

# *Stars, Numbers, and True Astrology*

**Stars do not cause good or bad luck but simply indicate the same**



## *Abstract and train of thoughts*

### **Astrology it is a science far more difficult to master than the highest mathematics.**

Every great astrologer admits man's free will, though not absolute, and therefore man's liberty to influence of the stars. 3

The two prerequisites for proficiency in astrology are the apperception by intuition of the ramifications of Universal Sympathy, and a pure life — physically, morally, and spiritually. 4

### **Like alchemy, modern astrology is no longer the pure and divine science of the schools of Thoth-Hermes, of the first Egyptian Dynasties.**

The kabbalistic Gematria is arithmetical, not geometrical. It is one of the methods for extracting the hidden meaning from letters, words, and sentences. It consists in applying to the letters of a word the sense they bear as numbers, in outward shape as well as in their individual sense. 6

Mathematics is the only exact and infallible science, for it proceeds from universals to particulars. 8

### **Astrology is a mathematical science, which teaches us what particular causes will produce what particular combination of effects.**

True Astrology gives us the means of obtaining the knowledge to guide our future births. 12

As the clock indicates, it does not influence the time, so the astrologer cannot shape destiny. 13

### **The Great Pyramid of Egypt was an Observatory of Occult Astrognosy.**

It must have been built at a time when Draconis, the then Polar Star, was at its lower culmination and the Pleiades, Alcyone especially, were on the same meridian above. 15

### **Suggested reading for students.**

From our Planetary Round and Globes Series. 17



# Astrology it is a science far more difficult to master than the highest mathematics.

**Every great astrologer admits man's free will, though not absolute, and therefore man's liberty to influence of the stars.**

First published in: *The Theosophist*, Vol. II (9), June 1881, pp. 198-99.

Republished in: *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (NATIVE ASTROLOGERS) III pp. 190-92.

[Mr. K.D. Dosabhoj wrote to *The Theosophist*, saying that his faith in astrology had been destroyed as the result of the failure of the astrologers he had consulted to make correct predictions. H.P. Blavatsky's editorial comment on this was as follows:]

Our esteemed Brother and correspondent was unlucky in his astrological researches, and that is all he can say. Because half-educated astronomers in one country may fail to correctly predict an eclipse, is it a reason why its inhabitants should decry astronomy and call it a visionary science? Besides the great neglect into which astrology has fallen during the last two centuries, it is a science far more difficult to master than the highest of mathematics; yet, notwithstanding all, we assert again that, whenever studied conscientiously, it proves the claims of its proficient correct. No more than Mr. Darasha Dosabhoj do we believe astrology capable of predicting every trifling event in our life, any accidental illness, joy or sorrow. It never claimed as much. The stars can *predict* (?) no more *unforeseen* events than a physician a broken leg to a patient who never stirs from his house. They show a lucky or unlucky life, but in general features, and no more. If our friend was unsuccessful with every astrologer he met, we know at least a dozen of well-educated men who were forced to believe in astrology as its predictions came to pass in every case. A large volume would be necessary to explain in detail the understanding of this ancient science, yet a few words may serve to correct one of the most glaring errors concerning it, not only current among the masses, but even among many who understand and practice astrology, namely, *that the planets make us what we are*, their good and evil aspects causing fortunate and unfortunate periods. Says a Professor of Astrology, W.H. Chaney:

Take to the unphilosophical astrologer the horoscope of a boy born with Sagittarius rising, Jupiter in the same, on the ascendant, in exact trine to the Sun and Leo, with other favourable configurations, and instantly he would declare that the boy would become a great man, a Prince, a President — and so would I. But the astrologer might insist that all this good fortune was *caused* by the boy having been born under such fortunate aspects, whereas I should look *beyond* the birth for the *cause*, and should probably discover, that, before his conception, his parents had been away from each other for weeks or months, during which both lived a life of perfect chastity; that they were very harmonious, in excellent bodily health, their intellects clear, their minds cheerful, and their moral natures strong.

The Egyptian episcope<sup>1</sup> discovered that in the morning, shortly before sunrise, in June, he could see in the east the brightest fixed star in the heavens, and immediately after thus seeing the star the Nile would overflow. Having witnessed the phenomenon for many successive years, he laid it down as an axiom that this star *indicated* the overflow of the Nile, no one thinking of disputing him; for the cause should be traced to the melting of the snow in the mountains of Africa. Now, suppose someone — a sceptic — had heard of this idea of a star *causing* the Nile to overflow, what an opportunity it would have afforded for heaping scorn and ridicule upon the poor episcope! Yet the episcope would have continued to observe the same phenomena year after year; and being called “moon-struck,” a “fool,” etc., would not have changed his opinion in the least. Now all the hubbub on this point would arise from ignorance on the part of the sceptic just as nine-tenths of all the disputes and quarrels arise. Teach the man that the appearance of that star at a particular time and place in the heavens *indicated*, not *caused* the overflow of the Nile, and he would have ceased to call the episcope an idiot and liar.

**The two prerequisites for proficiency in astrology are the apperception by intuition of the ramifications of Universal Sympathy, and a pure life — physically, morally, and spiritually.**

The intelligent reader must now see the point at which we aim — namely, that in astrology the stars do not *cause* our good or bad luck, but simply *indicate* the same. A man must be a psychologist and a philosopher before he can become a perfect astrologer, and understand correctly the great Law of *Universal Sympathy*. Not only astrology but magnetism, theosophy and every occult science, especially that of attraction and repulsion, depend upon this law for their existence. Without having thoroughly studied the latter, astrology becomes a *superstition*.

