

The Mystical Qabalah
By Dion Fortune

Editor's Introduction

The file you are currently looking at is Part I of Dion Fortune's *The Mystical Qabalah*. I have spent many hours on making this document ready for publication and, although there are many, many hours of work ahead of me to complete the entire book, I felt that it would be of value to make available this first part in order that those students who have been waiting for it might get some benefit from the instructional and theoretical material contained within.

The first part of the book explains how the Qabalah works and how to make use of its method and modes. This is an extremely valuable work and will certainly bear fruit should it be studied in detail. Whether you're new to the study of Qabalah or have been at it for ages you will still find this text of great value.

The second part of the text discusses each of the ten sephiroth in detail. When it is ready the entire text will be published as a PDF and made available.

As for the work I have put into this text, unlike many other scans which you may find on the net I have painstakingly gone through my scan line by line to ensure accuracy with the original. Although some mistakes will invariably get past even the most discriminating editor, I have tried to repair as many mistakes as possible in order to ensure a true representation of the original.

A word on the recent edition published by Weiser. They have released a new edition which is filled with editing and scanning errors. In some places entire sentences have been removed and in others whole lines of text are missing from the original. This means that the book, which is complex to begin with, is rendered almost useless. Although I have brought these errors to their attention with specific references, I have not heard back from them, nor do I expect that I will.

I hope that you enjoy this book and I am somewhat sorry that I do not have an ETA for Part 2 for those of you who are waiting for it. I will say this though, it will get done eventually even if I have to release it one sphere at a time.

May this text help you in your quest for spiritual growth and may its light help guide you along the Path of Return.

In L.V.X.

Greg Wotton

August 13, 2003

Forward

THE Tree of Life forms the ground-plan of the Western Esoteric Tradition and is the system upon which pupils are trained in the Fraternity of the Inner Light.

The transliteration of Hebrew words into English is the subject of much diversity of opinion, every scholar appearing to have his own system. In these pages I have availed myself of the alphabetical table given by MacGregor Mathers in *The Kabbalah Unveiled* because this book is the one generally used by esoteric students. He himself does not adhere to his own table systematically, however, and even uses different spellings for the same words. This is very confusing for anyone who wishes to use the Gematric method of elucidation, in which letters are turned into numbers. When, therefore, Mathers gives alternative transliterations, I have followed the one which coincides with that given in his own table.

The capitalisation employed in these pages may also appear unusual, but it is the one traditionally used among students of the Western Esoteric Tradition. In this system, common words, such as earth or path, are used in a technical sense to denote spiritual principles. When this is done, a capital is used to indicate the fact. When a capital is not used, it may be taken that the word is to be understood in its ordinary sense.

As I have frequently referred to the authority of MacGregor Mathers and Aleister Crowley in matters of Qabalistic mysticism, it may be as well to explain my position in relation to these two writers.

I was at one time a member of the organisation founded by the former, but have never been associated with the latter. I have never known either of these gentlemen personally, MacGregor Mathers having died before I joined his organisation, and Aleister Crowley having then ceased to be associated with it.

The Society of the Inner Light, founded by the late Dion Fortune, has courses for those who wish seriously to pursue the study of the Western Esoteric Tradition. Information about the society may be obtained by writing to the address below. Please enclose British stamps or international postal coupons in your letter if you wish a response.

The Secretary
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Part I

1. The Yoga of The West

1. Very few students of occultism know anything at all about the fountain-head whence their tradition springs. Many of them do not even know there is a Western Tradition. Scholarship is baffled by the intentional blinds and defences with which initiates both ancient and modern have wrapped themselves about, and concludes that the few fragments of a literature which have come down to us are medieval forgeries. They would be greatly surprised if they knew that these fragments, supplemented by manuscripts that have never been allowed to pass out of the hands of initiates, and completed by an oral tradition, are handed down in schools of initiation to this day, and are used as the bases of the practical work of the Yoga of the West.

2. The adepts of those races whose evolutionary destiny is to conquer the physical plane have evolved a Yoga technique of their own which is adapted to their special problems and peculiar needs. This technique is based upon the well-known but little understood Qabalah, the Wisdom of Israel.

3. It may be asked why it is that the Western nations should go to the Hebrew culture for their mystical tradition? The answer to this question will be readily understood by those who are acquainted with the esoteric theory concerning races and sub-races. Everything must have a source. Cultures do not spring out of nothing. The seed-bearers of each new phase of culture must of necessity arise within the preceding Culture. No one can deny that Judaism was the matrix of the European spiritual culture when they recall the fact that Jesus and Paul were both Jews. No race except the Jewish race could possibly have served as the stock upon which the new dispensation was to be grafted because no other race was monotheistic. Pantheism and polytheism had had their day and a new and more spiritual culture was due. The Christian races owe their religion to the Jewish culture as surely as the Buddhist races of the East owe theirs to the Hindu culture.

4. The mysticism of Israel supplies the foundation of modern Western occultism. It forms the theoretical basis upon which all ceremonial is developed. Its famous glyph, the Tree of Life, is the best meditation-symbol we possess because it is the most comprehensive.

5. It is not my intention to write a historical study of the sources of the Qabalah, but rather to show the uses that are made of it by modern students of the Mysteries. For although the roots of our system are in tradition, there is no reason why we should be hidebound by tradition. A technique that is being actually practised is a growing thing, for the experience of each worker enriches it and becomes part of the common heritage.

6. It is not necessarily incumbent upon us to do certain things or hold certain ideas because the Rabbis who lived before Christ had certain views. The world has moved on since those days and we are under a new dispensation but what was true in principle then will be true in principle now, and of value to us. The modern Qabalist is the heir of the ancient Qabalist, but he must re-interpret doctrine

and re-formulate method in the light of the present dispensation if the heritage he has received is to be of any practical value to him.

7. I do not claim that the modern Qabalistic teachings as I have learnt them are identical with those of the pre-Christian Rabbis, but I claim that they are the legitimate descendants thereof and the natural development therefrom.

8. The nearer the source the purer the stream. In order to discover first principles we must go to the fountain-head. But a river receives many tributaries in the course of its flow, and these need not necessarily be polluted. If we want to discover whether they are pure or not, we compare them with the pristine stream, and if they pass this test they may well be permitted to mingle with the main body of waters and swell their strength. So it is with a tradition: that which is not antagonistic will be assimilated. We must always test the purity of a tradition by reference to first principles, but we shall equally judge of the vitality of a tradition by its power to assimilate. It is only a dead faith which remains uninfluenced by contemporary thought.

9. The original stream of Hebraic mysticism has received many tributaries. We see its rise among the nomad star-worshippers of Chaldea, where Abraham in his tent among his flocks hears the voice of God. But Abraham has a shadowy background in which vast forms move half-seen. The mysterious figure of a great Priest-king, "born without father, without mother, without descent; having neither beginning of days nor end of life," administers to him the first Eucharistic feast of bread and wine after the battle with the Kings in the valley, the sinister Kings of Edom, "who ruled ere there was a king in Israel, whose kingdoms are unbalanced force."

10. Generation by generation we trace the intercourse of the princes of Israel with the priest-kings of Egypt. Abraham and Jacob went thither; Joseph and Moses were intimately associated with the court of the royal adepts. When we read of Solomon sending to Hiram, King of Tyre, for men materials to aid in the building of the Temple we know that the famous Tyrian Mysteries must have profoundly influenced the Hebrew esotericism. When we read of Daniel being educated in the palaces of Babylon we know that the wisdom of the Magi must have been accessible to Hebrew illuminati.

11. This ancient mystical tradition of the Hebrews possessed three literatures: the Books of the Law and the Prophets, which are known to us as the Old Testament; the Talmud, or collection of learned commentaries thereon; and the Qabalah, or mystical interpretation thereof. Of these three the ancient Rabbis say that the first is the body of the tradition, the second its rational soul, and the third its immortal spirit. Ignorant men may with profit read the first; learned men study the second; but the wise meditate upon the third. It is a strange thing that Christian exegesis has never sought the keys to the Old Testament in the Qabalah.

12. In Our Lord's day there were three schools of religious thought in Palestine: the Pharisees and the Sadducees, of whom we read so frequently in the Gospels; and the Essenes, who are never referred

to. Esoteric tradition avers that the boy Jesus ben Joseph, when His calibre was recognised by the learned doctors of the Law who heard Him speak in the Temple at the age of twelve, was sent by them to the Essenian community near the Dead Sea to be trained in the mystical tradition of Israel, and that He remained there until He came to John to be baptised in the Jordan before commencing His mission at the age of thirty. Be that as it may, the closing clause of the Lord's Prayer is pure Qabalism. Malkuth, the Kingdom, Hod, the Power, Netzach, the Glory, form the basal triangle of the Tree of Life, with Yesod, the Foundation, or Receptacle of Influences, as the central point. Whoever formulated that prayer knew his Qabalah.

13. Christianity had its esotericism in the Gnosis, which owed much to both Greek and Egyptian thought. In the system of Pythagoras we see an adaptation of the Qabalistic principles to Greek mysticism.

14. The exoteric, state-organised section of the Christian Church persecuted and stamped out the esoteric section, destroying every trace of its literature upon which it could lay hands in striving to eradicate the very memory of a gnosis from human history. It is recorded that the baths and bakehouses of Alexandria were fired for six months with the manuscripts from the great library. Very little remains to us of our spiritual heritage in the ancient wisdom. Everything that was above ground was swept away, and it is only with the excavation of ancient monuments the sands have swallowed that we are beginning to rediscover its fragments.

15. It was not until the fifteenth century, when the power of the Church was beginning to show signs of weakening, that men dared to commit to paper the traditional Wisdom of Israel. Scholars declare that the Qabalah is a medieval forgery because they cannot trace a succession of early manuscripts, but those who know the manner of working of esoteric fraternities know that a whole cosmogony and psychology can be conveyed in a glyph which means nothing to the uninitiated. These strange old charts could be handed on from generation to generation, their explanation being communicated verbally, and the true interpretation would never be lost. When in doubt as to the explanation of some abstruse point, reference would be made to the sacred glyph, and meditation thereon would unfold what generations of meditation had ensouled therein. It is well known to mystics that if a man meditates upon a symbol around which certain ideas have been associated by past meditation, he will obtain access to those ideas, even if the glyph has never been elucidated to him by those who have received the oral tradition "by mouth to ear."

16. The organised temporal force of the Church availed to drive all rivals from the field and destroy their traces. We little know what seeds of mystical tradition sprang up only to be cut down during the Dark Ages; but mysticism is inherent in the human race, and although the Church had destroyed all roots of tradition in her group-soul, nevertheless devout spirits within her fold rediscovered the technique of the soul's approach to God and developed a characteristic Yoga of their own, closely akin to the Bhakti Yoga of the East. The literature of Catholicism is rich in treatises on mystical theology which reveal practical acquaintance with the higher states of consciousness though a somewhat naive conception of

the psychology thereof, thus revealing the poverty of a system which does not avail itself of the experience of tradition.

