

leather-bound books and parchments mingled with that of jars of spices and bunches of drying herbs; the sight of strange objects, half-hidden, half-displayed — such as, for instance, a stuffed alligator hanging from the ceiling, or a skull upon a shelf in some dark corner, while shining silver witch-balls reflected the flame of a scented candle; all these things were deliberately used to act as suggestions to the mind. And in the days when all classes believed implicitly in magic, their effect must have been potent.

In these more sophisticated times, such a display might seem merely theatrical. Nevertheless, the effect of deliberately created atmosphere is not to be despised; only the present day magician sets about it in a less crude way than our ancestors did.

Soft lighting, for instance, is more pleasing and conducive to meditation than a bright overhead light. Certain colours have a soothing effect; others are warming and exciting. This, indeed, is a fundamental principle of the use of colour. We can divide colours, in a sense, into masculine and feminine.

The masculine colours are those which have a warming, stimulating effect — the fiery tones of red and orange, while the calming and soothing colours are the shades of blue and green. Yellow holds a midway place between the two; while the shades of purple are mysterious, and often favoured by those interested in the occult.

It will be seen how the three primary colours, red, blue and yellow, demonstrate what occultists call the Law of the Triangle, the two opposites with the uniting and harmonizing principle between them. Red is the active, stimulating colour; blue is the passive, soothing colour; while yellow holds the balance of harmony between the two.

Magicians of olden time regarded red as the colour of life, probably because of the redness of blood. Hence they often used red ink to inscribe magical sigils, in order to give them symbolic life. This idea goes back a very long way into human history. Men of the Stone Age used to cover the bones of their dead with red ochre, presumably in order to give them a new life. Our great-grandparents put their faith in red flannel underwear to protect them from colds and chills; and the fact that the flannel had to be red was, whether they realized it or

not, a remnant of a lingering belief in red as a magical colour.

Too much red in one's surroundings, however, can be over-stimulating to the nerves and make one irritable. Soft, rosy reds are more gentle in their effect, more subtly warming, than the bright scarlets and vermilions.

While red is the colour that stimulates the physical body, orange stimulates the more subtle forces. It is the colour of the sun, the source of vitality, as well as of light and heat. Upon the glorious golden sun, the life of our solar system of planets depends.

We see before us the countryside on a grey day. The landscape looks dull and lifeless. Then the sun comes out and immediately there is a wonderful transformation. All at once, the colours seem brighter. The air has a new freshness. The water sparkles with diamond drops. No wonder the ancient pagans worshipped the sun as the symbol of the divine source of life.

Thy dawning is beautiful in the horizon of heaven,  
O living Aton, beginning of life!  
When thou risest in the eastern horizon of heaven,  
Thou fillest every land with thy beauty;  
For thou art beautiful, great, glittering, high over the earth;  
Thy rays, they encompass the lands, even all thou hast made.  
Thou art Ra, and thou hast carried them all away captive;  
Thou bindest them by thy love.  
Though thou art afar, thy rays are on the earth;  
Though thou art on high, thy footprints are the day.

So sang Akhenaton (Amenhotep IV), who was Pharaoh of Egypt over three thousand years ago. Still today, the orange ray will help to restore vitality and will-power to those who feel weak and depleted. Wear the colour when you can in your clothing and use it in the furnishing of your surroundings. If it seems too strong a colour, however, to be used like this — though thank goodness even men today are beginning to overcome the convention of drabness — then get a piece of orange-coloured material, preferably silk, and wear it around the middle of your body, next to the skin. This method can be used for any colour whose vibration you wish to attune yourself to.

The colour yellow is a sunshine colour also, and

particularly stimulates the mind. The Buddhist monks of the East, some of the most deeply contemplative of men, wear yellow robes. Those sensitive enough to be able to see the colours of the human aura, have often testified to the nimbus of golden light which surrounds the head of a person whose mind is highly evolved. This is the origin of the halo, which has become the artistic convention for depicting saints or spiritual beings.

Green is the predominant colour of nature and its influence is restful and calming. For this reason, hospitals have adopted it in recent years for the garb of surgeons and the staff of operating theatres. Yet some people fear green as an 'unlucky' colour. This feeling is a lingering relic of the belief that green is the colour of the fairies. In Sir Walter Scott's poem, "The Lady of the Lake", he refers to "The fairies' fatal green" and he explains this in a note to the poem, as follows: "As the Daoine Shi or Men of Peace — i.e., fairies — wore green habits they were supposed to take offence when any mortals ventured to assume their favourite colour."

However, people who love nature and are sensitive to the unseen often show a liking for green in their clothes and surroundings; and for them, green is not unlucky, because they have a natural affinity for it. To the occult philosophers of old, green had a spiritual meaning. It signified the secret immanence of the divine spirit in the life of all things. They had a mystical saying in Latin, *Linea viridis gyrat universa*, which is explained by a passage in the writings of Thomas Vaughan (1621-1666):

"It compasseth the heavens and in them the earth, like a green rainbow or one vast sphere of viridity, and from this viridity the divine influences are showered down like rain, through the ether, into the globes of the fixed stars."

Vaughan's book, *Lumen de Lumine*, is an account of a mystical dream, in which he journeys to a waste and desolate land. This strange country of the mind is brought to life when the goddess of nature appears, "attired in thin loose silk but so green that I never saw the like, for the colour was not earthly."

There are many people today who need this redemption of nature. Modern so-called 'civilization' has forced them to lead frustrated, unnatural lives, cut off from the true sources of vitality and happiness, which are to be found in nature. The

real joy of living is not to be bought with money, or found in so-called 'getting on in the world' or 'being a success', as many who have spent their lives in pursuit of these things have learned to their cost.

To see the sunlight through the green leaves of a forest in summer, or to walk upon the turf of green hills, to rest the mind from thinking intellectually and just feel intuitively, this is medicine for body and soul. There is plenty of green available for us in nature; the vibration of the green ray is there in every leaf, in every blade of grass, if we will but attune ourselves to it.

Nature has given generously, also, of the spiritual and healing colour, blue, in the great expanse of the sky. Wilhelm Reich, the famous psychologist, believed that all nature is permeated with a subtle energy which he called 'orgone', because it is the energy which is present in the sexual climax, or orgasm — the basic energy of life itself. The prevailing colour of this energy, according to Reich, is blue-violet and it is this energy, permeating the atmosphere, which gives its glorious colour to the sky.

Whether or not we accept Reich's ideas, it is a fact that spiritual healers make much use of blue and healing sanctuaries are often hung with drapes of this colour. In the East, clear bright blue is believed to be a protection against black magic and the evil eye; and necklaces containing bright blue beads are often worn for this purpose.

Blue is the colour of the symbolic garter bestowed by the Order of the Garter, Britain's senior order of chivalry; it is also used in the Masonic tradition, where it signifies fidelity, friendship and universal sympathy. The three degrees of Craft Masonry are sometimes called 'Blue Masonry', because of the prevalence of the colour blue in their regalia. Blue is both literally and symbolically a heavenly colour.

One way in which the benefits of the blue ray can be attuned to is by using light which has filtered through blue glass. Glass has always taken the colour blue with particular richness and deepness. Antique Bristol glass has long been famous for its wonderful blue colour; but much less expensive glass than this can be bought which comes in beautiful shades of blue. If, then, one can obtain a stoppered bottle or decanter of richly-coloured blue glass, it can be used to get the benefit

of this healing colour. Fill the bottle with water and stand it in a sunlit place for a couple of days. To drink this water will be beneficial to health and psychic sensitivity.

Alternatively, get a piece of deep blue glass and frame it so that the sharp edges are covered. Hold this glass so that the sun shines through it and the coloured ray is directed upon any part of the body affected by illness, preferably upon the bare skin. Do this for as long as you conveniently can, up to about half-an-hour at a time. Many beneficial results have been claimed from this practice. Electric light is sometimes used to shine through the glass; but warm natural sunlight is best, if available.

Indigo and violet are closely akin to blue; the latter colour in fact shades into them. The glorious amethyst violet is a colour connected with mysticism and deeply religious feeling; yet it is also a sensual colour, emphasizing the deep psychological connection between the instincts of religion and those of sex. Aleister Crowley said of it that it is "a vibration which is at the same time spiritual and erotic". It is a colour of richness, royalty and opulence.

Indigo is the colour of the midnight deeps of space; making one think of the beyond, of infinity. It is the colour of things tremendous and remote and hence up to now has been little used on its own for magical purposes.

The attribution of the seven rainbow or prismatic colours to the seven visible heavenly bodies of our solar system, according to astrology, is as follows (this is the attribution of western magic, as given by the famous Order of the Golden Dawn):

- Red: Mars.
- Orange: Sun.
- Yellow: Mercury.
- Green: Venus.
- Blue: Moon.
- Indigo: Saturn.
- Violet: Jupiter.

According to the teachings of the same occult fraternity, the rainbow colours were shaded through the signs of the Zodiac as follows:



The Bewitchments of Love and Hate

Aries: Scarlet.  
Taurus: Red-orange.  
Gemini: Orange.  
Cancer: Amber.  
Leo: Yellow, greenish.  
Virgo: Green, yellowish.  
Libra: Emerald green.  
Scorpio: Green-blue.  
Sagittarius: Blue.  
Capricorn: Indigo.  
Aquarius: Violet.  
Pisces: Crimson.