The article “Stars and Numbers” which follows was written before we received the above letter. We draw our esteemed correspondent’s attention to it.



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<sup>1</sup> “Overseer”; our English word “episcopal” is derived from the name of this ancient pagan stargazer.

## Like alchemy, modern astrology is no longer the pure and divine science of the schools of Thoth-Hermes, of the first Egyptian Dynasties.<sup>1</sup>

First published in: *The Theosophist*, Vol. II (9), June 1881, pp. 199-201.

Republished in: *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (STARS AND NUMBERS) III pp. 192-203.

Ancient civilization saw nothing absurd in the claims of astrology, no more than many an educated and thoroughly scientific man sees in it today. Judicial astrology, by which the fate and acts of men and nations might be foreknown, appeared, nor does it even now appear, any more unphilosophical or unscientific than does natural astrology or astronomy — by which the events of so-called brute and inanimate nature (changes of weather, etc.) might be predicted. For it was not even prophetic insight that was claimed by the votaries of that abstruse and really grand science, but simply a great proficiency in that method of procedure which allows the astrologer to foresee certain events in the life of a man by the position of the planets at the time of his birth.

Once the probability, or even the simple possibility, of an occult influence exercised by the stars upon the destiny of man admitted — and why should the fact appear more improbable in the case of stars and man than in that of the sunspots and potatoes? — and astrology becomes no less an exact science than astronomy. The earth, Prof. Balfour Stewart, F.R.S., tells us — “is very seriously affected by what takes place in the sun” . . . a connection is strongly suspected “between epidemics and the appearance of the sun’s surface.”<sup>2</sup>

And if, as that man of science tells us, “a connection of some mysterious kinds between the sun and the earth *is more than suspected*” . . . and the problem is a most important one “to solve,” how much more important the solution of that other mystery — the undoubted affinity between man and the stars — an affinity believed in for countless ages and by the most learned among men! Surely the destiny of man deserves as much consideration as that of a turnip or a potato. . . . And if a disease of the latter may be *scientifically* foretold whenever that vegetable crops out during a “sunspot period,” why should not a life of disease, or health, of natural or violent death be as *scientifically* prognosticated by the position and appearance of the constellation with which man is as directly connected and which bears the same relation to him as the sun bears to the earth?

In its day, astrology was greatly honoured, for when in able hands it was often shown to be as precise and trustworthy in its predictions as astronomical predictions are in our own age. Omens were studied by all imperial Rome, as much, if not more than

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<sup>1</sup> [Cf. *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (ALCHEMY IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY) XI p. 548. Consult “Blavatsky on Alchemy is the Nineteenth Century,” in our Blavatsky Speaks Series. — ED. PHIL.]

<sup>2</sup> “One of the best known vegetable epidemics is that of the potato disease. The years 1846, 1860, and 1872 were bad years for the potato disease. Now, those years are not very far from the years of maximum sunspots . . . [there is a] curious connection between these diseases affecting plants and the state of the sun. . . . The disease that took place about three centuries since, of a periodical and very violent character, called the ‘sweating sickness’ . . . took place about the end of the fifteenth and the beginning of the sixteenth century. It took place in the following years: 1485, 1506, 1517, 1528, and 1551, about a period of eleven years intervening between the outbreaks. Now, this is exactly the sunspot period . . .” (*The Sun and the Earth*, Lecture by Prof. Balfour Stewart).

they are now in India. Tiberius practiced the science; and the Saracens in Spain held star divination in the greatest reverence, astrology passing into Western Europe through these, our first civilizers. Alphonso, the wise king of Castile and Leon, made himself famous in the thirteenth century by his “Astrological Tables” (called Alphon sine),<sup>1</sup> and his code of *Las Siete Partidas*; and the great astronomer Kepler in the seventeenth, the discoverer of the three great laws of planetary motions (known as Kepler’s laws), believed in and proclaimed astrology a *true science*. Kepler, the Emperor Rudolph’s mathematician, he to whom Newton is indebted for all his subsequent discoveries, is the author of *The Principles of Astrology*,<sup>2</sup> in which he proves the power of certain harmonious configurations of suitable planets *to control human impulses*. In his official capacity of Imperial astronomer, he is *historically* known to have predicted to Wallenstein, from the position of the stars, the issue of the war in which that unfortunate general was then engaged. No less than himself, his friend, protector and instructor, the great astronomer Tycho Brahe, believed in, and expanded the astrological system. He was forced, moreover, to admit the influence of the constellations on terrestrial life and actions quite against his will or wish, and merely because of the constant verification of *facts*.

**The kabbalistic Gematria<sup>3</sup> is arithmetical, not geometrical. It is one of the methods for extracting the hidden meaning from letters, words, and sentences. It consists in applying to the letters of a word the sense they bear as numbers, in outward shape as well as in their individual sense.<sup>4</sup>**

Closely related to astrology is the *Kabbalah* and its system of *numerals*. The secret wisdom of the ancient Chaldees left by them as an inheritance to the Jews relates primarily to the mythological science of the heavens and contains the doctrines of the hidden or occult wisdom concerning the cycles of time. In the ancient philosophy, the sacredness of numbers began with the great FIRST, the ONE, and ended with the naught or Zero, the symbol of the infinite and boundless circle, which represents the universe. All the intervening figures, in whatever combination, or however multiplied, represent philosophical ideas relating either to a moral or a physical fact in nature. They are the key to the archæan views on cosmogony, in its broad sense, including man and beings, and relate to the human race and individuals spiritually as well as physically.

