I seemed to feel a quaking of the earth, my ears tingled, my heart beat quickly. I heaped more twigs and perfumes on the chafing-dishes, and as the flame again burst up, I beheld distinctly, before the altar,

the figure of a man of more than normal size, which dissolved and vanished away. I recommenced the evocations and placed myself within a circle which I had drawn previously between the tripod and the altar. Thereupon the mirror which was behind the altar seemed to brighten in its depth, a wan form was outlined therein, which increased and seemed to approach by degrees. Three times, and with closed eyes, I invoked Apollonius. When I again looked forth there was a man in front of me, wrapped from head to foot in a species of shroud, which seemed more grey than white. He was lean, melancholy and beardless, and did not altogether correspond to my preconceived notion of Apollonius. I experienced an abnormally cold sensation, and when I endeavoured to question the phantom I could not articulate a syllable. I therefore placed my hand upon the Sign of the Pentagram, and pointed the sword at the figure, commanding it mentally to obey and not alarm me, in virtue of the said sign. The form thereupon became vague, and suddenly disappeared. I directed it to return, and presently felt, as it were, a breath close by me; something touched my hand which was holding the sword, and the arm became immediately benumbed as far as the elbow. I divined that the sword displeased the spirit, and I therefore placed it point downwards, close by me, within the circle. The human figure reappeared immediately, but I experienced such an intense weakness in all my limbs, and a swooning sensation came so quickly over me, that I made two steps to sit down, whereupon I fell into a profound lethargy, accompanied by dreams, of which I had only a confused recollection when I came again to myself. For several subsequent days my arm remained benumbed and painful. The apparition did not speak to me, but it seemed that the questions I had designed to ask answered themselves in my mind. To that of the lady an interior voice replied—Death!—it was concerning a man about whom she desired information. As for myself, I sought to know whether reconciliation and forgiveness were possible between two persons who occupied my thoughts, and the same inexorable echo within me answered—Dead!

I am stating facts as they occurred, but I would impose faith on no one. The consequence of this experience on myself must be called inexplicable. I was no longer the same man; something of another world had passed into me; I was no longer either sad or cheerful, but I felt a singular attraction towards death, unaccompanied, however, by any suicidal tendency. I analysed my experience carefully, and, notwithstanding a lively nervous repugnance, I repeated the same experiment on two further occasions, allowing some days to elapse between each. There was not, however, sufficient difference between the phenomena to warrant me in protracting a narrative which is perhaps already too long. But the net result of these two additional evocations was for me the revelation of two kabalistic secrets which might change, in a short space of time, the foundations and laws of society at large, if they came to be known generally.

Am I to conclude from all this that I really evoked, saw and touched the great Apollonius of Tyana? I am not so hallucinated as to affirm or so unserious as to believe it. The effect of the preparations, the perfumes, the mirrors, the pantacles, is an actual drunkenness of the imagination, which must act powerfully upon a person otherwise nervous and impressionable. I do not explain the physical laws by which I saw and touched; I affirm solely that I did see and that I did touch, that I saw clearly and distinctly, apart from dreaming, and this is sufficient to establish the real efficacy of magical ceremonies. For the rest, I regard the practice as destructive and dangerous; if it became habitual, neither moral nor physical health would be able to withstand it. The elderly lady whom I have mentioned, and of whom I had reason to complain subsequently, was a case in point. Despite her asseverations to the contrary, I have no doubt that she was addicted to Necromancy and Goëtia. At times she talked complete nonsense, at others yielded to senseless fits of passion, for which it was difficult to discover a cause. I left London without bidding her adieu, and I adhere faithfully to my engagement by giving no clue to her identity, which might connect her name with practices, pursued in all probability without the knowledge of her

family, which I believe to be numerous and of very honourable position.

There are evocations of intelligence, evocations of love and evocations of hate; but, once more, there is no proof whatsoever that spirits leave the higher spheres to communicate with us: the opposite, as a fact is more probable. We evoke the memories which they have left in the Astral Light, or common reservoir of universal magnetism. It was in this light that the Emperor Julian once saw the gods manifest, looking old, ill and decrepit—a fresh proof of the influence exercised by current and accredited opinions on the reflections of this same Magical Agent, which makes our tables talk and answers by taps on the walls. After the evocation I have described, I re-read carefully the life of Apollonius, who is represented by historians as an ideal of antique beauty and elegance, and I remarked that towards the end of his life he was starved and tortured in prison. This circumstance, which remained perhaps in my memory without my being aware of it, may have determined the unattractive form of my vision, the latter regarded solely as the voluntary dream of a waking man. I have seen two other persons, whom there is no occasion to name, both differing, as regards costume and appearance, from what I had expected. For the rest, I commend the greatest caution to all who propose undertaking similar experiences: their result is intense exhaustion and frequently a shock sufficient to occasion illness.

I must not conclude this chapter without mentioning the curious opinions of certain Kabalists, who distinguish between apparent and real death, holding that the two are seldom simultaneous. In their view, the majority of persons who are buried are still alive, while a number of others who are regarded as living are in reality dead. Incurable madness, for example, would be with them an incomplete but real death, leaving the earthly form under the purely instinctive control of the sidereal body. When the human soul suffers a greater strain than it can bear, it would thus become separated from the body, leaving the animal soul, or sidereal body, in its place, and these human remains would be less

alive in a sense than a mere animal. Dead persons of this kind are said to be identified by the complete extinction of the moral and affectionate sense: they are neither bad nor good; they are dead. Such beings, who are poisonous fungi of the human race, absorb the life of living beings to their fullest possible extent, and this is why their proximity depletes the soul and chills the heart. If such corpse-like creatures really existed, they would stand for all that was recounted in former times about brucalaques and vampires. Now, are there not certain persons in whose presence one feels less intelligent, less good, sometimes even less honest? Are there not some whose vicinity extinguishes all faith and all enthusiasm, who draw you by your weaknesses, who govern you by your evil propensities, and make you die slowly to morality in a torment like that of Mezentius? These are dead people whom we mistake for living beings; these are vampires whom we regard as friends!