17. The Bhakti Yoga of the Catholic Church is only Suitable for those whose temperament is naturally devotional and who find their readiest expression in loving self-sacrifice. But it is not everybody who is of this type, and Christianity is unfortunate in not having any choice of systems to offer its aspirants. The East, being tolerant, is wise, and has developed various Yoga methods, each of which is pursued by its adherents to the exclusion of the others, and yet none would deny that the other methods are also paths to God for those to whom they are suited.

18. In consequence of this deplorable limitation on the part of our theology many Western aspirants take up Eastern methods. For those who are able to live in Eastern conditions and work under the immediate supervision of a guru, this may prove satisfactory, but it seldom gives good results when the various systems are pursued with no other guide than a book and under unmodified Western conditions.

19. It is for this reason that I would recommend to the white races the traditional Western system, which is admirably adapted to their psychic constitution. It gives immediate results, and if done under proper supervision, not only does it not disturb the mental or physical equipoise, as happens with regrettable frequency when unsuitable systems are used, but it produces a unique vitality. It is this peculiar vitality of the adepts which led to the tradition of the elixir of life. I have known a number of people in my time who might justly be considered adepts, and I have always been struck by that peculiar ageless vitality they all possessed.

20. On the other hand, however, I can only endorse what all the gurus of the Eastern Tradition have always averred—that any system of psycho-spiritual development can only be safely and adequately carried on under the personal supervision of an experienced teacher. For this reason, although I shall give in these pages the principles of the mystical Qabalah, I do not consider it would be in anybody's interest to give the keys to its practice even if by the terms of the obligation of my own initiation I were not forbidden to do so. But, on the other hand, I do not consider it fair to the reader to introduce intentional blinks and misinformation, and to the best of my knowledge and belief the information I give is accurate, even if incomplete.

21. The Thirty-two Mystical Paths of the Concealed Glory are ways of life, and those who want to unravel their secrets must tread them. As I myself was trained, so can anyone be trained who is willing to undergo the discipline, and I will gladly indicate the way to any earnest seeker.

2. The Choice of a Path

1. No student will ever make any progress in spiritual development who flits from system to system; first using some New Thought affirmations, then some Yoga breathing exercises and meditation-postures, and following these by an attempt at the mystical methods of prayer. Each of these systems has its value, but that value can only be realised if the system is carried out in its entirety. They are the calisthenics of consciousness, and aim at gradually developing the powers of the mind. The value does not lie in the prescribed exercises as ends in themselves, but in the powers that will be developed if they are persevered with. If we intend to take our occult studies seriously and make of them anything more than desultory light reading, we must choose our system and carry it out faithfully until we arrive, if not at its ultimate goal, at any rate at definite practical results and a permanent enhancement of consciousness. After this has been achieved we may, not without advantage, experiment with the methods that have been developed upon other Paths, and build up an eclectic technique and philosophy therefrom; but the student who sets out to be an eclectic before he has made himself an expert will never be anything more than a dabbler.

2. Whoever has any practical experience of the different methods of spiritual development knows that the method must fit the temperament, and that it must also be adapted to the grade of development of the student. Westerners, especially such as prefer the occult to the mystic Path, often come seeking initiation at a stage of spiritual development which an Eastern guru would consider exceedingly immature. Any method that is to be available for the West must have in its lower grades a technique which can be used as a stepping-stone by these undeveloped students; to ask them to rise immediately to metaphysical heights is useless in the case of the great majority) and prevents a start from being made.

3. For a system of spiritual development to be applicable in the West it must fulfil certain well-defined requirements. To begin with, its elementary technique must be such that it is readily grasped by minds that have in them nothing of the mystic. Secondly, the forces it brings to bear to stimulate the development of the higher aspects of consciousness must be sufficiently powerful and concentrated to penetrate the relatively dense vehicles of the average Westerner, who makes nothing whatever of subtle vibrations. Thirdly, as few Europeans, following a racial dharma of material development, have either the opportunity or the inclination to lead the life of a recluse, the forces employed must be handled in such a way that they can be made available during the brief periods that the modern man or woman can, at the commencement of the Path, snatch from their daily avocations to give to the pursuit. They must, that is to say, be handled by a technique which enables them to be readily concentrated and equally readily dispersed, because it is not possible to maintain these high psychic tensions while living the hard-driving life of the citizen of a European city. Experience proves with unfailing regularity that the methods of psychic development which are effectual and satisfactory for the recluse produce neurotic conditions and breakdowns in the person who pursues them while compelled to endure the strain of modern life.

4. So much the worse for modern life, some may say, and adduce this undeniable fact as an argument for modifying Our Western ways of living. Far be it from me to maintain that our civilisation is perfect, or that wisdom originated and will die with us, but it appears to me that if our karma (or destiny) has caused us to be incarnated in a body of a certain racial type and temperament, it may be concluded that that is the discipline and experience which the Lords of Karma consider we need in this incarnation, and that we shall not advance the cause of our evolution by avoiding or evading it. I have seen so many attempts at spiritual development that were simply evasions of life's problems that I am suspicious of any system which involves a breach with the group-soul of the race. Nor am I impressed by a dedication to the higher life which manifests itself by peculiarities of clothing and bearing and by the manner of cutting, or omitting to cut, the hair. True spirituality never advertises itself.

5. The racial dharma of the West is the conquest of dense matter. If this were realised it would explain many problems in the relationships of West and East. In order that we may conquer dense matter and develop the concrete mind we are endowed by our racial heritage with a particular type of physical body and nervous system, just as other races, such as the Mongolian and the Negro, are endowed with other types.

6. It is injudicious to apply to one type of psycho-physical make-up the developing methods adapted to another; they will either fail to produce adequate results, or produce unforeseen and possibly undesirable results. To say this is not to condemn the Eastern methods, nor decry the Western constitution, which is as God made it, but to reaffirm the old adage that one man's meat is another man's poison.

7. The dharma of the West differs from that of the East; is it therefore desirable to try and implant Eastern ideals in a Westerner? Withdrawal from the earth-plane is not his line of progress. The normal, healthy Westerner has no desire to escape from life, his urge is to conquer it and reduce it to order and harmony. It is only the pathological types who long to "cease upon the midnight with no pain," to be free from the wheel of birth and death; the normal Western temperament demands "life, more life."

8. It is this concentration of life-force that the Western occultist seeks in his operations. He does not try to escape from matter into spirit, leaving an unconquered country behind him to get on as best it may; he wants to bring the Godhead down into manhood and make Divine Law prevail even in the Kingdom of the Shades. This is the root-motive for the acquisition of occult powers upon the Right-hand Path, and explains why initiates do not abandon all for the mystic Divine Union, but cultivate a White Magic.

9. It is this White Magic, which consists in the application of occult powers to spiritual ends, by means of which a large proportion of the training and development of the Western aspirant is carried out. I have seen something of a good many different systems, and in my opinion the person who tries to dispense with ceremonial is working at a great disadvantage. Development by meditation alone is a slow process in the West, because the mind-stuff upon which it has to work, and the mental atmosphere in

which the work has to be done, are very resistant. The only purely meditative school of Western Yoga is that of the Quakers, and I think that they would agree that their path is for the few; the Catholic Church combines Mantra Yoga with its Bhakti Yoga.

10. It is by means of formula that the occultist selects and concentrates the forces he wishes to work with. These formulæ are based upon the Qabalistic Tree of Life, and whatever system he may be working, whether he be assuming the God-forms of Egypt or evoking the inspiration of Iacchus with chant and dance, he has the diagram of the Tree at the back of his mind. It is in the symbolism of the Tree that Western initiates are drilled, and it supplies the essential ground-plan of classification to which all other systems can be related. The Ray upon which the Western aspirant works has manifested itself through many different cultures and developed a characteristic technique in each. The modern initiate works a synthetic system, sometimes using an Egyptian, a Greek, or even a Druidic method, for different methods are best suited for different purposes and conditions. In all cases, however, the operation he designs is strictly related to the Paths of the Tree of which he is master. If he possesses the grade which corresponds to the Sephirah Netzach, he can work with the manifestation of the force of that aspect of the Godhead (distinguished by the Qabalists by the name of Tetragrammaton Elohim) in whatever system he may select. In the Egyptian system it will be the Isis of Nature; in the Greek, Aphrodite; in the Nordic, Freya; in the Druidic, Keridwen. In other words, he possesses the powers of the Sphere of Venus in whatever traditional system he may be using. Having attained a grade in one system, he has access to the equivalent grades of all the other systems of his Tradition.

11. But although he may use these other systems as occasion serves, experience proves that the Qabalah supplies the best groundwork and the best system upon which to train a student before he begins to experiment with the pagan systems. The Qabalah is essentially monotheistic; the potencies it classifies are always regarded as the messengers of God and not His fellow-workers. This principle enforces the concept of a centralised government of the Cosmos and of the grip of the Divine Law upon the whole of manifestation—a very necessary principle with which to imbue any student of the Arcane forces. It is the purity, sanity, and clarity of the Qabalistic concepts as resumed in the formula of the Tree of Life which makes that glyph such an admirable one for the meditations that exalt consciousness and justify us in calling the Qabalah the Yoga of the West.

3. The Method of the Qabalah

1. Speaking of the method of the Qabalah, one of the ancient Rabbis says that an angel coming down to earth would have to take on human form in order to converse with men. The curious symbol-system known to us as the Tree of Life is an attempt to reduce to diagrammatic form every force and factor in the manifested universe and the soul of man; to correlate them one to another and reveal them spread out as on a map so that the relative positions of each unit can be seen and the relations between them traced. In brief, the Tree of Life is a compendium of science, psychology, philosophy, and theology.

2. The student of the Qabalah goes to work in exactly the opposite way to the student of natural science; the latter builds up synthetic concepts; the former analyses abstract concepts. It goes without saying, however, that before a concept can be analysed it must first be assembled. Someone must have thought out the principles that are resumed in the symbol which is the object of meditation of the Qabalist. Who then were the first Qabalists who built up the whole scheme? The Rabbis are unanimous upon this point, they were angels. In other words, it was beings of another order of creation than humanity who gave the Chosen People their Qabalah.

3. To the modern mind this may seem as absurd a statement as the doctrine that babies are found under gooseberry bushes; but if we study the many mystical systems of comparative religion we find that all the illuminati are in agreement upon this point. All men and women who have had practical experience of the spiritual life tell us that they are taught by Divine beings. We shall be very foolish if we altogether disregard such a cloud of witnesses, especially those of us who never have had any personal experience of the higher states of consciousness.