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<sup>1</sup> [Strictly speaking, they are astronomical tables produced at Toledo, Spain, in 1252, by fifty astronomers under the patronage of Alphonso X (1252–84), known as El Sabio, “the Learned.” See Bio-Bibliographical Index, s.v. ALPHONSO. — *Boris de Zirkoff*.]

<sup>2</sup> [Reference is most likely to Kepler’s *De Fundamentis Astrologiæ*. In the Charles Frisch edition of his *Opera Omnia*, published in 1858 by Heyden and Zimmer at Frankfurt am Main, it may be found in Vol. I, pp. 417–38. — *Boris de Zirkoff*.]

<sup>3</sup> [Closely related to Isopsephy or Isopsephia (from Greek ἴσος, “equal” and ψῆφος, “pebble”) is the practice of adding up the number values of the letters in a word to form a single number. The total number is then used as a metaphorical bridge to other words evaluating the equal number, which satisfies *isos* or “equal” in the term. The early Greeks used pebbles arranged in patterns to learn arithmetic and geometry, which corresponds to psēphos or “pebble” and “counting” in the term. Isopsephy is related to Gematria, the same practice using the Hebrew Alphabet. — *Wikipedia*.]

<sup>4</sup> [Cf. *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (OCCULT SYSTEMS OF INTERPRETATIONS OF ALPHABETS AND NUMERALS) XVI pp. 97–98. Consult “Occult Interpretation of Alphabets and Numerals,” in our *Blavatsky Speaks Series*. — ED. PHIL.]

Says Porphyry:

The numerals of Pythagoras were hieroglyphical symbols, by means whereof he explained *all* ideas concerning the nature of all things.<sup>1</sup>

In the symbolical *Kabbalah* — the most ancient system left to us by the Chaldeans — the modes of examining letters, words and sentences for hidden meaning were numerical. The *Gematria* (one of the three modes) is purely arithmetical and mathematical, and consists in applying to the letters of a word the sense they bear *as numbers* — letters being used also for figures in the Hebrew as in Greek. Figurative Gematria deduces mysterious interpretations from the shapes of letters used in occult manuscripts and the Bible.

Thus, as shown by Cornelius Agrippa, in *Numbers*,<sup>2</sup> the letter *Beth* means the reversal of enemies. The sacred anagrams known as *Zeruph* yield their mysterious sense by the second mode named *Themura*, and consist in displacing the letters and substituting them one for another and then arranging them in rows according to their numerical value. If, of all operations in the occult sciences, there is not one that is not rooted in astrology, arithmetic and especially geometry are a part of the first principles of magic. The most recondite mysteries and powers in nature are made to yield to the power of numbers. And let this not be regarded as a fallacy. He who knows the relative and respective numbers or the so-called correspondence between causes and effects will alone be able to obtain of a certainty the desired result. A small mistake, a trifling difference in an astronomical calculation and — no correct prediction of a heavenly phenomenon becomes possible. As Severinus Boethius puts it, it is by the proportion of certain numbers that all things were formed. “God geometrizes,” saith Plato, meaning creative nature. If there are so many occult virtues in natural things, “what marvel if in numbers, which are pure and commixed only with ideas, there should be found virtues greater and more occult?” asks Agrippa. Even Time must contain the mystery number; so also does motion, or action, and so, therefore, must all things that move, act, or are subjected to time. But

. . . the mystery is in the abstract power of number, in its rational and formal state, not in the expression of it by the voice, as among people who buy and sell.<sup>3</sup>

The Pythagoreans claimed to discern many things in the numbers of names. And if those who having understanding were invited to “compute the number and name of the beast” by the author of St. John’s *Revelation* it is because that author was a Kabbalist.<sup>4</sup>

The wisecracks of our generation raise daily the cry that science and metaphysics are irreconcilable; and *facts* prove as daily that it is but one more fallacy among the many that are uttered. The reign of exact science is proclaimed on every housetop,

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<sup>1</sup> [Porphyry, *Pythagoræ vita*, Amsterdam, 1707. Cf. H. Jennings, *The Rosicrucians*, 1870, p. 49 (p. 35, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). — *Boris de Zirkoff*.]

<sup>2</sup> x, 35

<sup>3</sup> *De Occulta Philos.*, cap. iii, p. cii

<sup>4</sup> [Consult “The Number of the Beast is the Number of Man,” in the same Series. — ED. PHIL.]

and Plato, who is said to have trusted to his imagination, is sneered at, while Aristotle's method built on pure reason is the one accepted by Science. Why? Because, says Dr. Draper,

. . . the philosophic method of Plato was the inverse of that of Aristotle. Its starting point was universals, the very existence of which was a matter of faith, and from these it descended to particulars, or details. Aristotle, on the contrary, rose from particulars to universals, advancing to them by inductions.<sup>1</sup>

**Mathematics is the only exact and infallible science, for it proceeds from universals to particulars.**

We humbly answer to this, that mathematics, *the only exact and infallible science* in the world of sciences proceeds from UNIVERSALS.

