

*Between black and white magic
there is but a cobweb thread*



From *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (THE HEXAGON WITH THE CENTRAL POINT, OR THE SEVENTH KEY)
XIV pp. 102-6.

aRGUING UPON THE VIRTUE IN NAMES (*Baalshem*), Molitor thinks it impossible to deny that the *Kabbalah* — its present abuses notwithstanding — has some very profound and scientific basis to stand upon. And if it is claimed, he argues,

That before the Name of Jesus every other Name must bend, why should not the Tetragrammaton have the same power?¹

This is good sense and logic. For if Pythagoras viewed the hexagon formed of two crossed triangles as the symbol of creation, and the Egyptians as that of the union of fire and water (or of generation), the Essenes saw in it the seal of Solomon, the Jews the Shield of David, the Hindus the sign of Vishnu (to this day); and if even in Russia and Poland the double triangle is regarded as a powerful talisman — then so widespread a use argues that there is something in it. It stands to reason, indeed, that such an ancient and universally revered symbol should not be merely laid aside to be laughed at by those who know nothing of its virtues or real Occult significance. To begin with, even the known sign is merely a substitute for the one used by the Initiates. In a *Tāntrika* work in the British Museum, a terrible curse is called down upon the head of him who shall ever divulge to the profane the real Occult hexagon known as the “Sign of Vishnu,” “Solomon’s Seal,” etc.

The great power of the hexagon — with its central mystic sign the T, or the Svastika, a septenary — is well explained in the seventh key of *Things Concealed*, for it says:

The seventh key is the hieroglyph of the sacred septenary, of royalty, of the priesthood [the Initiate], of triumph and true result by struggle. It is magic power in all its force, the true “Holy Kingdom.” In the Hermetic Philosophy it is the quintessence resulting from the union of the two forces of the great Magic Agent [Ākāśa, Astral Light] . . . It is equally Jakin and Boaz bound by the will of the Adept and overcome by his omnipotence.

The force of this key is absolute in Magic. All religions have consecrated this sign in their rites.

We can only glance hurriedly at present at the long series of antediluvian works in their postdiluvian and fragmentary, often disfigured, form. Although all of these are

¹ [See *Philosophie der Geschichte oder über die Tradition*, etc. Munster, Theissing, 1827–1855; ch. on “Numbers.”]

the inheritance from the Fourth Race — now lying buried in the unfathomed depths of the ocean — still they are not to be rejected. As we have shown, there was but one Science at the dawn of mankind, and it was entirely divine. If humanity on reaching its adult period has abused it — especially the last Sub-Races of the Fourth Root-Race — it has been the fault and sin of the practitioners who desecrated the divine knowledge, not of those who remained true to its pristine dogmas. It is not because the modern Roman Catholic Church, faithful to her traditional intolerance, is now pleased to see in the Occultist, and even in the innocent Spiritualist and Mason, the descendants of “the Kischuph, the Hamite, the Kasdim, the Cephene, the Ophite and the Khartumim” — all these being “the followers of Satan,” that they are such indeed. The State or National Religion of every country has ever and at all times very easily disposed of rival schools by professing to believe they were dangerous heresies — the old Roman Catholic State Religion as much as the modern one.¹

The abolition, however, has not made the public any the wiser in the Mysteries of the Occult Sciences. In some respects the world is all the better for such ignorance. The secrets of nature generally cut both ways, and in the hands of the undeserving they are more than likely to become murderous. Who in our modern day knows anything of the real significance of, and the powers contained in, certain characters and signs — talismans — whether for beneficent or evil purposes? Fragments of the Runes and the writing of the Kischuph, found scattered in old mediaeval libraries; copies from the Ephesian and Milesian letters or characters; the thrice famous *Book of Thoth*, and the terrible treatises (still preserved) of Targes, the Chaldaean, and his disciple Tarchon, the Etruscan — who flourished long before the Trojan War — are so many names and appellations void of sense (though met with in classical literature) for the educated modern scholar. Who, in the nineteenth century, believes in the art, described in such treatises as those of Targes, of evoking and directing thunderbolts? Yet the same is described in the Brāhmanical literature, and Targes copied his “thunderbolts” from the *Astra*,² those terrible engines of destruction known to the Mahābhāratean Āryans. A whole arsenal of dynamite bombs would pale before this art — if it ever becomes understood by the Westerners. It is from an old fragment that was translated to him, that the late Lord Bulwer-Lytton got his idea of Vril.³ It is a lucky thing, indeed, that, in the face of the virtues and philanthropy that grace our age of iniquitous wars, of anarchists and dynamiters, the secrets contained in the books discovered in Numa’s tomb should have been burnt. But the science of Circē and Mēdea is not lost. One can discover it in the apparent gibberish of the Tāntrika *Sūtras*, the *Kuku-ma* of the Bhūtāni and the Sikkim Dugpas and “Red-caps” of Tibet, and even in the sorcery of the Nīlgiri Mula-Kurumbas. Very luckily few outside the high practitioners of the Left Path and of the Adepts of the Right — in whose hands the weird secrets of the real meaning are safe — understand the “black” evocations. Otherwise the Western as much as the Eastern Dugpas might make short work of