4. There are some psychologists who will tell us that the Angels of the Qabalists and the Gods and Manus of other systems are our own repressed complexes; there are others with less limited outlook who will tell us that these Divine beings are the latent capacities of our own higher selves. To the devotional mystic this is not a point of any great moment; he gets his results, and that is all he cares about; but the philosophical mystic, in other words the occultist, thinks the matter out and arrives at certain conclusions. These conclusions, however, can only be understood when we know what we mean by reality and have a clear line of demarcation between the subjective and the objective. Any one who is trained in philosophical method knows that this is asking a good deal.

5. The Indian schools of metaphysics have most elaborate and intricate systems of philosophy which attempt to define these ideas and render them thinkable; and though generations of seers have given their lives to the task, the concepts still remain so abstract that it is only after a long course of discipline, called Yoga in the East, that the mind is able to apprehend them at all.

6. The Qabalist goes to work in a different way. He does not attempt to make the mind rise up on the wings of metaphysics into the rarefied air of abstract reality; he formulates a concrete symbol that the eye can see, and lets it represent the abstract reality that no untrained human mind can grasp.

7. It is exactly the same principle as algebra. Let X represent the unknown quantity, let Y represent the half of X , and let Z represent something we know. If we begin to experiment with Y ; to find out its relation to Z , and in what proportions, it soon ceases to be entirely unknown; we have learnt something at any rate about it; and if we are sufficiently skilful we may in the end be able to express Y in terms of Z , and then we shall begin to understand X .

8. There are a great many symbols which are used as objects of meditation; the Cross in Christendom; the God-forms in the Egyptian system; phallic symbols in other faiths. These symbols are used by the uninitiated as a means of concentrating the mind and introducing into it certain thoughts, calling up certain associated ideas, and stimulating certain feelings. The initiate, however, uses a symbol-system differently; he uses it as an algebra by means of which he will read the secrets of unknown potencies; in other words, he uses the symbol as a means of guiding thought out into the Unseen and Incomprehensible.

9. And how does he do this? He does it by using a composite symbol; a symbol which is an unattached unit would not serve his purpose. In contemplating such a composite symbol as the Tree of Life he observes that there are definite relations between its parts. There are some parts of which he knows something; there are others of which he can intuit something, or, more crudely, make a guess, reasoning from first principles. The mind leaps from one known to another known and in so doing traverses certain distances, metaphorically speaking; it is like a traveller in the desert who knows the situation of two oases and makes a forced march between them. He would never have dared to push out into the desert from the first oasis if he had not known the location of the second; but at the end of his journey he not only knows much more about the characteristics of the second oasis, but he has also observed the country lying between them. Thus, making forced marches from oasis to oasis, backwards and forwards across the desert, he gradually explores it; nevertheless, the desert is incapable of supporting life.

10. So it is with the Qabalistic system of notation. The things it renders are unthinkable-and yet the mind, tracking from symbol to symbol, manages to think about them; and although we have to be content to see in a glass darkly, yet we have every reason to hope that ultimately we shall see face to face and know even as we are known; for the human mind grows by exercise, and that which was at first as unthinkable as mathematics to the child who cannot manage his sums, finally comes within the range of our realisation. By thinking about a thing, we build concepts of it.

11. It is said that thought grew out of language, not language out of thought. What words are to thought, symbols are to intuition. Curious as it may seem, the symbol precedes the elucidation; that is why we declare that the Qabalah is a growing system, not a historic monument. There is more to be got

out of the Qabalistic symbols to-day than there was in the time of the old dispensation because our mental content is richer in ideas. How much more, for instance, does the Sefhirah Yesod, wherein work the forces of growth and reproduction, mean to the biologist than to the ancient rabbi? Everything that has to do with growth and reproduction is resumed in the Sphere of the Moon. But this Sphere, as represented upon the Tree of Life, is set about with Paths leading to other Sephiroth; therefore the biological Qabalist knows that there must be certain definite relationships between the forces subsumed in Yesod and those represented by the symbols assigned to these Paths. Brooding over these symbols, he gets glimpses of relationships that do not reveal themselves when the material aspect of things is considered; and when he comes to work these out in the material of his studies he finds that therein are hidden important clues; and so upon the Tree, one thing leads to another, explanation of hidden causes arising out of the proportions and relations of the various individual symbols composing this mighty synthetic glyph.

12. Each symbol, moreover, admits of interpretation upon the different planes, and through its astrological associations can be related to the gods of any pantheon, thus opening up vast new fields of implication in which the mind ranges endlessly, symbol leading on to symbol in an unbroken chain of associations; symbol confirming symbol as the many-branching threads gather themselves together into a synthetic glyph once more, and each symbol capable of interpretation in terms of whatever plane the mind may be functioning upon.

13. This mighty, all-embracing glyph of the soul of man and of the universe, by virtue of its logical association of symbols, evokes images in the mind; but these images are not randomly evolved, but follow along well-defined association-tracks in the Universal Mind. The symbol of the Tree is to the Universal Mind what the dream is to - the individual ego - it is a glyph synthesised from subconsciousness to represent the hidden forces.

14. The universe is really a thought-form projected from the mind of God. The Qabalistic Tree might be likened to a dream-picture arising from the subconsciousness of God and dramatising the subconscious content of Deity. In other words, if the universe is the conscious end-product of the mental activity of the Logos, the Tree is the symbolic representation of the raw material of the Divine consciousness and of the processes whereby the universe came into being.

15. But the Tree applies not only to the Macrocosm but to the Microcosm which, as all occultists realise, is a replica in miniature. It is for this reason that divination is possible. That little-understood and much-maligned art has for its philosophical basis the System of Correspondences represented by symbols. The correspondences between the soul of man and the universe are not arbitrary, but arise out of developmental identities. Certain aspects of consciousness were developed in response to certain phases of evolution, and therefore embody the same principles; consequently they react to the same influences. A man's soul is like a lagoon connected with the sea by a submerged channel; although to all outward seeming it is land-locked, nevertheless its water level rises and falls with the tides of the sea because of the hidden connection. So it is with human consciousness, there is a subconscious

connection between each individual soul and the World-soul deep hidden in the most primitive depths of subconsciousness, and in consequence we share in the rise and fall of the cosmic tides.

16. Each symbol upon the Tree represents a cosmic force or factor. When the mind concentrates upon it, it comes into touch with that force; in other words, a surface channel, a channel in consciousness, has been made between the conscious mind of the individual and a particular factor in the world-soul, and through this channel the waters of the ocean pour into the lagoon. The aspirant who uses the Tree as his meditation-symbol establishes point by point the union between his soul and the world-soul. This results in a tremendous access of energy to the individual soul; it is this which endows it with magical powers.

17. But just as the universe must be ruled by God, so must the many-sided soul of man be ruled by its god-the spirit of man. The Higher Self must dominate its universe or there will be unbalanced force; each factor will rule its own aspect, and they will war among themselves. Then do we have the rule of the Kings of Edom, whose kingdoms are unbalanced force.

18. Thus do we see in the Tree a glyph of the soul of man and the universe, and in the legends associated with it the history of the evolution of the soul and the Way of Initiation.

4. *The Unwritten Qabalah*

1. The point of view from which I approach the Holy Qabalah in these pages differs, so far as I know, from that of all other writers on the subject, for to me it is a living system of spiritual development, not a historical curiosity. Few people, even among those interested in occultism, realise that there is an active Esoteric Tradition in our midst, handed down in private manuscripts and by “mouth to ear.” Still fewer know that it is the Holy Qabalah, the mystic system of Israel, which forms its basis. But where may we look more aptly for our occult inspiration than to the Tradition which gave us the Christ?

2. The interpretation of the Qabalah is not to be found, however, among the Rabbis of the Outer Israel, who are Hebrews after the flesh, but among those who are the Chosen People after the spirit—in other words, the initiates. Neither is the Qabalah, as I have learnt it, a purely Hebraic system, for it has been supplemented during medieval times by much alchemical lore and by the intimate association with it of that most marvellous system of symbolism, the Tarot.

3. In my presentation of the subject, therefore, I do not appeal so much to tradition in support of my views, as to modern practice among those who make use of the Qabalah as their method of occult technique. It may be alleged against me that the ancient Rabbis knew nothing of some of the concepts here set forth; to this I reply that it is hardly to be expected that they should, as these things were not known in their day, but are the work of their successors of the Spiritual Israel. For my part, although I would not willingly mislead anyone concerning the teachings of those of ancient days, and upon matters of historical accuracy stand subject to correction from any who are better informed than I am in these matters (and their name is legion), I care not one jot for the authority of tradition if it hampers the free development of a system of such practical value as the Holy Qabalah, and I use the work of my predecessors as a quarry whence I fetch the stone to build my city. Neither am I limited to this quarry by any ordinance that I know of; but fetch also cedar from Lebanon and gold from Ophir if it suits my purpose.

4. Let it be clearly understood, therefore, that I do not say, This is the teaching of the ancient Rabbis; rather do I say, This is the practice of the modern Qabalists, and for us a much more vital matter, for it is a practical system of spiritual unfoldment; it is the Yoga of the West.

5. Having thus guarded myself as far as possible against blame for not having done what I never undertook to do, let me now define my own position in the matter of scholarship and general qualifications for the task in hand. So far as actual scholarship goes, I am in the same class as William Shakespeare, having little Latin and less Greek, and of Hebrew only that peculiar portion which is cultivated by occultists—the ability to transliterate unpointed Hebrew script for the purposes of Gematric calculations. Of any knowledge of Hebrew as a language I am guiltless.

6. Whether such frank acknowledgement of my deficiencies will serve to disarm criticism I do not know; no doubt it will be alleged against me, and not without justification, that one so ill-equipped should not have undertaken the task at all. To this I reply that if one saw a man dying injured, should the admitted absence of a medical qualification debar one from going to his assistance and giving him what help one could, pending the arrival of qualified attention? My work upon the Qabalah is of the nature of first aid. I find an invaluable system lying neglected, and ill-qualified for the task as I may be, I am striving to draw attention to its possibilities and restore it to its proper place as the key to Western occultism; and it is my chief hope in so doing that it may attract the attention of scholars, and that they will continue the task of translation and investigation of the Qabalistic manuscripts, which are as yet a vein of which only the outcroppings have been worked.

7. One qualification for my task I can plead in justification, however. For the last ten years I have lived and moved and had my being in the Practical Qabalah; I have used its methods both subjectively and objectively till they have become a part of myself; and I know from experience what they yield in psychic and spiritual results, and their incalculable value as a method of using the mind.