These attributions can act as a guide for those who wish to cultivate the powers of their particular sign or planet. It should be remembered that colours can always be modified and harmonized by the skilful juxtaposition of other shades; or enlivened by a touch of contrasting colour. Only experience can teach one to do this and achieve a pleasing effect; but experimenting with colours is a fascinating and truly magical thing, because colour knowledge played an important part in ancient magic.

As you become more sensitive to colour, you will be able to use it in specifically magical ways. One of these is the visualizing of colours in the aura, for purposes of strengthening and protection.

The aura has been called "the human atmosphere". It is a field of force surrounding the human body, in which clairvoyant sensitives can see many different colours, according to the mental and emotional state of the person. The more clear and beautiful the colours of the aura, the more spiritually evolved the person is. The general shape of the aura is like that of an egg, as it radiates from the human body in all directions, extending outwards for a distance of some two or three feet, though in exceptional cases it may be more.

People are seldom able to see the aura today, largely because they have been conditioned not to believe in such things and taught that it is 'all imagination'; or worse still, frightened by tales that 'all that sort of thing is of the devil' — and fear acts as a barrier to the free use of our natural

innate powers. However, if one can view the naked human body in a dim light, against a dark background, with practice and perseverance one can learn to see the aura.

We are often conscious of the influence of other people's auras, whether we can see them or not. They account for our instinctive likes and dislikes when meeting others, according to whether their aura harmonizes with our own or otherwise.

By visualizing a colour and picturing it mentally as surrounding us and filling our aura with its particular radiance and beauty, we can attune ourselves to the beneficial effects of that colour. Certain colours especially, are valuable for protecting us against various undesirable vibrations.

The clear, rosy reds will give us an influence of strength and confidence, when in the presence of lowering conditions, such as the danger of infection from illness, or the depleting effect that sick people sometimes have on others. Think of the glorious hues of red roses, and let their colour fill your aura, if you have to go somewhere on a miserable wintry day, for instance, where people are coughing and sneezing and everything looks depressing. The red ray will help to warm and protect you. I remember once using this method to make more bearable a wretched winter train journey in an unheated carriage and I suffered no cold or chill from the trip.

If you want protection for the mind, however, choose golden yellow. Charge your aura with this colour when you have to enter the presence of people who will try to overcome you in argument. Do this, and keep a positive mental attitude and their plausible tongues will be less able to talk you into something you may later regret. Golden yellow is the colour of highly developed intellect, and it will brighten your reasoning powers, especially if you picture it as a shining nimbus around your neck, repelling insidious arguments and suggestions.

Sometimes even more insidious, however, is the danger which attacks us through our emotions. The auric colour which will cool our emotional reactions and transmute them to a higher vibration, is the clear, bright, spiritual blue. When we are in danger of losing control of ourselves, we are said to see red'. These old sayings often have a good deal of instinctive truth — though of course it is the impure shades of auric colour that are referred to when we speak of going green

with envy, being yellow in the sense of cowardice, or depressed because we have got the blues. Dark, muddy blues really are the colours of depression, as sickly greens and yellows are of envy and cowardice, and harsh, glaring scarlet that of rage. The purer and more beautiful a colour is, the better is its influence; and the pure and beautiful blue will help us to rise above the lower types of emotion, if we will remember it and visualize it when we are tempted to give way to them. There is a great deal of nonsense talked about black magic; but nevertheless, black magic does exist. It is probably unlikely that you will ever be brought into contact with real disembodied evil, as most so-called black magicians have no power except to instil fear by the use of threats, working on their victim's imagination. However, it is possible that at some time you may encounter a genuine evil influence; and you can protect yourself against it by concentrating upon the clear and shining white light, the divine white brilliance, which is the symbol of the highest spiritual power we mortals can visualize.

Picture this light as surrounding you with a shining aura of protection, which overcomes everything lower than itself. See it as the most brilliant and pure whiteness of the spirit, in which you take refuge. An aura which is strengthened in this way will repel evil and cause it to rebound upon the sender, if the influence has been deliberately launched against you. Once you have aspired towards the higher plane and made contact with its vibrations, the presence of the white light in your aura will cast out fear.

## VI

# Magic of Talismans and Amulets

---

---

The wearing of talismans and amulets was practised by all the great civilizations of the past and especially that of ancient Egypt, from which so many of the basic ideas of magic derive. Nor has their popularity waned today. A host of so-called 'lucky charms' may be seen advertised for sale, while jewellers display in their windows attractive pendants and rings of a more or less magical nature. These often feature 'birth-stones' according to the sign of the Zodiac one was born under.

Is there really any truth in the beliefs behind these legendary luck-bringers? Can a person really attract good luck, or avert misfortune, by wearing such things? Centuries of magical faith and experience, at any rate, support such beliefs. The form of many traditional amulets, such as the ankh cross and the swastika, goes back to a vast antiquity; and so does the belief in the occult virtues of precious stones.

There is an essential difference between a talisman and an amulet, although the two words are often regarded as meaning more or less the same thing. A talisman is believed to have some occult potency for attracting some benefit to its possessor; while an amulet wards off danger and misfortune.

Magicians throughout the ages have made and consecrated talismans for some particular purpose and old books of magic are full of designs and instructions for making talismans. Sometimes a powerful talisman was believed to be capable of both attracting good luck and repelling evil; but an amulet has always been an occult protection, especially against the dreaded power of the evil eye.

Precious stones have been used both as amulets and talismans. Apart from their natural beauty, rarity and value, they were believed by the magicians and occultists of bygone

days to possess intrinsic virtues, which they could bestow upon those who wore them. This belief is implicit in the custom of each monarchy possessing its crown jewels or royal regalia and in the rings worn by bishops and other church dignitaries.

It appears also in the stories of many historic family heirlooms, especially among the old families of the more Celtic parts of the British Isles, namely Scotland, Wales and Ireland. Probably the most famous of such heirlooms is the Lee Penny, the heirloom of an ancient Scottish family, the Lockharts of Lee. This consists of a red stone mounted in the centre of a silver coin. It has long been believed to possess wonderful healing powers for the curing of diseased cattle; the method of its use being to immerse the talisman in water, and then give the water to the cattle to drink. Originally it was probably used for treating humans also.

The story attached to it says that it was brought home by one of the ancestors of the Lockharts of Lee who went to the Crusades and who received the stone as a ransom for a captured Saracen of high rank. However, the silver coin in which the red stone is mounted is an English groat of the reign of Edward IV; so its real origin is a mystery.

Among the English Crown Jewels is a wonderful stone of talismanic virtues, the Black Prince's ruby. It may be seen today mounted in the Imperial State Crown, among all the other splendours enshrined in the Jewel House at the Tower of London. The Black Prince was given the stone by his ally, Pedro the Cruel, who was said to have stolen it from the King of Granada, whom he murdered. In the following century, King Henry V took the stone and had it mounted in a coronet, which he wore upon his helmet at the Battle of Agincourt.

The story goes that this coronet saved his life, because in the course of the battle a blow aimed at the king's head was diverted by the coronet. Part of the coronet was broken off by the stroke; the very piece which contained the ruby. The story may be true or merely a romantic legend; but still today a mark may be seen upon the stone which might have been caused by the stroke of a sword.

The king was no doubt aware of the jewel's talismanic virtues and chose it for this reason. The ruby is a stone of

Mars, the planet which rules warfare and gives protection and victory in battle.

The astrological rulership of precious stones is an important factor in determining their virtues. Hence the idea of wearing one's birth-stone, in order to attract the best characteristics of the sign of the Zodiac under which one was born. Every sign of the Zodiac has its good and bad side, its strengths and its weaknesses. No sign is lucky or unlucky in itself.

However, the lists of birth-stones displayed in jewellers' windows are somewhat misleading, as they refer only to the month in which one was born, without mentioning the sign of the Zodiac. The changeover from one sign to another takes place around the 20th to the 22nd of each month. It varies a little each year, so that the precise time of the changeover can only be told by consulting an astrological ephemeris. (This is the name given to the yearly publications which supply detailed information of planetary movements, etc., for the use of astrologers).

Hence, a person born in March, for instance, may be under either Pisces or Aries, depending on which part of the month he or she was born in.

The list of birth-stones most generally agreed upon by jewellers is as follows:

- January: Garnet.
- February: Amethyst.
- March: Bloodstone or Aquamarine.
- April: Diamond.
- May: Emerald.
- June: Pearl or Moonstone.
- July: Ruby.
- August: Sardonyx or Peridot.
- September: Sapphire.
- October: Opal or Tourmaline.
- November: Topaz.
- December: Turquoise or Lapis Lazuli.

Few people realize the high antiquity from which such lists are derived. Their origin is to be found in the famous breast-plate of precious stones worn by the High Priest of Israel, as described in the Bible (*Exodus*, Chapter 28). This consisted of

four rows of jewels, three to each row. Josephus, the great Jewish historian, who wrote his *Antiquities of the Jews* in the first century AD, tells us that the stones of the breastplate signified the twelve months of the year and the twelve signs of the Zodiac; while the two great sardonyx stones that were in the clasps on the High Priest's shoulders, symbolized the sun and the moon.

The Authorised Version of the Bible gives the stones of the breastplate as: a sardius, a topaz, and a carbuncle; an emerald, a sapphire, and a diamond; a ligure, an agate, and an amethyst; and a beryl, an onyx, and a jasper. Modern scholars, however, doubt the accuracy of this translation. They generally translate the list of stones as consisting of: carnelian, chrysolite and emerald; garnet, lapis lazuli and jasper (or possibly some form of corundum); jacinth, agate and amethyst; beryl, onyx and jade.