¹ [In WMS (*The Theosophist*, Vol. LIII, April 1933, p. 10), the following line clarifies the next paragraph:

If Napoleon the Great has one meritorious act to boast of during his career of slaughter, it is that of having abolished the “Holy” Inquisition.]

² This is a kind of magical bow and arrow calculated to destroy in one moment whole armies; it is mentioned in the *Rāmāyana*, the *Purānas* and elsewhere.

³ [See “Vril and Bovril,” in our Confusing Words Series. — ED. PHIL.]

their enemies. The name of the latter is legion, for the direct descendants of the antediluvian sorcerers hate all those who are not with them, arguing that, therefore, they are against them.

As for the *Little Albert* — though even this small half-esoteric volume has become a literary relic — and the *Great Albert* or the *Red Dragon*,¹ together with the numberless old copies still in existence, the sorry remains of the mythical Mother Shiptons and the Merlins — we mean the false ones — all these are vulgarised imitations of the original works of the same names. Thus the *Petit Albert* is the disfigured imitation of the great work written in Latin by Bishop Adalbert, an Occultist of the eighth century, sentenced by the second Roman Concilium. His work was reprinted several centuries later and named *Alberti Parvi Lucii Libellus de Mirabilibus Naturæ Arcanis*. The severities of the Roman Church have ever been spasmodic. While one learns of this condemnation, which placed the Church, as will be shown, in relation to the Seven Archangels, the Virtues or Thrones of God, in the most embarrassing position for long centuries, it remains a wonder indeed, to find that the Jesuits have not destroyed the archives, with all their countless chronicles and annals, of the History of France and those of the Spanish Escorial, along with them. Both history and the chronicles of the former speak at length of the priceless talisman received by Charles the Great from a Pope. It was a little volume on Magic — or Sorcery, rather — all full of Kabbalistic figures, signs, mysterious sentences and invocations to the stars and planets. These were talismans against the enemies of the King (*les ennemis de Charlemagne*), which talismans, the chronicler tells us, proved of great help, as

. . . every one of them [the enemies] died a violent death.

The small volume, *Enchiridion Leonis Papæ*, has disappeared and is very luckily out of print. Again the Alphabet of Thoth can be dimly traced in the modern Tarot which can be had at almost every bookseller's in Paris. As for its being understood or utilized, the many fortune-tellers in Paris, who make a professional living by it, are sad specimens of failures of attempts at reading, let alone correctly interpreting, the symbolism of the Tarot without a preliminary philosophical study of the Science. The real Tarot, in its complete symbology, can be found only in the Babylonian cylinders, that anyone can inspect and study in the British Museum and elsewhere. Anyone can see these Chaldaean, antediluvian rhombs, or revolving cylinders, covered with sacred signs; but the secrets of these divining "wheels," or, as de Mirville calls them, "the rotating globes of Hecate," have to be left untold for some time to come. Meanwhile there are the "turning-tables" of the modern medium for the babes, and the *Kabbalah* for the strong. This may afford some consolation.

People are very apt to use terms which they do not understand, and to pass judgments on *prima facie* evidence. The difference between White and Black Magic is very difficult to realize fully, as both have to be judged by their motive, upon which their ultimate, though not their immediate, effects depend, even though these may not come for years. Between the "right and the left hand [Magic] there is but a cobweb

¹ [Other conjuring books include *The Enchiridion*, the *Magic Works of Agrippa*, *The Magical Venus*, the *Secrets of the Old Druid*, *The Treasure of the Old Man of the Pyramids*, etc.]

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thread,” says an Eastern proverb. Let us abide by its wisdom and wait till we have learned more.

We shall have to return at greater length to the relation of the *Kabbalah* to Gupta-Vidyā, and to deal further with esoteric and numerical systems, but we must first follow the line of Adepts in post-Christian times.