8. It is not required of those who would use the Qabalah as their Yoga that they should acquire any extensive knowledge of the Hebrew language; all they need is to be able to read and write the Hebrew characters. The modern Qabalah has been pretty thoroughly naturalised in the English language, but it retains, and must ever retain, all its Words of Power in Hebrew, which is the sacred language of the West just as Sanscrit is the sacred language of the East. There are those who have objected to the free employment of Sanscrit terms in occult literature, and no doubt they will object even more strongly to the employment of Hebrew characters, but their use is unavoidable, for every letter in Hebrew is also a number, and the numbers to which words add up are not only an important clue to their significance, but can also be used to express the relationships existing between different ideas and potencies.

9. According to MacGregor Mathers, in the admirable essay which forms the introduction to his book, the Qabalah is usually classed under four heads:

The Practical Qabalah, which deals with talismanic and ceremonial magic.

The Dogmatic Qabalah, which consists of the Qabalistic literature.

The Literal Qabalah, which deals with the use of letters and numbers.

The Unwritten Qabalah, which consists of a correct knowledge of the manner in which the symbol-systems are arranged on the Tree of Life, and concerning which MacGregor Mathers says, "I may say no more on this point, not even whether I myself have or have not received it." But as this portentous hint is elaborated by the late Mrs MacGregor Mathers in her introduction to the new edition of his book in the following plain-spoken words, "Simultaneously with the publication of the *Qabalah* in 1887, he received instructions from his occult teachers to prepare

what was eventually to become his esoteric school,” it may be justifiable to say that if he did receive the Unwritten Qabalah, it has for some years ceased to be unwritten, for after a quarrel with MacGregor Mathers, Aleister Crowley, the well-known author and scholar, published the lot. His books are now rare and hard to come by, and being much valued by the more scholarly of esotericists, their price has gone up out of sight, and they seldom come into the second-hand book market.

10. The breaking of an initiation oath is a serious matter, and a thing that I, for my part, do not care to do; but I admit of no authority that debars me from collecting and collating all available material that has been published upon any subject, and interpreting it according to the best of my understanding. In these pages it is the system given by Crowley of which I shall avail myself to supplement the points upon which MacGregor Mathers, Wynn Westcott, and A. E. Waite, the principal modern authorities upon the Qabalah, are silent.

11. As to whether I myself have received any knowledge of the Unwritten Qabalah, it would as ill beseem me as MacGregor Mathers to be explicit upon this point, and having followed his classic example of burying my head in the sand and waving my tail, I will return to the consideration of the matter in hand.

12. The essence of the Unwritten Qabalah lies in the knowledge of the order in which certain sets of symbols are arranged upon the Tree of Life. This Tree, *Otz Chiim*, consists of the Ten Holy Sephiroth arranged in a particular pattern and connected by lines which are called the Thirty-two Paths of the *Sepher Yetzirah*, or Divine Emanations (see *The Sepher Yetzirah*, by Wynn Westcott). Here there exists one of the “blinds,” or traps for the uninitiated, in which the ancient Rabbis delighted. We find, if we count them, that there are twenty-two, not thirty-two Paths upon the Tree; but for their purposes the Rabbis treated the Ten Sephiroth themselves as Paths, thus misleading the uninitiated. Thus the first ten Paths of the *Sepher Yetzirah* are assigned to the Ten Sephiroth, and the following twenty-two to the actual Paths themselves. It will then be seen how the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet can be associated with the Paths without discrepancy or overlapping. With them also are associated the twenty-two Tarot trumps, the *Atus*, or Abodes of *Thoth*. Concerning the Tarot cards there are three modern authorities of note: Dr Encausse, or “Papus,” the French writer; Mr A. E. Waite; and the MSS. of MacGregor Mathers’ Order of the Golden Dawn, which Crowley published upon his own authority. All three are different. Concerning the system Mr Waite gives, he himself says, “There is another method known to initiates.” There is reason to suppose that this is the method used by Mathers. Papus disagrees with both these writers in his method, but as his system does violence to many of the correspondences when placed upon the Tree, the final test of all systems, and as the Mathers-Crowley system fits admirably, I think we may justly conclude that the latter is the correct traditional order, and I propose to adhere to it in these pages.

13. The Qabalists further placed upon the Paths of the Tree the Signs of the Zodiac, the Planets, and the Elements. Now there are twelve Signs, seven Planets, and four Elements, making twenty-three

symbols in all. How are these to be fitted on to the Twenty-two Paths? Herein is another “blind,” but the solution is simple. Upon the physical plane we are ourselves in the Element of Earth, therefore that symbol does not appear upon the Paths which lead into the Unseen. Remove this, and we are left with twenty-two symbols, which fit accurately and, correctly placed, are found to correspond perfectly with the Tarot trumps, each elucidating the other in the most remarkable fashion, and giving the keys to esoteric astrology and Tarot divination.

14. The essence of each Path is to be found in the fact that it connects two of the Sephiroth, and we can only understand its significance by taking into account the nature of the linked Spheres upon the Tree. But a Sephirah cannot be understood upon a single plane; it has a fourfold nature. The Qabalists express this by saying that there are four worlds:

Atziluth, the Archetypal World, or World of Emanations; the Divine World.

Briah, the World of Creation, also called Khorsia, the World of Thrones.

Yetzirah, the World of Formation and of Angels.

Assiah, the World of Action; the World of Matter.

(See MacGregor Mathers, *The Qabalah Unveiled*.)

15. The Ten Holy Sephiroth are held to have each its own point of contact with each of the four Worlds of the Qabalists. In the Atziluthic World they manifest through the Ten Holy Names of God; in other words, the Great Unmanifest, shadowed forth through the Three Negative Veils of Existence which hang behind the Crown, declares itself in manifestation as ten different aspects which are represented by the different names used to denote Deity in the Hebrew Scriptures. These are variously rendered in the Authorised Version, and a knowledge of their true significance and the spheres to which they belong enables us to read many of the riddles of the Old Testament.

16. In the Briatic World the Divine Emanations are held to manifest through the Ten Mighty Archangels, whose names play such an important part in ceremonial magic; it is the worn and effaced remnants of these Words of Power that are the “barbarous names of evocation” of mediaeval magic, not one letter of which may be changed.” Why this is so may readily be seen when we remember that in Hebrew a letter is also a number, and the numbers of a Name have an important significance.

17. In the Yetziratic World the Divine Emanations manifest, not through a single Being, but through different types of beings, which are called the Angelic Hosts or Choirs.

18. The Assiatic World is not, strictly speaking, the World of Matter when viewed from the Sephirotic standpoint, but rather the Lower Astral and Etheric Planes which, together, form the

background of matter. Upon the physical plane the Divine Emanations manifest through what may not inaptly be called the Ten Mundane Chakras, likening these centres of manifestation to the centres that exist in the human body, an exact analogy. These Chakras are the Primum Mobile or First Swirlings, the Sphere of the Zodiac, the seven planets, and the Elements taken together-ten in all.

19. It will be seen from the foregoing that each Sephirah will therefore consist, firstly, of its Mundane Chakra; secondly, of an angelic host of beings, Devas or Archons, Principalities or Powers, according to the terminology used; thirdly, an Archangelic Consciousness, or Throne; and fourthly, a special aspect of the Deity. God as He is, in His entirety, being hidden behind the Negative Veils of Existence, incomprehensible to unenlightened human consciousness.

20. The Sephiroth may justly be considered macrocosmic, and the Paths microcosmic; for the Sephiroth, connected as they sometimes are in old diagrams by a flash of lightning, which is often depicted as hilted like a fiery sword, represent the successive Divine Emanations which constitute creative evolution; whereas the Paths represent the successive stages of the unfolding of cosmic realisation in human consciousness; in old pictures a serpent is often depicted as twined about the boughs of the Tree. This is the serpent Nechushtan “who holdeth his tail in his mouth,” the symbol of wisdom and initiation. The coils of this serpent, when correctly arranged upon the Tree, cross each of the Paths in succession and serve to indicate the order in which they should be numbered. With the help of this glyph, then, it is a simple matter to arrange all the tables of symbols in their correct positions upon the Tree, granted that the symbols are given in their correct order in the tables. In certain modern books which rank as authorities upon the subject the correct order is not given, the writers apparently holding that this should not be revealed to the uninitiated. But as this order is given correctly in certain older books, and, for the matter of that, in the Bible itself and the Qabalistic literature, there seems to me no point in deliberately misleading students with spurious information. To refuse to divulge anything may be justifiable, but how is it possible to justify the handing on of misleading statements? No one is going to be persecuted nowadays for their studies in unorthodox sciences, so there can be but one purpose in withholding teaching that relates solely to the theory of the universe and the philosophy arising therefrom, and in no way to the methods of practical magic, and that purpose is to retain a monopoly of the knowledge which confers prestige, if not power.

21. For my part I believe that this selfishness and exclusiveness is the bane of the occult movement rather than its safeguard. It is the old sin of retaining the knowledge of God in the hands of a priesthood and denying it to all outside the sacred clan; justifiable enough when the people were savages, but unjustifiable in the case of the modern student. For when all is said and done, the desired information can be worked out from existing literature by those who care to take the trouble, or purchased plainly set forth by those who can afford high prices for books now rare. Surely the possession of ample time and ample cash should not be the test of the fitness to obtain the Sacred Wisdom?

22. No doubt I shall expose myself to a shower of abuse from the self-constituted guardians of this knowledge who may hold that their precious secrets have been betrayed. To this I reply that I am not

betraying anything that is secret, but collecting that which has already been given to the world and is of a simple and well-known nature. When I first had access to certain manuscripts, I believed them to be secret, and unknown to the world at large, but a wider acquaintance with occult literature has revealed to me that the information is to be found scattered broadcast through it. Much, in fact, to which the initiate is sworn to secrecy has been published by Mathers and Wynn Westcott themselves, and as recently as 1926 a new edition of Mathers' work on the Qabalah was brought out under the editorship of his widow (who may be assumed to have known his wishes), and in that work will be found most of the tables that I give in these pages. As these catalogues of beings were originally given to the world by Isaiah, Ezekiel, and various mediaeval Rabbis, it may justly be held that the copyright in them has lapsed owing to the passage of time. In any case such ownership as there may be in these ideas is vested in the original author and not in any subsequent commentator, and that author, according to the Qabalah itself, is the Archangel Metatron.

23. Much that was once common knowledge has been gathered up and confined under the initiate's oath of secrecy. It is Crowley's jibe at his teachers that they bound him to secrecy with terrible oaths and then "confided the Hebrew alphabet to his safe keeping."