The custom of wearing birth-stones in modern times is thought to have originated in Poland, probably among the Jewish community there who traded in precious stones, and who were deeply interested in the mysticism of the sacred stones of the breastplate. It may have been spread throughout Europe by the fact that the Queen of France, wife of Louis XV, was the Polish Marie Leczinska; and the French court was the great centre of fashion and high society. So what the Queen of France wore and believed in was sure to be copied.

Here is an old Polish list of the birth-stones of the months, together with the particular virtue or blessing that each jewel was believed to bestow:

- January: Garnet. Constancy.
- February: Amethyst. Sincerity.
- March: Bloodstone. Courage.
- April: Diamond. Innocence.
- May: Emerald. Success in love.
- June: Agate. Health and long life.
- July: Cornelian. Contentment.
- August: Sardonyx. Happiness in marriage.
- September: Chrysolite. Antidote to troubles of the mind.
- October: Opal. Hope.
- November: Topaz. Faithfulness.

December: Turquoise Prosperity.

If we regard the bloodstone of March as being the obvious attribute of Aries (*circa* March 21st to April 21st), then we can interpret the rest of the stones accordingly, having found the starting-point of the Zodiac. Taurus takes the diamond, Gemini the emerald, Cancer the agate, Leo the cornelian, Virgo the sardonyx, Libra the chrysolite, Scorpio the opal, Sagittarius the topaz, Capricorn the turquoise, Aquarius the garnet and Pisces the amethyst.

The reason for associating the bloodstone with Aries is that it was a favourite talisman of soldiers and thus associated with Mars, the ruler of Aries. In addition to bestowing bravery upon its possessor, it was believed to have the power to staunch bleeding, when applied to wounds. The bloodstone is a smooth, opaque, greenish stone with little red specks in it, like spots of blood. Soldiers carried large bloodstones with them, which were smooth and rounded, of a suitable shape for binding on wounds. Their virtues were firmly believed in, and no doubt the coldness of the stone and the tight bandaging did help to stop bleeding, if the wound was not too severe.

Another stone particularly appropriate to Aries is the ruby, glowing red with the fire of Mars. Taurus (*circa* April 21st to May 21st) could compromise with the glittering or shining crystal, if diamonds are too costly; because crystal is ruled by the Moon, which is exalted in Taurus.

The emerald for Gemini is one of the most beautiful stones; but also, unfortunately, one of the most expensive. However, agates come in such great variety that they are often associated with versatile Mercury, the ruler of Gemini (*circa* May 21st to June 21st). I would definitely prefer the pearl or the moonstone to the agate as the mascot of Cancer (*circa* June 21st to July 21st), because this sign is ruled by the Moon. A strange thing about some agates is the way in which they display amazingly natural pictures in the stone, when it is cut and polished. I myself have seen a large nodule of agate which contained a startling likeness of a human eye — a natural amulet if ever there was one. This faculty of depicting things is an attribute of Mercury.

Warm, red cornelian certainly suits Leo (*circa* July 21st to



August 21st); but so, I think, does amber, with its beautiful shades of red and gold. Leo is ruled by the Sun. The sardonyx for Virgo (*circa* August 21st to September 21st) is another stone which comes in variegated form, associating it with Mercury, the ruler of Virgo. It displays bands of white and red, which were often cleverly carved into cameos in times past; the white part being used for the figures while the red formed the background.

The chrysolite for Libra (*circa* September 21st to October 21st) literally means 'the golden stone'; but its colour actually varies from golden-yellow to olive-green. Perhaps the most beautiful variety of it is the light green stone called the peridot. The belief in its virtues as an antidote to troubles of the mind goes back to Roman times. The Romans wore peridots set in gold to protect them against melancholy and against illusions and fears, especially those caused by enchantment.

The opal is often regarded as being a rather sinister stone and it is certainly a very costly one. Hence people born under Scorpio (*circa* October 21st to November 21st) might care to take the alternative of aquamarine. The name of this stone means 'sea water', and Scorpio is the fixed sign of water. Another alternative is serpentine, literally 'snakelike stone', from its fancied resemblance to the markings of a snake; the serpent being one of the symbols of Scorpio.

The lovely topaz for Sagittarius, with all its warm shades of brownish-gold, could hardly fail to please. Nor is it excessively rare and costly. There is a variety of it found in Scotland and known as the cairngorm. However, if Jupiter ruling the natives of Sagittarius (*circa* November 21st to December 21st) makes them desire a richer talisman, then the heavenly blue of the sapphire certainly seems appropriate; because in mythology the god Jupiter or Zeus was ruler of the skies.

The turquoise for Capricorn (*circa* December 21st to January 21st) is a stone almost universally esteemed as an amulet. It is particularly valued by the Tibetans, who use it a great deal in jewellery. The Red Indians of North America know it also, and regard it as being a stone of magical virtues. It is one of those jewels of which legend says that it becomes pale when its owner is in danger, thus serving as a warning that some peril is at hand.

Other Capricornian stones are jet and black onyx. Real jet has similar electrical properties to amber; hence its old name of 'black amber'. It is one of the oldest of magical stones; necklaces of polished jet have been found in prehistoric graves. However, the buyer should beware, because much that is sold as jet is really only black glass. One of the homes of real jet is Whitby, in Yorkshire, where attractive jewellery of jet is still obtainable.

As for the mysterious black onyx, this is a stone which seems to have stolen something of midnight itself and enclosed it in its shining surface. In ancient days, a concave piece of highly polished black onyx was used as a magic mirror, more potent even than a crystal ball to induce clairvoyance. The famous 'show-stone' of the Elizabethan magician, Dr Dee, was a mirror of this type; though accounts differ as to just what mineral it was made of. Sometimes the black onyx displays bands of white and it can then be skilfully cut and polished to resemble an eye — another potent amulet against the peril of the evil eye, which was so much dreaded by people of olden times.

The stone given for Aquarius (*circa* January 21st to February 21st), the garnet, is both beautiful and reasonably within the means of most people. However, it is rather hard to see its relevance to the airy sign of Aquarius, ruled by Saturn and Uranus; though the garnet's fiery red glow, like a burning ember, is welcome in the coldest days of winter, which occur in the time of year that Aquarius rules. My own feeling is that the garnet is more suitable for Capricorn, the sign in which fiery Mars is exalted.

Other possible Aquarian stones are the whitish-blue chalcedony, with its resemblance to a lightly-clouded blue sky, and the blue zircon, which shows the bright electric blue of Uranus. However, perhaps the most 'heavenly' stone of all appropriate to Aquarius, the fixed sign of air, is the star sapphire, which displays in its polished blue depths the perfect image of a star, surrounded by shining rays of light, which cross inside the stone to produce the 'star'. These are believed in the East to represent the powers of Faith, Hope and Destiny. Hence the star sapphire is one of the most wonderful and potent of talismanic stones, attracting good fortune and warding off evil.

The amethyst for Pisces (*circa* February 21st to March 21st) is one of the stones ruled by Jupiter, the planet that rules Pisces, and hence it is fully appropriate, its rich purple and violet hues according well with the rather mystical tendencies of the sign of Pisces. It is a favourite stone for the rings worn by bishops and other highly-placed ecclesiastics. It has a calming and soothing influence and a time-honoured legend says of it that it preserves its wearer from drunkenness and excessive passions.

Another precious substance appropriate to Pisces is coral; because the co-ruler of Pisces is Neptune, and it is a watery sign. Iridescent shell, of which modern jewellery is sometimes made, would be harmonious with Pisces also.

Some other beautiful and reasonably priced gem-stones are the apple-green chrysoprase, the rose quartz, and the tawny golden-striped crocidolite. The delicate green of chrysoprase is the green of growing things, of new life. I feel that it would be appropriate to Virgo, with its suggestion of youth and virginity. Rose quartz is suggestive of Venus; it is the colour of sentiment and romance, and hence would be appropriate to Libra, the sign ruled by Venus. (Taurus is also ruled by Venus; but rose quartz seems to me more in harmony with airy Libra than earthy Taurus). The golden gleams of crocidolite make it a natural choice for natives of the Sun's own sign, Leo.

The lore of precious stones is an inexhaustible subject; but I hope that enough has been said here to enable readers to make a choice of a talismanic gem-stone which will be both suitable to the time of their nativity, and within their price-range. Those who wish to study further will find much helpful and fascinating information in the following books:

*The Curious Lore of Precious Stones*, by George Frederick Kunz (first published 1913, reprinted by Dover Publications, Inc., New York, 1971).

*Amulets and Talismans*, by Sir E. A. Wallis Budge (first published 1930, reprinted by Collier Books, New York, 1970).

*The Book of Talismans, Amulets and Zodiacal Gems*, by William Thomas and Kate Pavitt (Riders, London, 1922 and recently reprinted).

Apart from precious stones and their virtues, there are other

time-honoured amulets and talismans, consisting of things in some form or design which is believed to be magical. For instance, we see jewellery produced in the shape of the ankh cross, the swastika, the scarab, the Hand of Fatima, the horse-shoe, the four-leaved clover, the two interlaced triangles which form the Star of David and so on. All these are loosely described as 'lucky charms'; but what is their real meaning?

Some of them, like the ankh cross and the scarab, go back to ancient Egypt. Others, like the swastika, may be even older. It is a great pity that the swastika has become unpopular, as a result of its adoption by the followers of Adolf Hitler; because it is one of the most venerable and world-wide symbols. Its distribution on both sides of the Atlantic has caused some occultists to believe that it originated in the lost continent of Atlantis.