It is this year especially, the year 1881, which seems to defy and challenge sober, matter-of-fact science, and by its extraordinary events *above* as *below*, in heaven as upon earth, to invite criticism upon its strange "coincidences." Its freaks in the domains of meteorology and geology were prognosticated by the astronomers, and these everyone is bound to respect. There is a certain triangle seen this year on the horizon formed of the most brilliant stars which was predicted by them, but none the less left unexplained. It is a simple geometrical combination of heavenly bodies, they say. As to that triangle, formed of the three large planets — Venus, Jupiter and Saturn — having aught to do with the destinies of either men or nations — why, that is pure superstition. "The mantle of the astrologers is burnt and the predictions of some of them, whenever verified, must be attributed to simple and blind chance."

We are not so sure of that; and, if permitted, will further on tell why — meanwhile, we must remind the reader of the fact that Venus, the most intensely brilliant of the three above-named planets, as was remarked in Europe and for all we know in India also — suddenly parted company with its two companions and, slowly moving onward, stopped above them, whence it goes on dazzling the inhabitants of the earth with an almost preternatural brilliancy.

- 1** The conjunction of *two* planets happens but rarely; that of three is still more rare; while the conjunction of four and five planets becomes an event. The latter phenomenon took place in historical times but once, 2449 years B.C., when it was observed by the Chinese astronomers and has not recurred since then. That extraordinary meeting of five large planets forebode all kinds of evils to the Celestial Empire and its peoples, and the panic then created by the predictions of the Chinese astrologers was not in vain. During the following 500 years, a series of internal broils, revolutions, wars, and changes of dynasty marked the end of the golden age of national felicity in the Empire founded by the great Fu-hi.
- 2** Another conjunction is known to have happened just before the beginning of the Christian era. In that year, three large planets had approached so closely together as to be mistaken by many for one single star of an immense size. Biblical scholars were more than once inclined to identify these "three in one" with

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<sup>1</sup> *History of the Conflict between Religion and Science*, p. 26



the Trinity, and at the same [time] with the “Star of the wise men of the East.” But they saw themselves thwarted in such pious desires by their hereditary enemies — the irreverent men of science, who proved that the astronomical conjunction took place a year before the period claimed for the alleged birth of Jesus. Whether the phenomenon forebode good or evil is best answered by the subsequent history and development of Christianity, than which, no other religion cost so many human victims, shed such torrents of blood, nor brought the greater portion of humanity to suffer from what is now termed the “blessings of Christianity and civilization.”

- 3 A third conjunction took place in A.D. 1563. It appeared near the great nebula in the constellation of Cancer. There were three great planets and — according to the astronomers of those days — the most nefarious: Mars, Jupiter and Saturn. The constellation of Cancer has always had a bad reputation; that year the mere fact of its having in its neighbourhood a triune conjunction of evil stars, caused the astrologers to predict great and speedy disasters. These did come to pass. A terrible plague broke out and raged in all Europe, carrying off thousands upon thousands of victims.

And now, in 1881, we have again a visit of three other “Wanderers.” What do they forebode? Nothing good, and it would seem, as if of the great evils they are likely to pour on the devoted heads of hapless humanity, the fatal prelude is already being played. Let us enumerate and see how far we are from the truth. The nearly simultaneous and certainly in some cases unexpected death of the great and most remarkable men of our age. In the region of politics, we find the Emperor of Russia, Lord Beaconsfield, and Aga Khan;<sup>1</sup> in that of literature, Carlyle and George Eliot; in the world of art, Rubinstein, the greatest musical genius. In the domain of geology — earthquakes which have already destroyed the town of Casamicciola on the Island of Ischia, a village in California and the Island of Chios which was laid entirely waste by the terrible catastrophe — one, moreover, predicted for that very day by the astrologer Raphael. In the domain of wars, the hitherto invincible Great Britain was worsted at the Cape by a handful of Boers; Ireland is convulsed and threatens; a plague now rages in Mesopotamia; another war is preparing between Turkey and Greece; armies of Socialists and red-handed Nihilists obscure the sun of the political horizon in Europe; and the latter thrown into a violent perturbation is breathlessly awaiting the most unexpected events [in the] future — defying the perspicacity of the most acute of her political men. In the religious spheres the heavenly triangle pointed its double horn at the monastic congregations and — a general *exodus* of monks and nuns — headed by the children of Loyola, followed in France. There is a revival of infidelity and mental rebellion, and with it a proportionate increase of missionary labourers (not labour), who like the hordes of Attila destroy much and build but little. Shall we

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<sup>1</sup> H.H. Aga Khan was one of the most remarkable men of the century. Of all the Mussulmans, Shiahs or Sunnis, who rejoice in the green turban, the Aga's claims to a direct descent from Mahomet through Ali rested on undeniable proofs. He again represented the historical “Assassins” of the Old Man of the Mountain. He had married a daughter of the late Shah of Persia; but political broils forced him to leave his native land and seek refuge with the British Government in India. In Bombay he had a numerous religious following. He was a high-spirited, generous man and a hero. The most noticeable feature of his life was that he was born in 1800 — and died in 1881, at the age of 81. In his case too the occult influence of the year 1881 has asserted itself.

add to the list of signs of these *nefasti dies*,<sup>1</sup> the birth of the *New Dispensation* at Calcutta? The latter, though having but a small and quite a local importance, shows yet a direct bearing upon our subject, *i.e.*, the astrological meaning of the planetary conjunction. Like Christianity with Jesus and his Apostles the *New Dispensation* can henceforth boast of having had a forerunner in starry heaven — the present triune conjunction of planets. It proves, moreover, our Kabbalistic theory of periodical cyclic recurrences of events. As the Roman sceptical world of 1881 years ago, we are startled by a fresh revival of mendicant Ebionites, fasting Essenes and Apostles upon whom descend “cloven tongues like as of fire,” and of whom we cannot even say as of the Jerusalem twelve, “that these men are full of new wine,” since their inspiration is entirely due to water, we are told.