24. The philosophy of the Qabalah is the esotericism of the West. In it we find such a cosmogony as is found in the Stanzas of Dyzan, which were the basis of Mme Blavatsky's work. Herein she found the framework of traditional doctrine which she expounded in her great book, *The Secret Doctrine*. This Qabalistic Cosmogony is the Christian Gnosis. Without it we have an incomplete system in our religion, and it is this incomplete system which has been the weakness of Christianity. The Early Fathers, in the homely metaphor, threw away the baby with the bath-water. A very cursory acquaintance with the Qabalah serves to show that here we have the essential keys to the riddles of Scripture in general and the prophetic books in particular. Is there any good reason why initiates of the present day should put all this knowledge into a secret box and sit upon the lid? If they consider that I am wrong to give accurate information upon matters which they consider their private preserve, I reply that this is a free country and they are entitled to their opinion.

5. Negative Existence

1. The esotericist, when endeavouring to formulate his philosophy for communication to others, is confronted by the fact that his knowledge of the higher forms of existence is obtained by a process other than thought; and this process only commences when thought is left behind. Consequently it is only in that region of consciousness which transcends thought that the highest form of transcendental ideas is known and understood; and it is only to those who are able to use this aspect of consciousness that he can communicate his ideas in their original form. When he wants to communicate these ideas to those who have had no experience of this mode of consciousness, he must either crystallise them into form or fail to convey any adequate impression. Mystics have used every imaginable simile in the endeavour to convey their impressions; philosophers have lost themselves in a maze of words; and all to no purpose so far as the unilluminated soul is concerned. The Qabalists, however, use another method. They do not try to explain to the mind that which the mind is not equipped to deal with; they give it a series of symbols to meditate upon, and these enable it to build the stairway of realisation step by step and to climb where it cannot fly. The mind can no more grasp transcendent philosophy than the eye can see music.

2. The Tree of Life, as cannot too often be emphasised, is not so much a system as a method; those who formulated it realised the important truth that in order to obtain clarity of vision one must circumscribe the field of vision. Most Philosophers founded their systems upon the Absolute; but this is a shifting foundation, for the human mind can neither define nor grasp the Absolute. Some others try to use a negation for their foundation, declaring that the Absolute is, and must ever be, unknowable. The Qabalists do neither of these things. They content themselves with saying that the Absolute is unknown to the state of consciousness which is normal to human beings.

3. For the purposes of their system, therefore, they draw a veil at a certain point in manifestation, not because there is nothing there, but because the mind, as such, must stop there. When the human mind has been brought to its highest stage of development, and consciousness can detach itself therefrom and, as it were, stand upon its own shoulders, we may be able to penetrate the Veils of Negative Existence, as they are called. But for all practical purposes we can understand the nature of the cosmos if we are content to accept the Veils as philosophical conventions, and realise that they correspond to human limitations, not to cosmic conditions. The origin of things is inexplicable in terms of our philosophy. However far we push our inquiries back into origins in the world of manifestation, we find a preceding existence. It is only when we are content to draw the Veil of Negative Existence across the path which leads back to beginnings that we get a background against which a First Cause becomes visible. And this First Cause is not a rootless origin, but a First Appearance on the Plane of Manifestation. Thus far and no farther can the mind go back; but we must always remember that different minds go back different distances, and that for some the Veil is drawn in one place, and for others in another. The ignorant man goes no further than the concept of God as an old man with a long white beard who sat on a golden throne and gave orders for creation. The scientist will go back a little further before he is

compelled to draw a veil called the ether; and the philosopher will go back yet further before he draws a veil called the Absolute; but the initiate will go back furthest of all because he has learnt to do his thinking in symbols, and symbols are to the mind what tools are to the hand—an extended application of its powers.

4. The Qabalist takes for his starting-point Kether, the Crown, the first Sephirah, which he symbolises by the figure One, Unity, and by the Point within the Circle. From this he traces backward the three Veils of Negative Existence. This is quite a different matter from starting at the Absolute and trying to work forwards into evolution. It may not yield immediately accurate and complete knowledge of the origin of all things, but it enables the mind to make a start; and unless we can make a start we have no hope of a finish.

5. The Qabalist, then, starts where he can—at the first point that is within the reach of finite consciousness. Kether is equated with the most transcendent form of God that we can conceive, Whose name is Ehieh, translated in the Authorised Version of the Bible as “I am,” or, more explicitly, the Self-Existing One, Pure Being.

6. But these words are words and nothing more unless they convey an impression to the mind, and in themselves they cannot do that. They must be related to other ideas before they have any significance. We only begin to understand Kether when we study Chokmah, the Second Sephirah, its emanation; it is only when we see the full unfoldment of the Ten Sephiroth that we are ready to approach Kether, and then we approach it with the data that gives us the key to its nature. In working with the Tree it is wisest to keep on going over it, rather than to concentrate upon a single point until it is mastered, for one thing explains another, and it is out of the perception of the relationships between the different symbols that enlightenment arises. Again we say, the Tree is a method of using the mind, not a system of knowledge.

7. But at the moment we are not engaged in the study of the Emanations, but of origins, so far as the human mind may hope to penetrate them; and paradoxical as it may appear, we shall penetrate further when we draw the Veils across them than when we try to pierce the darkness. We will, then, sum up the position of Kether in one sentence, a sentence that can have but little significance for the student approaching the subject for the first time, but which must be borne in mind, for its significance will begin to dawn presently. In so doing, we are adhering to the ancient esoteric tradition of giving the student a symbol to incubate till it hatches in his mind, rather than explicit instruction which would convey nothing to him. The seed-sentence then, which we cast into the subconscious mind of the reader, is this: “Kether is the Malkuth of the Unmanifest.” Mathers says (*op. cit.*): “The limitless ocean of negative light does not proceed from a centre, for it is centreless, but it concentrates a centre, which is the number One of the manifested Sephiroth, Kether, the Crown, the First Sephirah.”

8. These words in themselves contain contradictions and unthinkable; negative light is simply a way of saying that the thing described, though having certain qualities in common with light, is nevertheless not light as we know it. This tells us very little about that which it is intended to describe. We are told

not to make the mistake of thinking of it as light, but we are not told how to think of it as it really is, and for the very good reason that the mind is not equipped with any images under which to represent it, and must therefore let it alone till growth takes place. Nevertheless, although these words do not tell us all that we would like to know, they convey certain images to imagination; these sink into the subconscious mind which are related to them. Thus knowledge grows from more to more when the Qabalistic method is given its practical application as the Yoga of the West.

9. The Qabalists recognise four planes of manifestation, and three planes of unmanifestation, or Negative Existence. The first of these is called AIN, Negativity; the second, AIN SOPH, the Limitless; the third, AIN SOPH AUR, the Limitless Light. It is out of this last that Kether is concentrated. These three terms are called the three Veils of Negative Existence depending back from Kether; in other words, they are the algebraic symbols that enable us to think of that which transcends thought, and which at the same time hide that which they represent; they are the masks of transcendent realities. If we think of the states of negative existence in terms of anything that we know, we shall err, for whatever else they may be, they cannot be that, being unmanifest. The expression "Veils," therefore, teaches us to use these ideas as counters, of no value in themselves, but useful to us in our calculations. This is the true use of all symbols; they veil that which they represent until we can reduce them to terms we can comprehend; nevertheless they enable us to use in our calculations ideas which would otherwise be unthinkable. And as the essence of the Tree lies in the fact that it causes its symbols to elucidate one another by means of their relative positions, these Veils serve as the scaffolding of thought, enabling us to take our bearings in regions as yet uncharted. Such Veils, or non-concrete symbols, are, however, of no value to us unless one side of the Veil abuts upon known country. The Veils, in fact, while they conceal that which they represent, enable us to see clearly that to which they form a background. This is their function, and the only reason they are referred to. It is only by reason of our infirmities that we need to have these unresolvable symbols presented to us, and the mind disciplined in esoteric philosophy soon learns to work within these limitations and accept as a painted veil the symbol of that which lies beyond its ken. This way lies the unfoldment of wisdom, for the mind grows with what it feeds upon, and one of these days, when we have climbed to Kether, we may hope to stretch out our hands and rend the Veil and look through into the Limitless Light. The esotericist does not limit himself by declaring the Unknown to be the Unknowable, for he is above all things an evolutionist, and knows that that which we cannot compass to-day we may achieve in the to-morrow of cosmic time. He knows, too, that evolutionary time is an individual matter upon the inner planes, and is measured, not regulated, by the revolution of the earth upon its axis.

10. These three Veils - AIN, Negativity; AIN SOPH, the Limitless ; and AIN SOPH AUR, the Limitless Light - though we cannot hope to understand them, nevertheless suggest to our minds certain ideas. Negativity implies Being or existence of a nature which we cannot comprehend. We cannot conceive of a thing which is, and yet is not; therefore we must conceive of a form of being of which we have never had any conscious experience; a form of being which, according to our concepts of existence, does not exist, and yet, if one may express it so, exists according to its own idea of existence. In the words of a very wise man: There are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in our philosophy.

11. But although we say that Negative Existence is outside the range of our realisation, it does not mean that we are outside the range of its influence. If this were so, we could dismiss it as non-existent so far as we are concerned, and our interest in it would be at an end. On the contrary, although we have not direct access to its being, all that we know as existing has its roots in this Negative Existence, so that, although we cannot know it directly, we have experience of it at one remove. That is to say, although we cannot know its nature, we know its effects, in the same way as we are ignorant of the nature of electricity yet are able to turn it to good account in our lives, and from our experience of its effects we are able to come to certain conclusions concerning some at least of the qualities it must possess. Those who have penetrated furthest into the Unseen have given us symbolic descriptions by means of which we may turn our minds in the *direction* of the Absolute, even if we cannot reach it. They have spoken of Negative Existence as Light: “Ain Soph Aur, the Limitless Light.” They have spoken of the First Manifest as Sound: “In the beginning was the Word.” I remember once hearing a man, who was an adept if ever there was one, say, “If you want to know what God is, I can tell you in one word: God is pressure.” And immediately an image leapt to my mind and a realisation followed. I could conceive the outflowing of life through every channel of existence. I felt that a genuine realisation of the nature of God had been conveyed to me. And yet, if one came to analyse the words, there was nothing in them; nevertheless they had the power to convey an image, a symbol, to the mind, and the mind, working upon it in the realm of intuition beyond the sphere of reason, achieved a realisation, even if that realisation could only be reduced to the sphere of concrete thought as an image.

12. We must clearly realise that in these highly abstract regions the mind can use nothing but symbols; but these symbols have the power to convey realisations to minds that know how to use them; these symbols are the seeds of thought whence understanding arises, even if we are not able to expand the symbol itself into a concrete realisation.