The swastika is known to the American Indians, who regard it as a sacred and magical sign. It also appears among the remains of prehistoric Mexico, notably upon many of the famous stone tablets discovered by William Niven and described by Colonel James Churchward in his books about that other sunken continent, Mu or Lemuria. Indeed, to record all the various manifestations of this mysterious symbol would need a chapter to itself. It can be found upon the thrones of Tibetan lamas of high rank and upon very old church bells in English belfries. The people of ancient China revered it, and so did the people of Troy. Its name, *swastika*, comes from Sanskrit, the sacred language of India, and means happiness, well-being, good luck.

Some particularly interesting forms of the swastika are those which appear upon the mysterious stone monuments of prehistoric Scotland. These are generally attributed to the Picts. A notable example is the Newton Stone, found in Aberdeenshire, which displays a swastika surrounded by an inscription in an unknown alphabet.

One of the most famous talismans of the ancient East was the signet ring of Jenghis Khan, a large gold ring set with a magnificent ruby, upon which was engraved the sign of the swastika. It was preserved with the greatest care and secrecy among the Buddhist lamas of Mongolia, as its possession was believed to confer great power and protection.

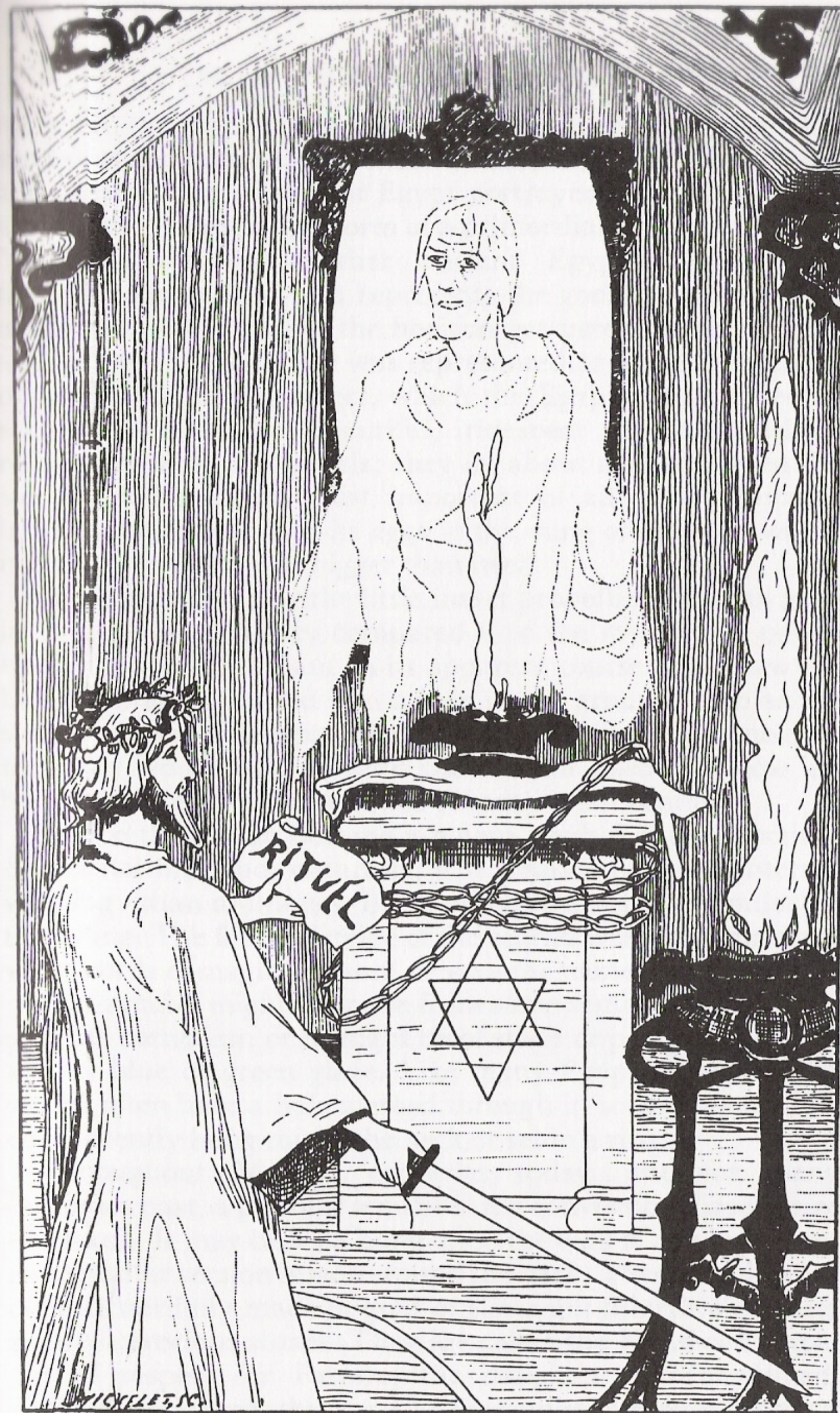
That great nineteenth-century occultist, Madame Blavatsky, explains the swastika as being basically an equal-armed cross, a symbol far older than Christianity. The upright line represents the masculine influence, the horizontal line the feminine one. From the union of two opposites, masculine and feminine, positive and negative, comes all manifestation. Then lines are added to the cross, signifying motion, the Wheel of Life, or cyclic law. Thus the swastika appears, with its four arms symbolizing birth, life, death, and immortality. There are also the four winds, the four seasons and the four elements; and all these are summed up in the swastika.

Much argument has taken place over the question of which way the arms of the swastika should point, to the right or to the left. Some say the former is most beneficent and fortunate and some say the latter. Both forms are found in ancient art, and apparently regarded as being equally sacred. Hitler favoured the swastika with arms pointing to the right; but the swastika adopted by Madame Blavatsky as part of the emblem of the Theosophical Society points in the other direction.

The ankh cross is the ancient Egyptian symbol of life and immortality. The gods and goddesses of Egypt are generally depicted holding this emblem in their hands, grasping it by the loop as if it were a key; hence it is sometimes called 'The Key of Life'. It occurs in hieroglyphic inscriptions as the symbol meaning 'life'; for instance, in the royal cartouche of the Pharaoh Tutankh-amun, whose name has been translated by Egyptologists as meaning 'The Living Image of Amen'.

Like the swastika, the ankh cross dates back to unknown antiquity. Some authorities have believed it to be a conventionalized figure of a sandal-strap, symbolizing the power to go, to travel onwards; and conveying the idea of the human soul as the pilgrim of eternity. However, it seems perhaps more likely that the ankh cross represents the union of male and female, the creative powers of life. The looped part of the ankh, by its oval shape, signifies the opening of the vagina; while the T-shaped part is a simplified figure of the penis and testicles.

There are many ancient amulets which were quite openly



The Magician evoking a spirit. Note seal of Solomon design on front of altar

made in the shape of the human genital organs. They were life symbols and hence luck symbols. However, the highly evolved and delicate art of ancient Egypt portrayed the ankh cross as an artistic, hieroglyphic form of a primordial idea.

The scarab is another ancient Egyptian amulet of tremendous antiquity. It represents the god Kephra, the sun at night, hidden below the horizon yet potent to come forth and bring the dawn. He was represented as a beetle, because of the habits of this insect, which the Egyptians regarded as sacred. Beetles have beautiful, iridescent wing-cases which reflect the light like jewels; they fly about at dusk, when the sun is sinking, and most important of all, this particular beetle, the scarab, lays its eggs in the dung of animals, which it then rolls into a ball bigger than itself.

The Egyptians saw the little insect propelling this ball with its hind legs; and they compared it to the mysterious power which propelled the sun on its apparent course. They saw the ball eventually pushed into a hole in the ground, even as the sun disappeared beneath the western horizon. Then, one day, the eggs would hatch within their warm cover and new life burst forth; even as the sun was reborn each morning.

Hence the scarab became a potent symbol of resurrection, of eternal life; and, naturally, it is frequently found interred with Egyptian mummies. But it was also a popular amulet for the living. The flat underside of the scarab was often engraved with words of magical power, or with the name of a Pharaoh.

The amulet might be made from some semi-precious stone, such as cornelian; or it might be of stone or pottery, coloured with a blue or green glaze. Like many Egyptian amulets, it would often have a hole pierced through it, so that it could be conveniently hung round the neck or set in a ring.

Throughout Moslem countries today, and for many centuries past, a popular amulet is the conventionalized figure of a hand. It may be seen hung upon the wall of a living-room; or a smaller version is worn round the neck. These amulets are often beautifully made of gold or silver-gilt filigree work, and set with precious stones. They are called the Hand of Fatima, out of respect for Fatima, the daughter of Mohammed. Actually, however, the hand as an amulet is even older than the days when Mohammed was founding the religion of Islam.