The year 1881, then, of which we have lived but one-third, promises, as predicted by astrologers and astronomers, a long and gloomy list of disasters on land, as on the seas. We have shown elsewhere<sup>2</sup> how strange in every respect was the grouping of the figures of our present year, adding that another such combination will not happen in the Christian chronology before the year 11811, just 9930 years hence, when — there will be no more a “Christian” chronology we are afraid, but something else. We said:

Our year 1881 offers that strange fact, that from whichever of four sides you look at its figures — from right or left, from top or bottom, from the back, by holding the paper up to the light — or even *upside down*, you will always have before you the same mysterious and Kabbalistic numbers of 1881. It is the correct number of the three figures which have most perplexed mystics for over eighteen centuries. The year 1881, in short, is the number of the Great Beast of the *Revelation*, the number 666 of St. John’s *Apocalypse*<sup>3</sup> — that Kabbalistic Book *par excellence*. See for yourselves: 1 + 8 + 8 + 1 make eighteen; eighteen divided thrice gives three times six, or placed in a row, 666, “the number of man.”<sup>4</sup>

This number has been for centuries the puzzle of Christendom and was interpreted in a thousand different ways. Newton himself worked for years over the problem, but ignorant of the secret Kabbalah, failed. Before the Reformation it was generally supposed in the Church to have reference to the coming Antichrist. Since then the Protestants began to apply it, in that spirit of Christian charity which so characterizes Calvinism, to the Latin Popish Church, which they call the “Harlot,” the “great Beast” and the “scarlet woman,” and forthwith the latter returned the compliment in the same brotherly and friendly spirit. The supposition that it refers to the Roman

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<sup>1</sup> [Fasti is the plural of the Latin adjective *fastus*, most commonly used as a substantive. The word derives from *fas*, meaning “that which is permitted,” that is, “that which is legitimate in the eyes of the gods.” *Fasti dies* were the days on which business might be transacted without impiety, in contrast to *dies nefasti*, days on which assemblies and courts could not convene. The word *fasti* itself came to denote lists organised by time. The temporal structure distinguished *fasti* from *regesta*, which were simple lists of property, or assets, such as land or documents, or transactions transferring property. — *Wikipedia*.]

<sup>2</sup> *Bombay Gazette*, 30<sup>th</sup> March, 1881

<sup>3</sup> [xiii, 17-18]

<sup>4</sup> [Full text in “The Number of the Beast is the Number of Man,” in the same Series. — ED. PHIL.]

nation — the Greek letters of the word *Latinus* as numerals, amounting to exactly 666 — is absurd.

There are beliefs and traditions among the people which spring no one knows from whence and pass from one generation to the other, as an oral prophecy, and an unavoidable fact to come. One of such traditions, a correspondent of the *Moscow Gazette* happened to hear in 1874 from the mountaineers of the Tyrolian Alps, and subsequently from old people in Bohemia. “From the first day of 1876,” says that tradition, “a sad, heavy period will begin for the whole world *and will last for seven consecutive years*. The most unfortunate and fatal year for all will be 1881. He who will survive it has an *iron head*.”

An interesting new combination, meanwhile, of the year 1881, in reference to the life of the murdered Czar, may be found in the following dates, every one of which marks a more or less important period in his life. It proves at all events what important and mysterious a part, the figures 1 and 8 played in his life. 1 and 8 make 18; and the Emperor was born April 17<sup>th</sup> ( $1 + 7 = 8$ ) in 1818. He died in 1881 — the figures of the years of his birth and death being identical, and coinciding, moreover, with the date of his birth 17 ( $1 + 7 = 8$ ). The figures of the years of the birth and death being thus the same, as four times 18 can be formed out of them, and the sum total of each year’s numerals is 18. The arrival at Petersburg of the late Empress — the Czar’s bride — took place on September 8<sup>th</sup>; their marriage April 16<sup>th</sup> — ( $8 + 8 = 16$ ); their eldest daughter, the Grand Duchess Alexandra, was born August 18<sup>th</sup>; the late Czar-évitch Nicolas Alexandrovitch, on September the 8<sup>th</sup>, 1843 ( $1 + 8 + 4 + 3 = 16$ , *i.e.*, twice 8). The present Czar, Alexander III, was born February 26<sup>th</sup> ( $2 + 6 = 8$ ); the proclamation of the ascension to the throne of the late Emperor was signed February 18; the public proclamation about the coronation day took place April 17<sup>th</sup> ( $1 + 7 = 8$ ). His entrance into Moscow for the coronation was on August 17<sup>th</sup> ( $1 + 7 = 8$ ); the coronation itself being performed August 26<sup>th</sup> ( $2 + 6 = 8$ ); the year of the liberation of the Serfs, 1861, whose numerals sum up to 16 — *i.e.*, twice 8!<sup>1</sup>