13. Little by little, like a rising tide, realisation is concreting the Abstract, assimilating and expressing in terms of its own nature things which belong to another sphere; and we shall make a great mistake if we try to prove with Herbert Spencer that because a thing is unknown by any capacity of the mind we at present possess, that it must for ever be Unknowable. Time is not only increasing our knowledge, but evolution is increasing our capacity; and initiation, which is the forcing-house of evolution, bringing faculties to birth out of due season, brings the consciousness of the adept within reach of vast apprehensions which are as yet below the horizon of the human mind. These ideas, though clearly apprehended by himself after another mode of consciousness, cannot be conveyed by him to anyone who does not share this mode of consciousness. He can only put them forth in symbolic form; but any mind that has in any way had experience of this wider mode of functioning will be able to lay hold on these ideas on their own plane, although it may be unable to translate them into the sphere of conscious thought. In this way, therefore, in the literature of esoteric science there are scattered seed-ideas such as “God is pressure” and “Kether is the Malkuth of Negative Existence.” These images, whose content does not belong to our sphere at all, are as the male germs of thought which fecundate the ova of concrete realisation. In themselves they are incapable of maintaining more than the fugitive existence in consciousness as a flash of realisation, but without them the ova of philosophical thought will be infertile.

Impregnated by them, however, though their substance is absorbed and lost in the very act of impregnation growth takes place within the formless germ of thought, and ultimately, after due gestation beyond the threshold of consciousness, the mind gives birth to an idea.

14. If we want to get the best out of our minds, we must learn to allow for this period of latency, this impregnation of our minds by something outside our plane of existence, and its gestation beyond the threshold of consciousness. The invocations of an initiation ceremony are designed to call down this impregnating influence upon the consciousness of the candidate. Hence it is that the Paths of the Tree, which are the stages of illumination of the soul, are intimately associated with the symbolism of initiation ceremonies.

6. *Otz Chiim, The Tree of Life*

1. Before we can understand the significance of any individual Sephirah, we must grasp the broad outlines of the OTZ CHIIM, the Tree of Life, as a whole.

2. It is a glyph, that is to say a composite symbol, which is intended to represent the cosmos in its entirety and the soul of man as related thereto; and the more we study it, the more we see that it is an amazingly adequate representation; we use it as the engineer or the mathematician uses his sliding-rule, to scan and calculate the intricacies of existence, visible and invisible, in external nature or the hidden depth of the soul.

3. It is represented, as will be seen from diagram III, as a set of ten circles arranged in a certain pattern, and connected among themselves by lines. The circles are the Ten Holy Sephiroth, and the connecting lines are the Paths, twenty-two in number.

4. Each Sephirah (which is the singular form of the word of which Sephiroth is the plural) is a phase of evolution, and in the language of the Rabbis they are called the Ten Holy Emanations. The Paths between them are phases of subjective consciousness, the Paths or grades (Latin, *gradus*, step) by which the soul unfolds its realisation of the cosmos. The Sephiroth are objective; the Paths are subjective.

5. Let it be recalled again that I am not expounding the traditional Qabalah of the Rabbis as a historical curio, but the structure that has been raised upon it by generations of students, initiates all of them, adepts some of them, who have made the Tree of Life their instrument of spiritual development and magical work. This is the modern Qabalah, the Alchemical Qabalah as it has sometimes been called, and it contains all manner of things beside traditional Rabbinical lore, as will be seen in due course.

6. Let us now consider the general lay-out and significance of the Tree. It will be seen that the circles which represent the Sephiroth are arranged in three vertical columns (see diagram I), and that at the head of the centre, higher than any other, forming the apex of the topmost triangle of Sephiroth, is the Sephirah Kether, to which we referred in the previous chapter. To quote again the words of MacGregor Mathers, "The limitless ocean of negative light does not proceed from a centre, for it is centreless, but it concentrates a centre, which is the number one of the manifested Sephiroth, Kether, the Crown, the First Sephirah."

7. Mme Blavatsky draws from Eastern sources the term "The point within the circle" to express the First Becoming of manifestation, and the idea is contained in the Rabbinical term, Nequdah Rashunah, the Primal Point, a name applied to Kether.

8. But Kether does not represent a position in space. The Ain Soph Aur has been called a circle whose centre is everywhere and whose circumference is nowhere, a statement which, like so many in occultism, is inconceivable, yet nevertheless presents an image to the mind and therefore serves its purpose. Kether, then (and for the matter of that, all the other Sephiroth), is a state or condition of existence. We must always bear in mind that the planes do not tower up one above another into the empyrean like the storeys of a building, but are conditions of being, states of existence of different types, and though they developed successively in time, they occur simultaneously in space; existence of all types being present in a single being, as we realise when we remember that the being of man is made up of a physical body, emotions, mind, and spirit, all occupying the same space at the same time.

9. If anyone has ever watched a heated liquid, at saturation point, crystallise out as it cools, they will have a useful symbol of Kether. Fill a tumbler with boiling water and dissolve in it as much sugar as it will take up, and then, as the mixture cools, watch the sugar crystals appearing. When you have done this in actuality, and not merely read about it, you will have a concept under which you can think of the First Manifest coming into existence out of the Primordial Unmanifest. The liquid is transparent and formless, but a change occurs within it, and crystals, solid, visible, and of a definite form, begin to appear. Equally may we conceive that a change occurs within the Limitless Light, and Kether crystallises out.

10. I do not propose at the present moment to go deeply into the nature of any of the Sephiroth, but merely to indicate the general scheme of the Tree. We shall go over the ground again and again in the course of these pages until a comprehensive concept is built up. This can only be done gradually, and if we spend a great deal of time upon an individual point before the student has a general concept, much of that time will be wasted because the bearing of that concept on the scheme as a whole will not be understood. The Rabbis themselves apply to Kether the titles, Concealed of the Concealed, and the Inscrutable Height, hinting that there is not a great deal that the human mind can hope to know about Kether.

11. It is worthy of note that Exoteric Judaism, to whose liabilities Christianity is the not altogether fortunate heir, does not contain any concept of the Emanations, or overflowing of the Sephiroth one from another. It declares that God made the sea and the hills and the beasts of the field, and we visualise this process, if we visualise it at all, as the work of a celestial craftsman fashioning each new phase of manifestation and putting the finished product in its place in the world. This concept kept science back for hundreds of years in Western Europe, and in the end men of science had to break with religion and endure persecution as heretics in order to arrive at that conception of evolution which was explicitly taught in the Mystic Tradition of Israel, a tradition with which the writers of the Old Testament were unquestionably familiar, for their works are full of Qabalistic references and implications.

12. The Qabalah does not conceive of God as fabricating creation stage by stage, but thinks of the different phases of manifestation as evolving one from another, as if each Sephirah were a pool which, being filled, overflowed into a lower pool. To borrow again from MacGregor Mathers, hidden in an

acorn is an oak with its acorns, and hidden in each of these is an oak with *its* acorns. So each Sephirah contains the Potentiality of all that come after it in the scale of downflowing manifestation. Kether contains the rest of the Sephiroth, nine in number; and Chokmah, the second, contains the potentialities of all its successors, eight in number. But in each Sephirah only one aspect of manifestation is unfolded; the subsequent ones remain latent, and the preceding ones are received by reflection. Each Sephirah, then, is a pure form of existence in its essence; the influence of preceding phases of evolution is external to it, being reflected. These aspects, as it were, having been crystallised out in the previous stages, are no longer in solution in the outflowing stream of manifestation which ever proceedeth from the Unmanifest through the channel of Kether. When therefore we want to find the essential nature, the basis of manifestation, of a particular type of existence, we get it in the Sephirah to which it corresponds when we meditate upon that Sephirah in its primal form; for there are four forms, or worlds, under which the Qabalists conceive of the Tree, and these we will consider in due course. They are only referred to now in order that the student may have enough background to see his picture in perspective.

13. The student will find it very helpful to refer to the chapters in *The Ancient Wisdom*, by Annie Besant, which deal with the phases of evolution. These throw much light upon the subject with which we are dealing, though the system of classification is not the same.

14. Let us conceive of Kether, then, as a fountain which fills its basin, and the overflow therefrom feeds another fountain, which in its turn fills its basin and overflows. The Unmanifest for ever flows under pressure into Kether, and there comes a time when evolution has gone as far as it can in the extreme simplicity of the form of existence of the First Manifest. All possible combinations have been formed, and they have undergone all possible permutations. Action and reaction are stereotyped, there can be no new development save the combining of the combinations among themselves. Force has formed all possible units; the next phase of development is for these units to combine into more complex structures. When this occurs, a new and more highly organised phase of existence begins; all that has already been evolved remains, but that which evolves now is more than the sum of the previously existing parts, for new capacities come into being.

15. This new phase represents a change of mode of existence. Just as Kether crystallised out of the Limitless Light, so the second Sephirah, Chokmah, crystallises out of Kether in this new mode of being, this new system of actions and reactions which have ceased to be simple and direct and become complex and tangential. We now have two modes of existence, the simplicity of Kether and the relative complexity of Chokmah; both these are so simple that no kind of life known to us could be maintained in them; nevertheless, they are the forerunners of organic life. We might say that Kether is the first activity of manifestation, movement; it is a condition of pure becoming, *Rashith ha Gilgalim*, the First Swirlings, the commencement of Whirling Motions as it is called by the Qabalists—*Primum Mobile* as it is called by the Alchemists. Chokmah, the Second Sephirah, is called by the Rabbis *Mazloth*, the Sphere of the Zodiac. Here we have introduced the concept of the circle with its segments. Creation has moved onwards. Out of the primordial Egg has developed the Serpent that holdeth his tail in his mouth, as Mme

Blavatsky chronicles in her invaluable storehouses of archaic symbolism, the *Secret Doctrine* and *Isis Unveiled*.

16. In a similar manner to that in which Kether overflowed into Chokmah does Chokmah overflow into Binah, the Third Sephirah. The Paths pursued by the Emanations in these successive overflowings is represented upon the Tree of Life by a Lightning Flash, or in some diagrams by a Flaming Sword. It will be observed by reference to diagram I that the Lightning Flash must proceed from Kether outwards and downwards to the right to reach Chokmah, and then turns on a level course to the left and proceeds an equal distance beyond Kether upon that side, and there establishes Binah. The result is a triangular figure upon the glyph, and it is called the Triangle of the Three Supernals, or the First Trinity and is separated from the rest of the Sephiroth by the Abyss, which normal human consciousness cannot cross. Here are the toots of existence, hidden from our eyes.

7. The Three Supernals

1. Having considered in outline the development of the three first Divine Emanations, we are now in a position to obtain a deeper insight into their nature and significance, for we can study them in relation to each other. This is the only way to study the Sephiroth, for a single Sephirah, taken by itself, is barren of significance. The Tree of Life is essentially a scheme of relationships, stresses, and reflections (see diagram II).

2. The Rabbinical books apply many curious appellations to the Sephiroth, and we learn much from considering these; for every word in these books has a weighty significance, and none are used lightly or for the sake of idle poetic imagery; all are as precise as scientific terms, which, in fact, is what they are.