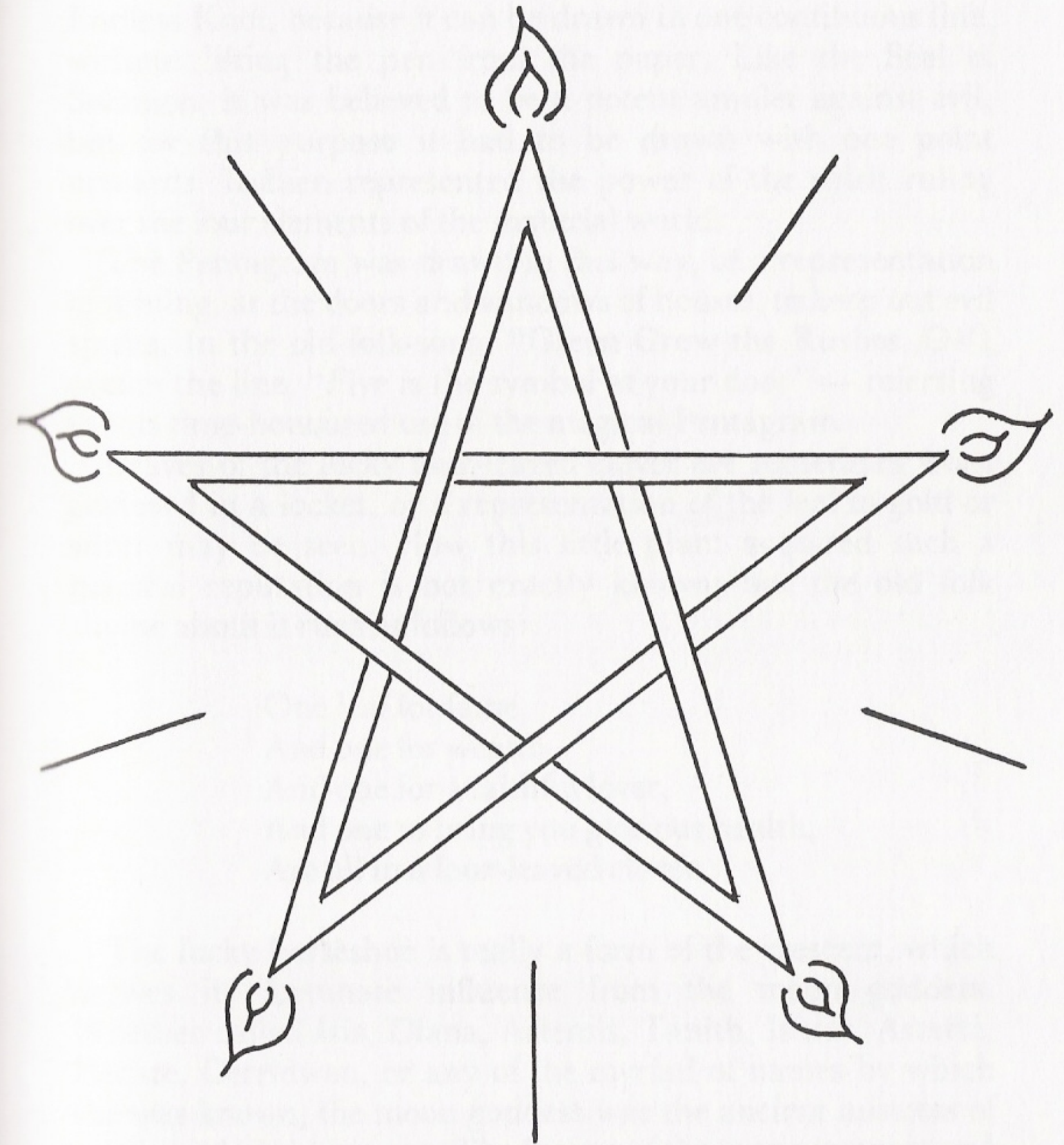
It derives from the natural gesture of raising the hand to ward off evil, especially the peril of the evil eye. Such protective hands are often set with bright blue turquoises, for this reason. The colour blue, the clear hue of heaven, is believed throughout the East to have the power of averting evil occult influence, as already noted in Chapter V.

A familiar talismanic figure is the two interlaced triangles which form the Star of David, the symbol of the Jewish religion. This six-pointed star, formed by the two triangles, is also called the Seal of Solomon. The Biblical King Solomon was believed in the ancient world to have been a great magician, able to command powerful genii and even demons and force them to do his bidding. Two of the most famous grimoires, or books of ceremonial magic, are called *The Key of Solomon the King*, and *The Goetia, or Lesser Key of Solomon*. Whether in fact either book really had anything to do with King Solomon is highly problematical. However, the basic form of the six-pointed star occurs over and over again in ancient books of magic; and always as a powerful amulet to protect the magician against evil forces.

It is probably even older than the time of King Solomon, because it is also found in the age-old magical lore of India. The Indian form of it shows the symbol of the sun in the centre of the interlaced triangles. The modern Jewish version sometimes displays in the centre the Hebrew letters of the word *Mazeltov*, meaning 'good luck'.

The upward-pointing triangle is the elemental symbol of fire, the downward-pointing one that of water. Fire is regarded as a masculine element and water as a feminine one. So we have again the idea of the union of masculine and feminine, displayed this time in the form of interlaced triangles. Also, when the symbol of the sun is drawn in the centre of the figure, we have the implied presence of the six other visible heavenly bodies of greatest significance, distributed around the points of the star; namely, Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Venus, Mercury and the Moon. These together with the Sun make up the sacred seven whose influence is so important in all ancient magic.

Another important magical sigil is the five-pointed star, called the Pentagram or Pentacle. This, too, may be found as



The Upright Pentagram, the Blazing Star of White Magic,  
drawn in the form of the Endless Knot

a piece of magical jewellery; though perhaps not so frequently as the Seal of Solomon. In mediaeval times, it acquired the curious name of the Goblins' Cross; and it was also called the Endless Knot, because it can be drawn in one continuous line, without lifting the pen from the paper. Like the Seal of Solomon, it was believed to be a potent amulet against evil; but for this purpose it had to be drawn with one point upwards. It then represented the power of the spirit ruling over the four elements of the material world.

The Pentagram was drawn in this way, or a representation of it hung, at the doors and windows of houses, to keep out evil spirits. In the old folk-song, "Green Grow the Rushes, O!", occurs the line, "Five is the symbol at your door" — referring to this time-honoured use of the magical Pentagram.

Leaves of the lucky four-leaved clover are sometimes worn enclosed in a locket, or a representation of the leaf in gold or silver may be seen. How this little plant acquired such a magical reputation is not exactly known; but the old folk rhyme about it runs as follows:

One leaf for fame,  
And one for wealth,  
And one for a faithful lover,  
And one to bring you glorious health,  
Are all in a four-leaved clover.

The lucky horseshoe is really a form of the crescent, which derives its fortunate influence from the moon goddess. Whether called Isis, Diana, Artemis, Tanith, Ishtar, Astarte, Hecate, Cerridwen, or any of the myriad of names by which she was known, the moon goddess was the ancient mistress of magic and enchantment. The figures of the lunar crescent and the horse appear together on ancient British coins, notably those minted by the Iceni, the people of Queen Boadicea.

The horseshoe also carries with it the magic of the smith and his craft. All good blacksmiths were supposed to be natural magicians. Our Anglo-Saxon ancestors delighted in the tales of Wayland the Smith and his magical powers. In later years, with the spread of Christianity, legends were told of doughty St Dunstan, who worked as a blacksmith and had

frequent magical contests with the Devil. Cold iron, especially in the form of a horseshoe, was a protection against the mischief of the fairies and all sorts of uncanny beings.

The luckiest horseshoe is that which you find yourself, by accident, cast upon the road. You should nail it up over your door, for luck; but be sure to have the ends of the horseshoe pointing upwards, or the luck will run out. Only the blacksmith himself is privileged to hang a lucky horseshoe with the ends down, to pour out the luck upon the forge.

A potent natural amulet and talisman for good fortune, is a piece of lodestone. This is iron ore containing natural magnetic properties, hence it is sometimes called magnetite. Though not as strong as a manufactured magnet, it will nevertheless pick up steel pins and needles. In appearance, it is a mere rough, blueish-grey stone with metallic veins in it; yet an old rhyme pays tribute to its magical virtues:

The lodestone is the stone, the only stone alone,  
Deserving praise above the rest, whose virtues are unknown.  
The diamond bright, the sapphire brave, are stones that bear the  
name;  
But flatter not, and tell the truth, lodestone deserves the same.

To carry a lodestone was believed to bestow health, vigour and sexual attractiveness. It strengthened magical powers and dispelled evil spirits. Wealthy magicians wore their lodestone in a little cage of gold or silver filigree, hung from a chain around the neck. The less wealthy carried it in a small bag of soft leather, together with some magical herbs. This might be hung from a string round the neck, or worn somehow close to the skin. Sometimes the bag contained a pair of small, twin lodestones, cleaving together by their own magnetic power. This was considered to be a very potent charm to attract love.

One often sees rings, bracelets and necklaces fashioned in the form of a snake, or of two serpents intertwined. This is another form of jewellery that was originally magical, though today often worn merely for ornament. The sacred serpent appears upon the crowns of Egyptian Pharaohs and in the temple carvings of ancient India. Hermes, the herald of the gods of Greece and patron of magic, is portrayed carrying the caduceus, a wand with two serpents twined about it.

In the latter case, the twin serpents represent the two interacting forces, positive and negative, which manifest throughout nature — a basic idea which we have seen frequently repeated in different forms.

The snake is also a symbol of spiritual power. To the people of olden time, it seemed a mysterious creature, because of the way in which it glided without legs. Anyone who watches a serpent travelling over the ground with amazing speed, must feel something of this strangeness. Moreover, the serpent renews itself by shedding its complete skin and this habit has caused it to become the emblem of rebirth and immortality.