To conclude, we may mention here a far more curious discovery made in relation, and as a supplement, to the above calculation, by a Jewish Rabbi in Russia — a Kabbalist, evidently, from the use he makes of the *Gematria* reckoning. It was just published in a St. Petersburg paper. The Hebrew letters as stated have all their numerical value or correspondence in arithmetical figures. The number 18 in the Hebrew Alphabet is represented by the letters — “HETH” = 8, and “YOD” = 10, *i.e.*, 18. United together Heth and Yöd form the word “khaï,” or “hay,” which literally translated means the imperative — *live* and *alive*. Every orthodox Jew during his fast and holy days is bound to donate for some pious purpose a sum of money consisting of, and containing the number 18 in it. So, for instance, he will give 18 kopecks, or 18 ten-kopeck bits, 18 roubles or 18 times 18 kopecks or roubles — according to his means and degree of religious fervour. Hence, the year 1818 — that of the Emperor’s birth — meant, if read in Hebrew — “khaï, khaï” or *live, live* — pronounced emphatically twice; while the year 1881 — that of his death read in the same way, yields the

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<sup>1</sup> [All the dates given in this paragraph are according to the Julian Calendar or “Old Style” to which 12 days should be added (in the nineteenth century to obtain the correct dates, according to the Gregorian Calendar. — Boris de Zirkoff.)]

fatal words “Khai-tze” rendered in English, “*thou living one depart*”; or in other words, “life is ended.” . . .

Of course, those sceptically inclined will remark that it is all due to blind chance and “coincidence.” Nor would we much insist upon the contrary, were such an observation to proceed but from uncompromising atheists, and materialists, who, denying the above, remain only logical in their disbelief, and have as much right to their opinion as we have to our own. But we cannot promise the same degree of indulgence whenever attacked by orthodox religionists. For, that class of persons while pooh-poohing speculative metaphysics, and even astrology — a system based upon strictly mathematical calculations, pertaining as much to exact science as biology or physiology, and open to experiment and verification — will, at the same time, firmly believe that potato disease, cholera, railway accidents, earthquakes and the like are all of *Divine origin* and, proceeding directly of God, have a meaning and a bearing on human life in its highest aspects. It is to the latter class of theists that we say: prove to us the existence of a *personal* God either outside or inside physical nature, demonstrate him to us as the external agent, the Ruler of the Universe; show him concerned in human affairs and destiny and exercising on them an influence, at least as great and reasonably probable as that exercised by the sunspots upon the destiny of vegetables and then — laugh at us. Until then, and so long as no one is prepared with such a proof and solution, in the words of Tyndall,

Let us lower our heads, and acknowledge our ignorance, priest and philosopher, one and all.

## **Astrology is a mathematical science, which teaches us what particular causes will produce what particular combination of effects.**

### **True Astrology gives us the means of obtaining the knowledge to guide our future births.**

First published in *The Theosophist*, Vol. V, No. 9 (57), June 1884, pp. 213-14.  
Republished in *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (ASTROLOGY) VI pp. 227-30.

[The authorship of this article is uncertain. Peculiarities of style indicate at least the possibility of its having been written by H.P. Blavatsky, while the rather authoritative manner of presenting the subject, and deep insight, strengthen this idea. The intrinsic value of the teachings herein contained has been the deciding factor for the inclusion of this article in the present volume. — *Boris de Zirkoff*.]

In the last number appeared the review of an elementary work on Astrology. It may not therefore be unprofitable to say a few words in regard to the subject itself. The popular idea seems to be that the planets and the stars exercise a certain influence upon the destiny of man, which the science of Astrology can determine; and that there are means within the reach of that science which can be used to propitiate “the evil stars.” This crude notion, not philosophically understood, leads to two unscientific fallacies. On the one hand it gives rise to a belief in the doctrine of fatality, which says that man has no free-will inasmuch as everything is predetermined, and in the other it leads one to suppose that the laws of Nature are not immutable, since certain propitiatory rites may change the ordinary course of events. These two extreme views induce the “rationalist” to reject “Astrology” as a remnant of the uncivilized

condition of our ancestors, since as a matter-of-fact student he refuses to recognize the importance of the saying,

“Real philosophy seeks rather to solve than to deny.”

It is an axiom of the philosophic student that truth generally lies between the extremes. If one therefore proceeds in this spirit, he will find that there is yet not an unreasonable or unscientific hypothesis which can reconcile all these different views, and which, not unlikely, was what the ancients meant by Astrology. Although a study of this science may enable one to determine what the course of events will be, it cannot necessarily be inferred therefrom that the planets exercise any influence over that course. The clock indicates, it does not influence, the time. And a distant traveller has often to put right his clock so that it may indicate correctly the time of the place he visits. Thus, though the planets may have no hand in changing the destiny of the man, still their position may indicate what that destiny is likely to be. This hypothesis leads us to the question,

