

*The pernicious influence
of the moon*



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IT IS WELL KNOWN THAT THE MOONBEAMS have a very pernicious influence; and recently this question became the subject of a very animated discussion among some men of science in Germany. Physicians and physiologists begin to perceive at last, that the poets had led them into a trap. They will soon find out, it is to be hoped, that Eastern Occultists had more real information about the genuine character of our treacherous satellite than the Western astronomers with all their big telescopes. Indeed — “fair Diana,” the “Queen of Night,” she, who in “clouded majesty”

. . . unveil'd her peerless light,
and o'er the dark her silver mantle threw.¹

— is the worst — because secret — enemy of her Suzerain, and that Suzerain's children, vegetable and animal as well as human. Without touching upon her occult and yet generally unknown attributes and functions, we have but to enumerate those that are known to science and even the profane.

The moon acts perniciously upon the mental and bodily constitution of men in more than one way. No experienced captain will allow his men to sleep on deck during the full moon. Lately it was proved beyond any doubt, by a long and careful series of experiments, that no person even one with remarkably strong nerves — could sit, lie or sleep for any length of time, in a room lit by moonlight without injury to his health. Every observing housekeeper or butler knows that provisions of any nature will decay and spoil far more rapidly in moonlight than they would in entire darkness. The theory that the cause of this does not lie in the specific perniciousness of moonbeams, but in the well-known fact that all the refrangible and reflected rays will act injuriously — is an exploded one. This hypothesis cannot cover the ground in our case. Thus, in the year 1693, on January 21st, during the eclipse of the moon, *thrice* as many sick people died on that day than on the preceding and following days. Lord Bacon used to fall down senseless at the beginning of every lunar eclipse and returned to consciousness but when it was over. Charles the Sixth, in 1399, became a *lunatic* at every new moon and at the beginning of the full moon. The origin of a number of nervous diseases was found to coincide with certain phases of the moon, especially epilepsy and neuralgia — the only cure for which is, as we know, the sun. After a discussion of many days, the wise men of Germany came to no better conclu-

¹ [John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, Bk. IV, i, p. 598]

sion than the implicit confession that: “Though it is a pretty well established fact that there exists some mysterious and *nefast*¹ connection between the night luminary and most of the human and even animal and vegetable diseases, yet wherein lies the cause of such connection — we are unable, at present, to determine.”

Of course not. Who of these great physicians and physiologists but knows since his boyhood that there was in old Greece a widely spread belief that the magicians, and especially the enchanter and *sorcerer* of Thessaly, had an uncontrollable power over the moon, drawing her down from heaven at will by the mere force of their incantations and producing thereby her eclipses? But that is *all they know* unless they add to it their conviction that the stupid superstition had nothing at all in it at the bottom. Perhaps they are right, and ignorance, in their case, may be bliss. But the occultists ought not to forget, at any rate, that *Isis* of the Egyptians and the Grecian *Diana* or *Luna* were identical; that both wear the crescent on their heads or the cow’s horns, the latter the symbol of the new moon. More than one profound mystery of nature is securely shrouded by the “veils” of *Isis* and *Diana*, who were both the anthropomorphized symbols — or Goddesses — of nature, whose priests were the greatest and most powerful adepts of the lands that worshipped the two. The fact alone, that the temple of *Diana* in *Aricia* was served by a priest who had always *to murder his predecessor*, is more than suggestive to a student of Occultism; for it shows him that in the temples of *Diana* the greatest as the most revered of all the goddesses of Rome and Greece — from that of *Ephesus*, one of the seven wonders of the world, down to the said temple of *Aricia*, the same mysterious initiations took place as in the sacred temples of the Egyptian *Isis*: *i.e.*, the initiator having unveiled the Goddess, or shown the neophyte *naked truth* — had to die.²



¹ [irreligious]

² We refer the reader to our footnote on page 38 (col. 2) in the November *Theosophist*, 1882, Art. “Gleanings from Éliphas Lévi.” [Vide p. 265 of the present Volume. — *Boris de Zirkoff*.]