It is widely believed that snakes can hypnotize birds and small animals, so that they become entranced and allow the snake to swallow them. Thus the snake has come to represent mysterious occult power and as such, it is frequently depicted upon the paraphernalia of magic. Sometimes the serpent is shown holding its tail in its mouth. The Greeks called this figure of the encircled serpent the *Ouroboros* and regarded it as a symbol of infinity and eternity.

## VII

# Magic of Sex

---

---

For nearly two thousand years, in the western world at any rate, the idea of sex has been almost synonymous with that of sin. This unhappy aberration in man's philosophy, productive of so much misery and frustration, has been in complete contrast with earlier ways of thinking among the pagans of the ancient world and with a good deal of eastern mystical philosophy also.

Upon some of the ancient temples of India, magnificent sculptures portray gods and goddesses in every conceivable variety of sexual embrace. In old-time Tibet also, the deities were depicted in this manner. The sacred *Yab-Yum*, or 'Father-Mother' pictures, showed male divinities united in sexual climax with their female counterparts.

The basis for this conjunction of sex and spirituality is the world-wide observation of the interplay of opposites throughout manifested nature. The followers of so chaste and ascetic a philosopher as Pythagoras bore witness to this idea in ancient Greece. To the mediaeval alchemists, the Great Work came from the union of opposites. The Chinese sages based both philosophy and magic upon the interplay of the complementary forces which they called *Yang* and *Yin*.

*Yang* and *Yin* were the fundamentals of the universe. *Yang* was positive, *Yin* was negative. *Yang* represented masculinity, the Sun, the heavens, the day; while *Yin* ruled femininity, the Moon, the earth, the night. The *Tao*, or absolute divinity, was depicted by a sacred diagram showing the *Yang* and *Yin* forces locked within a circle.

The sacred four-lettered name of God, the Tetragrammaton, which the translators of the Bible have rendered, somewhat misleadingly, as 'Jehovah', also contains



this idea. It is composed of four Hebrew letters, *Yod*, *He*, *Vau* and *He* again. The mystical Rabbis who formulated the Hebrew Qabalah or Kabbalah (a word meaning secret tradition handed down), said that the *Yod* of Tetragrammaton means the Divine Masculinity, the first *He* means the Divine Femininity, the *Vau* means their supernal union and the final *He* means the material universe which results from it.

The word 'Jehovah' is in fact similar to a number of other divine names, or appellations of the Supreme Deity, which occur in those Graeco-Egyptian systems of magic that have come to be known as Gnostic. Such, for instance, is the word IAOUUEI, which magicians of Alexandria in Egypt used as a divine name and a word of power. It has been conjectured that this word is derived from the sounds made by people at the moment of sexual climax. Very similar is IO EVOHE the ecstatic cry of the dancers in the Greek Mysteries; and this, too, could have had its origin in the involuntary sounds of orgasm.

The mystic word IO is composed of letters in the shape of an upright and a circle; symbols which represent the male and female organs of generation. The same idea in prehistoric Britain was expressed in stone. Some of the mighty stones of Avebury, of unknown antiquity, are composed alternately of tall uprights, representing the male principle, or *phallus*, and broader, diamond-shaped stones, representing the female genital orifice, or *cteis*. Two of the biggest of these stones are known locally as Adam and Eve.

This time-honoured concept is even more plainly expressed by a group of prehistoric stones near Penzance in Cornwall, known in the old Cornish language as the *Men-an-Tol*. This group consists of two upright stones, with a broader stone between them. This broad, central stone has a large hole painstakingly carved through its centre, making it a feminine symbol. These stones have been revered from time immemorial as possessing magical powers. Sickly children were believed to be made stronger by being helped to crawl through the holed stone of the *Men-an-Tol*. This is probably a folk-memory of an ancient rite of rebirth.

Another group of prehistoric stones in Britain, with a long history of folklore and magic, are the Rollright Stones, near



The Maypole as it used to be in old-time London.  
Note upright-and-circle symbolism

Long Compton, on the border between Oxfordshire and Warwickshire. These consist of a circle of large stones, originally more conspicuous than they are now as many have sunk into the earth. Outside this circle is a massive upright stone called the King Stone. The circle of stones is about one hundred feet in diameter, and the King Stone is nearly nine feet tall.

This wonderful group of stones now has a modern road running through it, between the King Stone and the circle; but its ancient magic is still potent. The spirit of its basic design is evidently sexual; the upright and the circle, the masculine and the feminine. One legend about the Rollright Stones says that if a childless woman desired to be cured of her barrenness, she should go to the Rollright Stones secretly, on the night of the full moon, strip off her clothes and dance three times naked around the circle and then go up to the King Stone and embrace it, standing so that its shadow cast by the moonlight covers her.

No doubt this ritual was surreptitiously done by many Cotswold country wives in days long ago. Today, a would-be practitioner of the ritual would need to beware of passing cars on the road (though it is fairly lonely one) and she would also need sandals to protect her feet from the debris left behind by picnickers.

Ritual nudity as a magical practice is very old. The naked dances organized by the pagan cult of witchcraft in times past were denounced by the Church; but they still took place. In those days, when the countryside was much more thinly populated than it is today, large bonfires could be lit in lonely places, to provide light and warmth, and a gay, glowing centre of magic flame to dance around. By dancing naked, in a state of mind of 'oneness with nature', witches contacted the universal life energy, and felt themselves revitalized. Even in modern days, the ashes of bonfires have been found at the Rollright Stones — fires believed locally to have been lit for purposes of witchcraft.

The ancient rites of fertility and vitality belonging to the Old Religion of Nature, still take place secretly in the countryside of Britain, as they do elsewhere in Europe and America, particularly at the full moon. They are done for luck,

for enjoyment and for the continuance of age-old tradition.

One such ritual involves a man and a woman dancing seven times round a large tree, preferably an oak. Both have to be naked, so a warm summer night of the full moon is preferred. She pretends to be trying to escape and he to pursue her. But at the seventh round of the dance, she allows him to catch her and they have intercourse beneath the tree. At the end of the rite, a leaf is plucked from the tree and moistened with the sexual fluids that have been mingled in the woman's vagina. This leaf is considered to be a powerful talisman and may be carried to bring good fortune, or used in other magical ways.

A similar rite is performed around a bonfire, lit within an old stone circle; and this may have been the purpose of the bonfires of which traces were found at the Rollright Stones, as mentioned above. This is seldom done today, as it is too likely to be seen and to attract the attention of outsiders. When it is performed, however, the woman carries a small branch with green leaves on it, as she dances. A leaf is plucked from the branch and used as above, and the rest of the branch is burned on the fire.

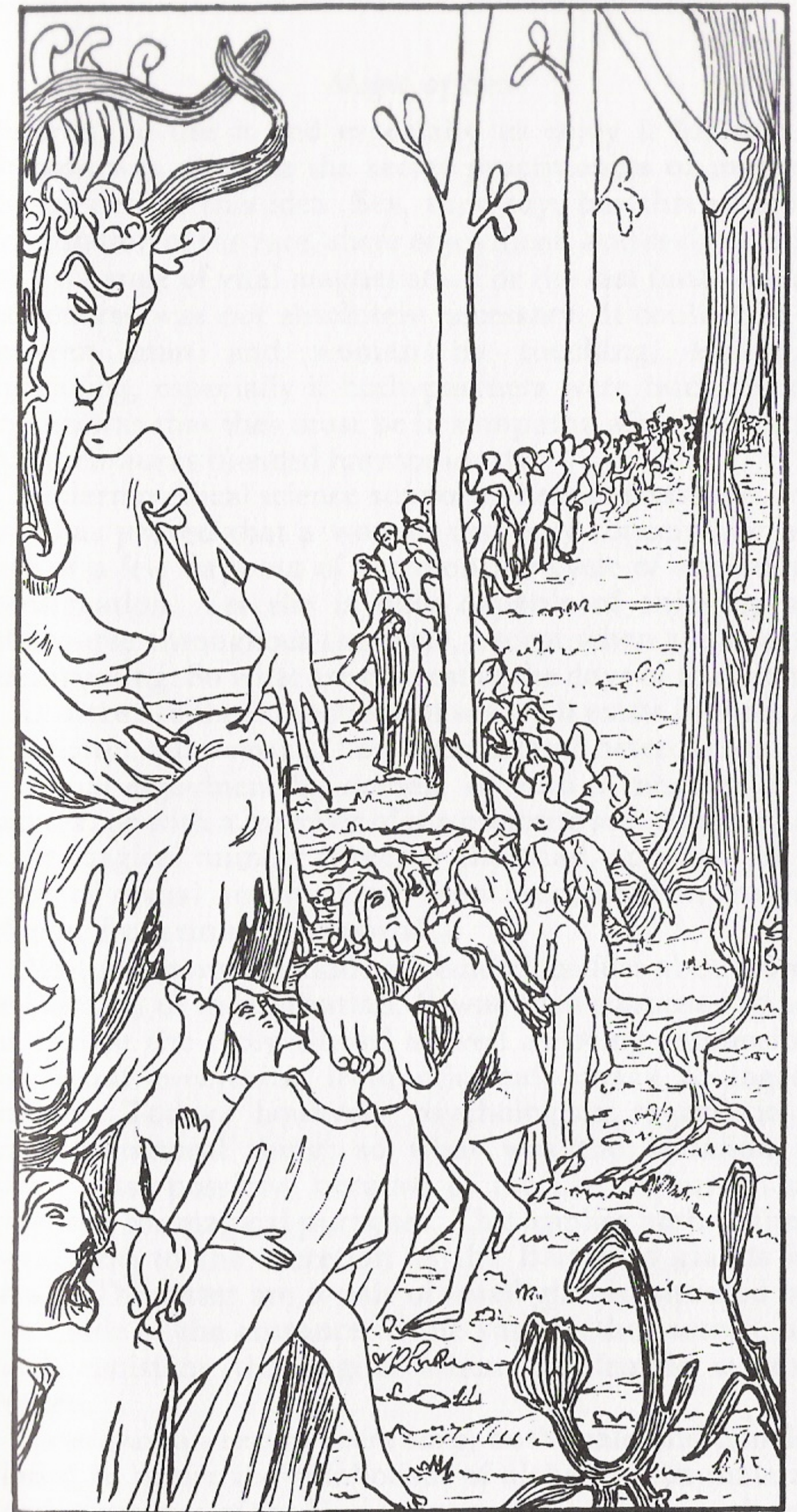
When the rite is finished, the fire, which need only be a small one, is extinguished by pouring upon it a libation of wine or cider. This is taken to the ceremony in a special flask or bottle marked with witchcraft signs, as nothing common should be brought into the magic circle. Each of the participants takes a drink from the bottle, and they repeat an old form of words:

As merry we have met,  
As merry we have been,  
So merry may we part,  
And merry meet again.