**As the clock indicates, it does not influence the time, so the astrologer cannot shape destiny.**

As understood by the Occultist, it is merely the chain of causation producing its correspondently series of effects. One who has carefully followed the teachings of Occultism, as recently given out, concerning *Devachan* and future re-births, knows that every individual is his own creator or his own father, *i.e.*, our future personality will be the result of our present mode of living. In the same manner our present birth, with all its conditions, is the tree grown out of the germ sown in our past incarnations. Our physical and spiritual conditions are the effects of our actions produced on those two planes in previous existences. Now it is a well-known principle of Occultism that the ONE LIFE which pervades ALL connects all the bodies in space. All heavenly bodies have thus mutual relation, which is blended with man's existence, since he is but a microcosm in the macrocosm. Every thought, as much as action, is dynamic and is impressed in the imperishable Book of Nature — the *Ākāśa*, the objective aspect of the UNMANIFESTED LIFE. All our thoughts and actions thus produce the vibrations in space, which mould our future career. And astrology is a science which, having determined the nature of the laws that govern these vibrations, is able to state precisely a particular or a series of results, the causes of which have already been produced by the individual in his previous life. Since the present incarnation is the child of the previous one, and since there is but that ONE LIFE which holds together all the planets of the Solar system, the position of those planets at the time of the birth of an individual — which event is the aggregate result of the causes already produced — gives to the true Astrologer the data upon which to base his predictions. It should be well remembered at the same time that just as the “astronomer who catalogues the stars cannot add one atom to the universe,” so also can no astrologer, no more than the planet, *influences* the human destiny. Perhaps the following beautiful passage from that exquisite work of Bulwer Lytton's — *Zanoni* — may help to make the meaning still clearer:

For the accomplishment of whatever is great and lofty, the clear perception of truths is the first requisite — truths adapted to the object desired. The warrior thus reduces the chances of battle to combinations almost of mathematics. He

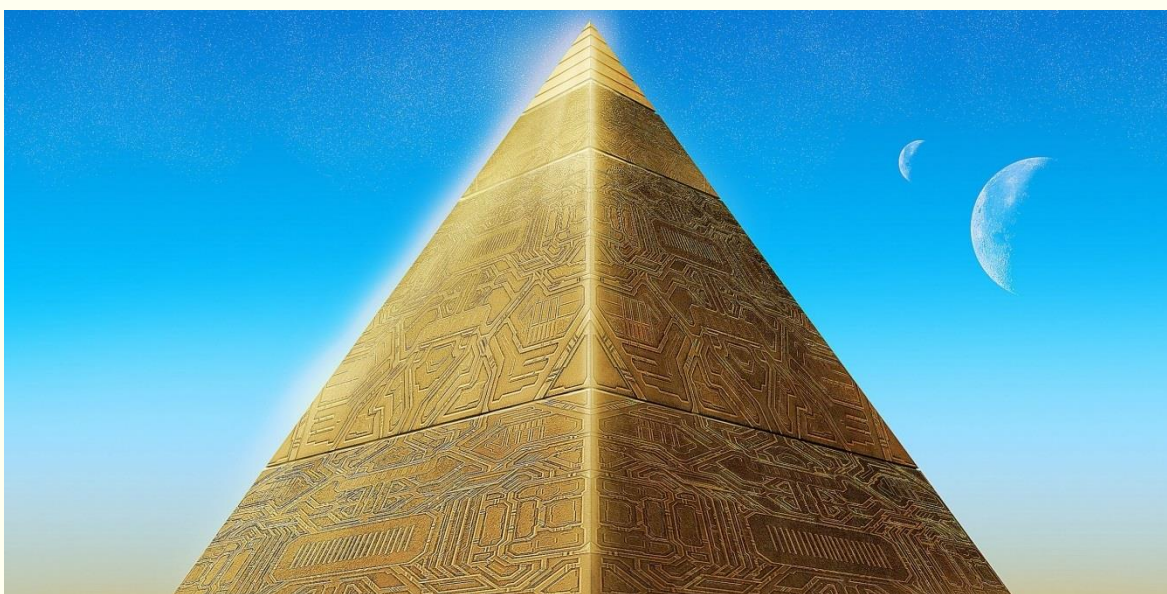
can predict a result, if he can but depend upon the materials he is forced to employ.<sup>1</sup>

This necessitates a consideration of the element of clairvoyance necessary to constitute a true astrologer.

The ancient *Rishis*, to condemn whose books without a hearing was till recently a general practice, had by observation, experiment and deep occult knowledge, taken account of all conceivable combinations of various causes and determined with mathematical precision almost to infinitesimal point their effects. But yet, since the cosmos is infinite, no finite being can ever take cognisance of *all* the possibilities of Nature; at any rate they cannot be committed to writing, since as *Isis Unveiled* says:

. . . to express divine ideas, divine language is necessary.

Recognising the truth of this most important but unfortunately often neglected axiom, they laid down as the first condition of success in astrology a pure life, physically, morally and spiritually. This was intended to develop the psychic capacities of the astrologer who could thus see in *Ākāśa* the combinations, not alluded to in the written works, and predict their results in the manner beautifully illustrated in the above extract from *Zanoni*. In short, true Astrology is a mathematical science, which teaches us what particular causes will produce what particular combinations, and thus, understood in its real significance, gives us the means of obtaining the knowledge how to guide our future births. True, such astrologers there are but few: but are we justified in condemning the science of electricity because there may be very few real electricians? We must not at the same time lose sight of the fact that although there are numberless combinations which must be determined by the psychic vision of the astrologer, there are yet a very large number of them which have been determined and put on record by the ancient sages. It is these cases which baffle us when we find that some astrological calculations prove correct while others are quite beside the mark.



<sup>1</sup> [Bk. III, ch. iv, p. 128. Full text in our Buddhas and Initiates Series. — ED. PHIL.]

## The Great Pyramid of Egypt was an Observatory of Occult Astrognomy.

From *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (ANCIENT ASTRONOMY – THE GREAT PYRAMID) XIII pp. 321-23.

The Manuscript of this Fragment in H.P. Blavatsky's handwriting exists in the Adyar Archives. It consists of three sheets which have been transcribed and originally published in *The Theosophist*, Vol. LXXXV, No. 2, November 1963. — *Boris de Zirkoff*.