3. The meaning of the word Kether, we have already noted, is Crown. Chokmah means Wisdom, and Binah means Understanding. But pendent to these two latter Sephiroth is a curious and mysterious third, which is never represented in the glyph of the Tree; this is the invisible Sephirah, Daath, Knowledge, and it is said to be formed out of the conjunction of Chokmah and Binah and is situated astride the Abyss. Crowley tells us that Daath is in another dimension to the other Sephiroth, and forms the apex of a pyramid of which Kether, Chokmah, and Binah form the three basal angles. To me, Daath presents the idea of realisation and consciousness.

4. Let us now proceed to elucidate the Three Supernals according to the method of the mystical Qabalah, which consists in filling the mind with all the correspondences and symbols assigned thereto and letting contemplation work among them.

5. It will be observed that these three and their mysterious fourth all contain symbolism relating to the head, which in the archetypal man represents the highest level of consciousness. When we seek in the Rabbinical literature to see what further names may have been applied to them, we find yet more head symbolism applied to Kether; this, although not specifically referred to them, may be taken to embrace the other two Supernals also, for they are aspects of Kether on a lower plane.

6. The Rabbis called Kether, among other titles, which we need not consider now, Arik Anpin, The Vast Countenance, The White Head, The Head Which Is Not. The magical symbol of Kether, according to Crowley, is an ancient bearded king seen in profile. MacGregor Mathers says: "The symbolism of the Vast Countenance is that of a profile in which one side only of the countenance is seen; or as it is said in the Qabalah, 'In him is all right side.'" The left side, being turned towards the Unmanifest, is for us like the dark side of the moon.

7. But Kether is primarily the Crown. Now the Crown is not the head, but rests upon it and above it. Therefore Kether cannot be consciousness, but the raw material of consciousness when considered microcosmically, and the raw material of existence when considered macrocosmically. For there is this

twofold way of considering the Tree, as we have already noted; it can be regarded as the universe and as the soul of man, and these two aspects throw light upon each other. In the words of the Emerald Tablet of Hermes: “As above, so below.”

8. Kether differentiates into Chokmah and Binah before it achieves phenomenal existence, and these two are called by the Qabalists, Abba, the Supernal Father, and Ama, the Supernal Mother. Binah is also called the Great Sea, and Shabathai, the Sphere of Saturn. As we continue, we shall find that the Sephiroth are called successively the Spheres of the planets, but Binah is the first of the Emanations to be so assigned; Kether is called the First Whirlings, and Chokmah the Sphere of the Zodiac.

9. Now Saturn is the Father of the Gods; he is the greatest of the old gods that were the predecessors of the Olympians over which Jupiter rules. In the secret titles attributed to the Tarot trumps, the Path of Saturn is called, according to Crowley, The Great One of the Night of Time.

10. We have, then, Kether differentiating into an active male potency, Chokmah, and a passive female potency, Binah, and these are placed at the head of the two side columns formed by the vertical alignment of the Sephiroth in their spacing on the Tree of Life. Of these two columns, the left-hand one under Binah is called Severity; the right-hand one under Chokmah is called Mercy; the middle one under Kether is called Mildness, and it is said to be the Column of Equilibrium. These two side columns are the two pillars that stand at the entrance to King Solomon’s Temple and are represented in all Lodges of the Mysteries, the candidate himself, when he stands between them, is the Middle Pillar of Equilibrium.

11. Here we meet with the idea put forth by Mme Blavatsky, that there can be no manifestation without differentiation into the Pairs of Opposites. Kether differentiates its two aspects as Chokmah and Binah, and manifestation is in being. Now in this supernal triangle, The Head Which Is Not, the Father and the Mother, we have the root concept of our cosmogony, and we shall return to it again and again under innumerable aspects, and each time that we return to it we shall receive illumination. These earlier chapters do not attempt to deal with any of the points exhaustively for reasons already noted, for the student unfamiliar with the subject (and there are very few students who are familiar with it) has not yet got the necessary mental furniture of facts to enable him to appreciate the significance of a more detailed study; we are at the present moment engaged in assembling this furniture; in due course we shall begin to arrange it into a house of life, and study it in detail.

12. Binah, the Superior Mother (as distinguished from Malkuth, the Inferior Mother, the Bride of Microprosopos, the Isis of Nature, the Tenth Sephirah), is two-aspected, and these aspects are distinguished as Ama, the Dark Sterile Mother, and Aima, the Bright Fertile Mother. We have already noted that she is called the Great Sea, Marah, which not only means Bitter, but also is the root of Mary; and here we meet again the idea of the Mother, at first virgin, and then with child by the Holy Spirit.

13. By the association of Binah with the sea we are reminded that life had its primordial beginnings in the waters; from the sea arose Venus, the archetypal woman. The association of Saturn suggests the idea of primordial age: “Before the gods that made the gods had drunk at eve their fill——” It suggests the most ancient rocks: “Within the shady stillness of the vale . . . sat grey-haired Saturn, quiet as a stone.” Max Heindel speaks of the Lords of Form as among the earliest phases of evolution, and an inspirational work in my possession, *The Cosmic Doctrine*, speaks of the Lords of Form as the Laws of Geology.

14. Considering again the symbolism of the two lateral columns of the Tree, we see Chokmah and Binah as Force and Form, the two units of manifestation.

15. It would not profit us to go more deeply into the endless ramifications of this symbolism at the present moment, for it is carrying us beyond the three Sephiroth we have already studied. Let us proceed to a further consideration of the mysterious Daath, which never appears on the Tree, and to which no Deity-name or angelic host is assigned and which has no mundane symbol in planet or element, as have all the other stations on the Tree.

16. Daath is produced by the conjunction of Chokmah and Binah, as has been already noted. The Supernal Father, Abba, marries the Supernal Mother, Ama, and Daath is the issue. Now Daath is called some curious things by the Qabalists; we will note a few of them.

17. In verse 38 of the *Book of Concealed Mystery* (Mathers’ English translation from the Latin translation of Knorr von Rosenroth) it says: “For Father and Mother are perpetually conjoined in Yesod, the Foundation (the ninth Sephirah), but concealed under the mystery of Daath or Knowledge”; and in verse 40 we read concerning Daath: “The man that shall say, I am the Lord’s, he descendeth. . . . Yod (the tenth letter of the Hebrew alphabet) is the foundation of Knowledge of the Father; but all things are called BYODO, that is, all things are applied to Yod concerning which this discourse is. All things cohere in the tongue which is concealed in the mother. That is, through Daath or Knowledge, whereby Wisdom is combined with Understanding, and the Beautiful Path (Tiphareth, the Sixth Sephirah) with his bride the Queen (Malkuth, the Tenth Sephirah); and this is the concealed idea, or soul, pervading the whole emanation. Since it is opened for that which proceedeth from itself; that is, Daath is itself the beautiful path, but also the inner, whereto Moses referred; and that Path lieth hid within the mother, and is the medium of its conjunction.” When it is noted that Yod is identical with the Lingam in the Hindu system; and that Kether, Daath, and the Beautiful Path, Tiphareth, the Sixth Sephirah, are in a line on the Middle Pillar of the Tree, which equates with the spine in man, the microcosm; and that Kundalini is coiled in Yesod, also on the Middle Pillar, we shall see that we have here an important key for those who are equipped to use it.

18. In the *Greater Holy Assembly*, verse 566 (Mathers’ translation), we read concerning the Head of Microprosopos, whose whole body is being taken as a glyph of the cosmos: “From the Third Cavity there goes forth a thousand times a thousand conclaves and assemblies, wherein Daath, Knowledge, is

contained and dwelleth. And the hollow place of this cavity is between the other two cavities; and all these conclaves are filled from either side. This is that which is written in Proverbs, 'And in knowledge (Daath) shall the conclaves be filled.' And those three are expanded over the whole body, on this side and on that, and with them does the whole body cohere, and the body is contained by them on every side, and through the whole body are they expanded and diffused."

19. When it is recalled that Daath is situated at the Point where the Abyss bisects the Middle Pillar, and that up the Middle Pillar lies the Path of the Arrow, the way by which consciousness goes when the psychic rises on the Planes, and that here also is Kundalini, we see that in Daath is the secret of both generation and regeneration, the key to the manifestation of all things through the differentiation into pairs of Opposites and their union in a Third.

20. Thus doth the Tree unfold its secrets to the Qabalists,

21. The Second Triangle upon the Tree of Life is formed of the Sephiroth Chesed, Geburah, and Tiphareth. Chesed is formed by the overflowing of Binah, and is situated in the Right-hand Pillar of Mercy, immediately below Chokmah; the angle of the Lightning Flash, which is used to indicate the course of the emanations upon the Tree, slopes downwards to the right across the glyph, from Binah at the head of the Pillar of Severity to Chesed, which occupies the middle section of the Pillar of Mercy. Then the Flash turns and goes horizontally across the glyph back again to the Pillar of Severity, in the middle section of which is found the Sephirah Geburah. Down and to the right slopes once more the symbol of emanating force, and indicates the Sephirah Tiphareth, which occupies the very centre of the Tree in the Pillar of Mildness or Equilibrium. These three Sephiroth constitute the next functional triangle we have to consider, and although we do not intend to go exhaustively into their symbolism until we have completed our schematic survey of the whole system, it is necessary to say enough to give some clue to their significance and enable them to be assigned to a place in the concept we are building up. This concept is so vast and so infinite in its elaboration of detail that to attempt to teach it exhaustively from A to Z must end in confusion. Only gradually can it reveal its significance to the student as one aspect interprets another. My method of teaching the Tree may not be ideal from the point of view of systematic thought, but I believe it is the only one which will enable the beginner to "get the hang" of the subject. It was upon the Tree that I got my own mystical training, and I have lived and moved and had my being in its company for a good many years now, so I feel that I am competent to speak upon it from the point of view of practical mysticism; for I know from my own experience the difficulties of getting hold of the Qabalistic system, so intricate, abstract, and voluminous, and yet so comprehensive and satisfactory when once it is mastered.

22. Before we can consider the Second Triangle of the Tree as a unit, we must know the meaning of its component Sephiroth. Chesed means Mercy or Love; it is also called Gedulah, Greatness or Magnificence, and to it is assigned the Sphere of the planet Jupiter. Geburah means Strength; it is also called Pachad, Fear; to it is assigned the Sphere of the planet Mars. Tiphareth means Beauty, and to it is assigned the Sphere of the Sun. When the gods of the various pagan pantheons are being correlated

with the Spheres on the Tree, it will be found that the sacrificed gods invariably come on to Tiphareth, and for this reason it has been called the Christ-centre in the Christian Qabalah.