Then the rest of the wine or cider is poured upon the fire.

If no ancient stone circle is available, the witches may use thirteen ordinary stones to mark out a circle to work in. These stones are usually removed afterwards, so that no tell-tale traces remain and the ashes of the fire are ascribed to picnickers or gypsies.

The Christian church proclaimed sexual intercourse to have been ordained for one purpose only, namely the procreation of



The dance of the witches' Sabbat

children; to use it and especially to enjoy it for any other purpose was sin. But the secret practitioners of magic have always denied this idea. Sex, they say, has three functions: propagation of the race, sheer enjoyment, and revitalization by the exchange of vital magnetism. For the last function, actual intercourse was not absolutely necessary. It could take place between man and woman by touching, kissing and embracing, especially if both partners were nude. The only proviso was that they must be in sympathy with each other, so that their auras blended harmoniously.

Modern medical science supports these contentions, insofar as it has proved that a woman can only conceive for a brief time of a few days out of her monthly cycle of ovulation and menstruation. Yet she is fully capable of enjoying sexual intercourse throughout the cycle, except when she is actually menstruating. So what are the rest of the days of the cycle for?

As there are three functions of sex, so it exists in three forms of activity: auto-sexual, homosexual and heterosexual. That is, sexual enjoyment by oneself, or with a member of one's own sex, or with a member of the opposite sex. Again, the idea of the magical number three, or the triad, appears. All these forms of sexual activity have been used, both in magic and religion, from time immemorial.

Old-time moralists made a tremendous fuss about so-called 'self-abuse', or masturbation. It was even supposed to be 'the sin against the Holy Ghost' as well as being responsible for just about everything from criminal lunacy to ingrowing toenails. Today, however, psychologists regard it as a perfectly natural thing; so what was the agitation really about? Just possibly, because of the use of human sexual secretions for magical purposes. This applies both to the male sperm and to the secretion of the Bartholin glands in the female. The latter are a pair of small glands, situated one on either side of the entrance to the vagina, that secrete a fluid which moistens the vagina when the female is sexually aroused.

These human sexual secretions, both male and female, are alluded to under the symbolism of alchemy; the male as the blood or essence of the Red Lion, and the female as the gluten or essence of the White Eagle. The 'Lion' is the emblem of

Leo, the fixed sign of fire; the 'Eagle' is the emblem of the higher aspect of Scorpio, the fixed sign of water. Fire is regarded as a masculine element and water as a feminine one. Similarly, the alchemical vessels could represent the sexual organs. The athanor could be a synonym for the penis and the cucurbit (a gourd-shaped vessel) for the vagina. Old alchemical manuscripts sometimes have illustrations of these vessels, in which their shapes are clearly reminiscent of sexual significance. The mingled sexual fluids constitute the 'First Matter', out of which is transmuted the 'Elixir of Life'.

The strange symbolism of alchemy was one way in which secret brotherhoods concealed the sexual nature of their rites, which might otherwise have been denounced as 'abominations' simply because they involved sex. (Although, of course, not all alchemical symbolism should be interpreted in this way).

Aleister Crowley, in his notorious book *Magick in Theory and Practice*, had a joke at the expense of the credulous, when he wrote that "a male child of perfect innocence and high intelligence" was the most suitable victim for a magical sacrifice; claiming that he himself had been making such a sacrifice "on an average about 150 times every year" for several years past! What Crowley actually meant was that he used his own semen for magical purposes, but even some present-day writers have swallowed the bait and shudderingly declared that Crowley and his followers were criminals who performed human sacrifices. (*Magick in Theory and Practise* was first privately printed in Paris in 1929. It has since been reprinted by Castle Books of New York.)

The idea behind this practice is that the vital essences of the body give off power, which can be directed by the mind and will of the magician for some specific end. In the case of animal sacrifice, it is the freshly-spilt blood which gives off this vital power. But, say those magicians who practise sexual rites, why use such a crude, brutal and cruel method as killing some living creature, when there are much pleasanter means at hand?

*Magica sexualis*, or sexual magic, has been the well-kept secret of the inner circles of many occult brotherhoods, of both east and west. It has been disguised in curious symbolism and



A group of Etruscan dieties from a mirror back depicting the carefree rites of ancient times

abstruse terms, because hitherto frank discussion of such ideas has not been possible. Because sexual enjoyment was the great sin, any ritual which involved sex must automatically be black magic and devil-worship. Quite a good deal of this mentality still lingers, even in our own day.

The pagans of ancient times thought differently. They believed that which gave pleasure to humans also gave pleasure to the gods; in other words, the gods were happy to see man happy. This idea was handed down in the Orient for many centuries. M. C. Poinsoot, in *L'Amour et la Magie* (Paris, 1926), quotes from a French translation of a famous Arabic treatise on sexual matters, written by Kohdja Omer Aleby Aben Othman: "*La copulation est le plus grand et le plus saint des cantiques*", "Copulation is the greatest and holiest song of praise".

Farther east, the Tantriks of India, those mystics who follow the old traditions called *Tantras*, perform a kind of five-fold sacrament of union with nature. Like the magicians of the west, they recognize five elements, the fifth being spirit or *akasha*. Their communion is called the *Panchamakara*, or 'Five Ms', because it involves five things beginning with the letter M:

Wine (*madya*) for the element of fire.

Meat (*mangsa*) for air.

Fish (*matsya*) for water.

Bread (*mudra*) for earth.

Sexual intercourse (*maithuna*) for spirit.

The priestess with whom the sexual act takes place within the consecrated circle, is regarded as the living personification of Shakti, the goddess of universal nature.

They find the sacred elements of life present symbolically within the sexual act itself. The hardness felt as the penis penetrates the vagina, represents earth. The flow of semen and moisture represents water. The rubbing together of the genitals is like the rubbing of sticks to produce fire. The movement of the two bodies is like the movement of air. The passion of the climax produces pleasure and the nature of pleasure or ecstasy is *akasha*.

The penis is symbolically referred to as the *vajra* or 'thunderbolt', and the vagina as the lotus-flower. Hence one

meaning of the mystic *mantram*, or sacred phrase: *Aum mani padme hum*, "Hail to the jewel in the lotus".

Another Tantrik belief is that at the moment of sexual orgasm a quantity of vital magnetism is released. If this occurs simultaneously with both partners in coition, then there is an harmonious exchange of vitality which is beneficial to both. Hence the kind of sexual intercourse all too common in western countries, where the only thing that matters to the man is his own satisfaction, would be quite useless from this point of view.

Two things are evidently very important for the purpose of sexual magic; namely, that the partners should be in complete harmony with each other, and that they should be sexually potent. Occultism has a good deal of advice to give upon both these points.

By comparing the horoscopes of two people, a skilled astrologer can tell if they are likely to be suited to each other or not. This requires correct horoscopes to be cast for both; but a rough rule-of-thumb guide is that people born under birth signs of the same element, earth, fire, air or water, are likely to get on well together, because such signs will be in trine aspect to each other on the map of the Zodiac, and this is the most favourable and harmonious aspect.

The fire signs are Aries, Leo and Sagittarius. The water signs are Cancer, Scorpio and Pisces. The air signs are Libra, Aquarius and Gemini. The earth signs are Capricorn, Taurus and Virgo.

A phenomenon I have often noticed with regard to people's birth signs, is that people born under signs which are opposite to one another in the Zodiac are often violently attracted to each other, but the attraction does not last. It is more in the nature of infatuation than genuine love. This seems to bear out the old saying that opposites attract. Such attraction may be great fun while it lasts; but the end is usually stormy.

Such Zodiacal opposites are Aries and Libra, Taurus and Scorpio, Gemini and Sagittarius, Cancer and Capricorn, Leo and Aquarius, Virgo and Pisces.

People who are definitely unlikely to be in harmony with each other, are those whose birth signs are what the astrologers call in square aspect to each other, because this is a difficult and inharmonious aspect.

Aries is square to Cancer and Capricorn.

Taurus is square to Leo and Aquarius.

Gemini is square to Virgo and Pisces.

Cancer is square to Libra and Aries.