**It must have been built at a time when Draconis, the then Polar Star, was at its lower culmination and the Pleiades, Alcyone especially, were on the same meridian above.**

Disintegrating the objective forms of the celestial cattle, by rending asunder the parent constellations from their progeny — the Zodiacal signs made them retrograde 30 degrees toward the West, so with Astrognomy. As if to enforce the more emphatically upon the human mind the everlasting Wisdom of the axiom of the Founder of Astronomy, the Shepherd-god Hermes-A-Brahm — “as above so it is below; as in heaven, so on earth,” hardly yet twelve centuries ago we thought of perceiving that the collective wisdom of our patriarchal teachers had long time since emigrated or rather also moved — West; but never perceived that on its way it had lost as well as the “signs” all semblance of definite forms. In their ignorance, our astronomical predecessors of the Transitional Ages, scoffed at their predecessors, and these in their turn grinned at those who came before. It seems, almost, as if the discovery by Hipparchus the Nicæan, of the retrograde motion of the equinoctial points had a prophetic character in it, as relating to the simultaneously parallel retrogression of human understanding; till finally, and very happily for humanity, the cycle of intellectual Development, till then on its downward path, having reached its nadir, suddenly proceeded onward, until it culminated in its highest point of altitude — the present glorious Age! How truly wise and prophetically inspired were the archaic Indo-Chaldees and Egyptians even in giving names to things, may be inferred by one instance just recorded from Space, by one of my assistant-star gangers. It is well known to us that at whatever epoch the great Pyramid of Egypt may have been built, it must have been at a time when Draconis, the then Polar Star, was at its lower culmination and the Pleiades — Alcyone especially — were on the same meridian above. By a calculation of Sir John Herschel in A.D. 1839 — who correctly assumed that the long and narrow tubular entrance passage was built so as to level at the then polar star, the building of the Pyramid of Cheops was fixed upon the year 2170 B.C. — whereas it ought to have been, with far more propriety and regard to truth, placed at 28,868 years B.C. by adding to the figures of 2170, the whole period of the preceding Equinoctial precession.<sup>1</sup> Richard A. Proctor,<sup>2</sup> an Astronomist of the same age, was the first to prove that, if we take the pyramid's *cubits*, and multiply the number thereof in a base side of the Pyramid by the number fifty, and increase the result in proportion as the base Diagonal exceeds the measures of the side, the sum comes out in the number of years in the great precessional period. Therefore, there now remains no doubt, nor did it remain, long before the means of verifying events

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<sup>1</sup> Bessel's calculation.

<sup>2</sup> [*The Great Pyramid, observatory, tomb and temple*. London: Chatto & Windus, 1883. See pp. 17-18ff.; 45 *et seq.*]

by examining their pictorial records in the galleries of Boundless Space were discovered — that the builders of the Pyramid had erected it as an Observatory of Occult Astrognomy, and — called the Polar Star Draco, or Draconis, for reasons, certainly perfectly known to themselves. And yet so retrograding proved the human intellect and so inconsistent with its own reforms that unable to follow their Shepherd forefather's grand ideas, and yet anxious to prove that they knew as much and far more, they resorted to the following expedients. After having reviled Astrolatry, and trampled under their feet the sacred bulls Apis and Mnevis, symbolizing Life, and worshipped in the days of Menes and in whom the God Pthah, Sokar, Osiris (Life and Light) were allegorically said to be resident, they yet instituted a Pastoral Religion in which instead of the sacred Bull, they worshipped a Lamb, equally the emblem of Life and Light and regarded as a grand Shepherd, and his assistant Pastors as their Spiritual Guides! They allowed all the heathen names of Stars named by their idolatrous forefathers to remain *status quo*, and, at the same time, perverted their meanings in the most cunning way. So, having erroneously and most ridiculously calculated that less than a fourth of the great astronomical cycle formed by the precedence in the equinoctial presentation has passed since MAN WAS PLACED UPON THE EARTH; they set themselves to making prophecies on quite an opposite basis. So, for instance, one of such Pastors or Shepherds at the head of a hydropathic sect named "Baptists," in an old and now ruined city of the Atlantidian continent, called Philadelphia (probably a Greek colony, peopled by irresolute and ever trembling people called Quakers) took upon himself to interpret the presence of Draconis, the chief Star situated in the tail of the constellation Dragon or the Great Serpent in the following wise. He asked the people to believe that the entrance of the Great Pyramid was the "bottomless pit" or Hell, as they named the Hades of their forefathers! At the same time computing that the one thousand eight hundred and seventy seven inches from the beginning of the Grand Gallery of the Pyramid stood for A.D. 1877 years since the birth of the Lamb, and that there remained but a few inches more to bring the gallery to its end, he maintained it to be a prophecy. Very shortly he said,

Draconis will again be on the meridian below the pole . . . but just seven times lower than at the time of the Pyramid's building. This final downwardness of seven times is strikingly suggestive of the Dragon's complete dethronement. And what is still more remarkable, whilst [Alpha] Draconis is on the meridian at this low point, Aries, the Ram, appears on the meridian above, with the line passing exactly through his horns! A more vivid astronomical sign of the overthrow of Satan . . . it is not possible to conceive. It is, as the very heavens were proclaiming that the ever-living Lamb takes to him his great power, and enters upon his glorious reign!





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