Leo is square to Scorpio and Taurus.

Virgo is square to Sagittarius and Gemini.

Libra is square to Cancer and Capricorn.

Scorpio is square to Leo and Aquarius.

Sagittarius is square to Pisces and Virgo.

Capricorn is square to Libra and Aries.

Aquarius is square to Scorpio and Taurus.

Pisces is square to Sagittarius and Gemini.

In addition to this astrological guidance, some occultists believe that there will be more excitement and satisfaction in a love affair if a fair person mates with a dark one and vice versa. Blondes, they say, are 'electric' and brunettes 'magnetic'. Such expressions, of course, are figurative; but they are an attempt to express the difference between the auras of fair people and dark people, when it comes to a question of how their particular vibrations will blend.

The ways in which people have sought for occult means of securing sexual potency are so numerous, that the study of them forms a branch of *magica sexualis* in itself. People have been willing to swallow the most revolting concoctions, if only this end could be achieved thereby. Yet medical science assures us that, in most cases, the effect of such 'love potions' could only be psychological.

Nevertheless, when it comes to such an intimate thing as one's sexual relationships, psychology can be a very powerful influence. Many a supposedly impotent man has been made so by a nagging wife, for instance; there has been nothing physically wrong with him. Likewise, many allegedly frigid women have really been simply unable to respond to a selfish, clumsy and sexually ignorant man.

Leaving aside the horrid and often poisonous recipes recommended in old books of magic as aphrodisiacs, and the rich and expensive foods such as truffles and oysters, widely believed to have the same effect, is there anything left which is a genuine aphrodisiac or stimulant of sexual potency?

In the way of an actual potion, that is, something to be

drunk, the only proven aphrodisiac is alcohol — *in small but powerful quantities*. Therefore, it would seem that the ideal love potion to be taken by two people before they start to embrace, is a good liqueur. Many liqueurs, in fact, have a secret reputation as aphrodisiacs. Creme de Menthe is notable in this respect; oil of peppermint, which it contains, has been considered an aphrodisiac since the days of ancient Greece. Another liqueur has the significant title of Parfait Amour, 'Perfect Love'.

However, the most bewitching of liqueurs is undoubtedly Strega. The word *strega* is Italian for 'witch'; and the story goes that this liqueur was originally made as a witches' potion. It comes from the district of Benevento, in Italy, well-known for its legends of witchcraft, and reputed to be a time-honoured centre of *La Vecchia Religione*, 'the Old Religion'. The witches' potion is now made commercially; but a memento of its origin may be seen upon the bottle, which bears a lively little picture of a witches' dance.

Drambuie is another stimulating drink, reputed to have been a favourite with Bonnie Prince Charlie, the Young Pretender, when he was adventuring in Scotland. Advocaat is a stimulant and restorative, containing egg-yolks. Kummel is a liqueur flavoured with the aromatic seeds of cumin and caraway, which have a tonic effect. Nor are the virtues of Chartreuse and Benedictine to be overlooked, in spite of the fact that these liqueurs are traditionally made by monks.

Remember, however, that *all* liqueurs are meant to be taken in small quantities only, to be savoured and sipped delicately from beautiful liqueur glasses. Haste and excess will defeat their own ends; instead of being stimulated, all you will get is a sick headache.

Good wine also tends to have an aphrodisiac effect; but beer or spirits are less suitable. Mead, that most time-honoured of drinks, has an excellent reputation for building sexual potency. It is not generally realized that our term 'honeymoon' takes its name from this fact. Among our Celtic and Anglo-Saxon ancestors, newly-wedded couples used to drink plenty of mead for a month after their wedding, to make them strong and fertile. Mead is made from honey, hence this was the 'honeymoon'. When we remember how health food specialists today praise the virtues of honey, there may well be

sound sense in this old belief. Once again, however, moderation is advised — really good old-fashioned mead, which can still be found in the English countryside, is powerful stuff.

A powerful stimulant to the senses is the right sort of perfume. Two perfumes which have the reputation of being aphrodisiacs are musk and patchouli. The latter first came to the western world when it was used to scent the luxurious Indian shawls which were so popular with Victorian ladies; and it soon became the favourite scent of high-class women of pleasure. Consequently, it tended to be frowned upon in respectable society, and a certain air of moral disapproval still seems to cling to it. The aphrodisiac properties of musk have been known throughout the East for many centuries. These and other oriental scents can be obtained in the form of cones and joss-sticks, to burn as incense. Indeed, I have seen packets of joss-sticks of the perfume known as *Javaji*, unashamedly labelled "No. 1 Bedroom Special".

Other sexually exciting scents are *Ylang-Ylang* and jasmine. The former name means 'flower of flowers'; it is obtained from richly scented flowers which grow in Madagascar. The Chinese of olden times called the jasmine 'sweetness in women' and it was a favourite with oriental concubines.

Perhaps the strangest of all aphrodisiacs and yet one which has been proven to work, is mild flagellation upon the buttocks. The operative word, however, is *mild*. I am not dealing here with the practices of sadism or masochism; but simply with the use of flagellation as a stimulant, which it undoubtedly is. Indeed, it may surprise many people to learn that a number of highly-respected physicians of bygone days recommended the use of whipping or birching for this purpose, provided it was not applied with too heavy a hand.

This fact is commented on by an erudite Victorian writer, John Davenport, in a curious book called *Aphrodisiacs and Anti-Aphrodisiacs; Three Essays on the Powers of Reproduction*; first published, privately printed, in London in 1869. He says:

As an erotic stimulant, more particularly, it may be observed that, considering the many intimate and sympathetic relations existing between the nervous branches of the extremity of the spinal marrow, it is impossible to doubt that flagellation exercised upon the buttocks and the adjacent parts has a powerful effect upon the organs of generation.



(Davenport's very interesting book has been reissued in our own day under the title of *Aphrodisiacs and Love Stimulants*, edited by Alan Hull Walton, and published by Luxor Press, London, in 1965).

Flagellation has been used in this way for many centuries. A classic treatise on the subject was written by a seventeenth-century physician, John Henry Meibomius. It was called *Tractatus de usu flagrorum in re medica et venerea* (A Treatise on the use of Flogging in Medicine and Venery), first published in 1645 and several times reprinted in later years.

The ancient Egyptians worshipped the god Min or Menu, who presided over fertility and generation; he was depicted as a virile male, naked except for an elaborate head-dress and brandishing a whip. The ancient historian Herodotus tells us that the Egyptians practised flagellation as part of their religious rites; but, as an initiate himself, he was not allowed to mention the reason why these beatings were performed.

There is little doubt, however, about the inner meaning of a phrase which occurs in the letters which passed between those famous romantic lovers of the Middle Ages, Abelard and Heloise: "*Verbera quandoque dabat amor non furor, gratia non ira, quae omnium unguentorum suavitatem transcendunt*"; "Stripes which, whenever inflicted by love, not by fury but affection, transcended in sweetness every unguent."

During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, flagellation was widely, though secretly, indulged in, to such an extent that it became almost fashionable. Indeed, it was whispered that a certain notorious but high-class brothel in London where flagellation was practised, was visited by no less a person than the Prince of Wales, later King George IV. A witty and widely circulated poem, though of doubtful authorship, was devoted to the various pleasures and pains of flagellation. It was called "The Rodiad", and contained a couplet which summed up the social attitudes of many people of high society at that period:

Delightful sport! Whose never failing charm  
Makes young blood tingle and keeps old blood warm.

Many magical orders and occult brotherhoods have cherished an inner circle where various forms of sexual magic

were practised. The initiates of such societies have been sworn to secrecy. However, there can be no rule against quoting something which is already in print, and upon which the copyright has long lapsed.

The late nineteenth century in America saw a remarkable occultist and mystic named Paschal Beverly Randolph. He travelled to Europe and to the Near East, and claimed to be a Rosicrucian. He strove valiantly by his writings to enlighten contemporary society by giving people a higher and happier viewpoint about sexual matters and suffered condemnation by Victorian moralists on that account.

Randolph died in controversial circumstances in 1875. One account of his death says that he committed suicide; but another claims that he was murdered, because his writings had revealed and publicly discussed matters which powerful secret groups wished to remain concealed.

In one of Randolph's major works, *Eulis*, occurs the following plain-spoken passage:

Remember, O Neophyte, that I am not dealing in mere philosophical formulae; but in, and with, fundamental principles underlying all being. Fix this first principle firmly in your memory: LOVE LIETH AT THE FOUNDATION of all that is. Second, the mystical moment, the instant wherein a portion of man's essential self is planted within the matrix, is the most solemn, serious, powerful and energetic moment he can ever know on earth; and only to be excelled by correspondent instants after he shall have ascended to realms beyond the starry spaces. Third, it follows that as are the people at that moment, so will be that which enters into them from the regions above, beneath, and round about. Wherefore whatsoever male or female shall truly will for, hopefully pray for, and earnestly yearn for, when love pure and holy is in the nuptial ascendant, in form passional, affectional, divine and volitional, that prayer will be granted and boon be given; but the prayer must precede.

Elsewhere in Randolph's works may be found the rationale of this teaching. He likens the human soul to a form of fire, a force which is polarized within the physical body. The negative pole of this soul-force dwells in the brain, while its positive pole is situated in the genital region. Between the two is the life centre, the solar plexus. Through the genital centre, we contact that aspect of the soul which "is in direct magnetic and ethereal contact with the Soul of Being; the foundation-fire of the Universe; with all that vast domain underlying