23. We now have sufficient material to make a survey of the Second Triangle. Jupiter, the beneficent ruler and lawgiver, is balanced by Mars the Warrior, the fiery and destructive force, and the two are equilibrated in Tiphareth, the Redeemer. In the Supernal Triangle we see the primary Sephirah emanating a pair of opposites which express the two sides of its nature, Chokmah, Force, and Binah, Form, masculine and feminine Sephiroth respectively. In the Second Triangle we have the pairs of opposites which find their equilibrium in a third, placed upon the Middle Pillar of the Tree. From this we deduce that the First Triangle derives its significance from that which lies behind it, and the Second Triangle derives its significance from that into which it issues forth. In the First Triangle we find a representation of the creative forces of the substance of the universe; in the Second we have a representation of the governing forces of evolving life. In Chesed is the wise and kindly king, the father of his people, organising his realm, building up industry, fostering learning, and bringing the gifts of civilisation. In Geburah we have a warrior king, leading his people in battle, defending his kingdom from the assaults of the enemy, extending his boundaries by conquest, punishing crime, and destroying evil-doers, In Tiphareth we have the Saviour, sacrificed upon the Cross for the salvation of his people, and thereby bringing Geburah into equilibrium with Gedulah, or Chesed. Here we find the sphere of all the beneficent sun-gods and healing gods. Thus we see that the mercies of Gedulah and the severities of Geburah unite for the healing of the nations.

24. Behind Tiphareth, traversing the Tree, is drawn Paroketh, the Veil of the Temple, the analogue, on a lower plane, of the Abyss which separates the Three Supernals from the rest of the Tree. Like the Abyss, the Veil marks a chasm in consciousness. The mode of mentation on one side of the chasm differs in kind from the mode of mentation prevailing upon the other. Tiphareth is the highest sphere to which normal human consciousness can rise. When Philip said to Our Lord, "Show us the Father," Jesus replied, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." All the human mind can know of Kether is its reflection in Tiphareth, the Christ-centre, the Sphere of the Son. Paroketh is the Veil of the Temple which was rent asunder at the Crucifixion.

25. We now come in our brief preliminary survey to the Third Triangle composed of the Sephiroth Netzach, Hod, and Yesod. Netzach is the basal Sephirah of the Pillar of Mercy, Hod is the basal Sephirah of the Pillar of Severity, and Yesod is upon the Middle Pillar of Mildness or Equilibrium, in direct alignment with Kether and Tiphareth. Thus the Third Triangle is an exact replica of the Second Triangle upon a lower arc.

26. The meaning of Netzach is Victory, and to it is assigned the Sphere of the planet Venus; the meaning of Hod is Glory, and to it is assigned the Sphere of the planet Mercury; the meaning of Yesod is Foundation, and to it is assigned the Sphere of the Moon.

27. While the Second Triangle might not inaptly be termed the Ethical Triangle, the Third may well be called the Magical Triangle; and if we assign to Kether the Sphere of the Three in One, the undivided Unity, and to Tiphareth the Sphere of the Redeemer or Son, we may be justified in referring to Yesod the Sphere of the Holy Spirit, the Enlightener; this is an attribution of the Christian Trinity that fits better upon the Tree than its assignation to the Three Supernals, which brings the Son in the place of Abba, the Father, and the Holy Spirit in the place of Ama, the Mother, and is obviously irrelevant and productive of innumerable discrepancies in the correspondences and symbolisms. In this we see an example of the value of the Tree as a method of counterchecking vision or meditation; correct attributions fit upon the Tree through endless ramifications of symbolism, as we saw when considering Binah as the Mother; incorrect symbolism breaks down and reveals its bizarre associations at the first attempt to follow out a chain of correspondences. It is amazing what ramifications of association-chains can be followed when the attribution is correct. It seems as if it were only the extent of our knowledge which limits the length of the chain that can be linked logically together; it will extend through science, art, mathematics, and the epochs of history; through ethics, psychology, and physiology. It was this peculiar method of using the mind which in all probability gave the ancients their premature knowledge of natural science, knowledge which has had to await the invention of instruments of precision for its confirmation. We get clues to this method in the dream-analysis of analytical psychology. We might describe it as the symbol-using power of the subconscious mind. It is an instructive experiment to toss a mass of irrelevant symbolism into the mind and watch it sort itself out in meditation upon the Tree, rising into consciousness in long association-chains like dream analysis.

28. Netzach is the Sphere of the Goddess of Nature, Venus. Hod is the Sphere of Mercury, the Greek analogue of the Egyptian Thoth, Lord of Books and Learning. Observing their opposition, we shall expect to find two different aspects represented in them, these finding their equilibrium in a third, Yesod, the Sphere of Luna. We see then a Triangle Composed of the Lady of Nature, the Lord of Books, and the Mistress of Witchcraft; in other words, subconsciousness and super-consciousness correlate in psychism.

29. Anyone who is familiar with practical mysticism knows that there are three paths of superconsciousness — devotional mysticism, which correlates with Tiphareth; nature mysticism, of the inebriating Dionysian. type, which equates with the Venus Sphere of Netzach; and intellectual mysticism of the occult type, which equates with Hod, the Sphere of Thoth, Lord of Magic. Tiphareth, as will be seen by reference to the diagram of the Tree, belongs to a higher plane than any member of the Third Triangle; Yesod, on the other hand, is drawing very near to the Sphere of Earth.

30. To Yesod are assigned all the deities that have the moon in their symbolism: Luna herself; Hecate, with her dominion over evil magic ; and Diana, with her presidency over childbirth. The physical moon, Yesod in Assiah, as the Qabalists would say, with its twenty-eight day cycle, correlates with the reproductive cycle of the human female. If the symbolism of the Luna crescent be traced through the various pantheons it will be found that the deities associated with it are predominantly female; it is interesting to note in confirmation of our assignation of the Holy Spirit to Yesod that according to

MacGregor Mathers the Holy Spirit is a feminine force. He says (*Kabbalah Unveiled* p. 22): “We are usually told that the Holy Spirit is masculine. But the word Ruach, Spirit, is feminine, as appears from the following passage of the Sepher Yetzirah, ‘Achath (feminine, not Achad, masculine), ruach elohim chiim: One is *she*, the Spirit of the Elohim of Life.’” When we consider the Middle Pillar as referring to levels of consciousness we shall find further confirmation of this view.

31. There remains for our final consideration the Sefirah Malkuth, the Kingdom of Earth. This Sefirah differs from the others in several respects. Firstly, it is not part of any equilibrated triangle, but is said to be the receptacle of the influences of all the others. Secondly, it is a fallen Sefirah, for it was cut off from the rest of the Tree by the Fall, and the coils of the Stooping Dragon arising from the World of Shells, the Kingdoms of Unbalanced Force, separate it from its brethren. Behind the shoulder of the Queen, the Bride of Microprosopos (Malkuth), the Serpent rears his head, and here is said to be the place of severest judgments. The Sphere of Malkuth abuts upon the Hells of the Averse Sephiroth, the Qliphoth, or evil demons. It is the firmament whereby Elohim separated the supernal waters of Binah from the infernal waters of Leviathan.

32. The signification of the Qliphoth must be considered fully in due course; but having referred to them here in order to explain the position of Malkuth, we must say something further in order to render the explanation intelligible.

33. The Qliphoth (singular Qliphah, an immodest woman or harlot) are the Evil or Averse Sephiroth, each an emanation of unbalanced force from its corresponding Sphere upon the Holy Tree; these emanations took place during the critical periods of evolution when the Sephiroth were not in equilibrium. For this reason they are referred to as the Kings of Unbalanced Force, the Kings of Edom, “who ruled before there was a king in Israel,” as the Bible puts it; and in the words of the *Siphrah Dzenioutha*, the *Book of Concealed Mystery* (Mathers’ translation), “For before there was equilibrium, countenance beheld not countenance. And the kings of ancient time were dead, and their crowns were found no more; and the earth was desolate.”

34. We have now completed our preliminary survey of the Tree of Life, and the arrangement of the Ten Holy Sephiroth thereon; we also have some clue to their significance and have been given a hint or two of the manner in which the mind works when it uses these cosmic symbols for its meditations. Consequently we are now in a position to assign each fresh bit of information to its correct position in our scheme; we are building up the jigsaw puzzle with a knowledge of the outlines of the picture. Crowley has aptly likened the Tree to a card-index file, in which each symbol is an envelope. This is a simile which it would be difficult to improve upon. In the course of our studies we shall begin to fill these filing cases, and to find the cross-indexing among them indicated by the appearance of the same symbol in other associations.

8. *The Patterns of the Tree*

1. There are various methods by which the Ten Holy Sephiroth can be grouped upon the Tree of Life. Of these it cannot be said that one is correct and another incorrect; they serve different purposes and throw much light upon the meaning of the individual Sephiroth by revealing their associations and equilibrium.
2. They are also of value because they enable the decimal system of the Tree to be equated with the three, four, and sevenfold systems.
3. The primary conformation of the Tree is into three Pillars. It will be observed by reference to the diagrams that the Sephiroth readily lend themselves to this threefold vertical division, for they are arranged in three columns. These are called the Right-hand Pillar of Mercy, the Left-hand Pillar of Severity, and the Middle Pillar of Mildness or Equilibrium (see diagram I).
4. Before proceeding any further we must make clear the significance of the right and left sides of the Tree. As we look at the Tree in the diagram we see Binah, Geburah, and Hod upon the left side, and Chokmah, Chesed, and Netzach upon the right side; this is the way we view the Tree when we are using it to represent the Macrocosm. But when we are using it to represent the Microcosm, that is our own being, we, as it were, back into it, so that the Middle Pillar equates with the spine, and the Pillar that contains Binah, Geburah, and Hod with the right side, and the Pillar that contains Chokmah, Chesed, and Netzach with the left side. These three Pillars can also be equated with the Shushumna, Ida, and Pingala of the Yoga system. It is very important to remember the reversal of the Tree when it is used as a subjective symbol, otherwise confusion results. In his valuable book upon the literature of the Qabalah, *The Holy Qabalah*, Mr Waite, in the frontispiece, for some reason best known to himself, reverses the usual presentation of the Tree; but it may be taken for granted that most representations of the symbol give the objective Tree, not the subjective. When the Tree is being used to indicate the lines of force in the aura, it is the subjective Tree that must be used, so that Geburah equates with the right arm. In all cases, of course, the Middle Pillar remains steadfast.
5. The Pillar of Severity is considered to be negative or feminine, and the Pillar of Mercy to be positive or masculine. Superficially it may be thought that these attributions lead to incompatible symbolism, but a study of the Pillars in the light of what we now know concerning the individual Sephiroth will reveal that the incompatibilities are purely superficial and that the deeper significance of the symbolism is entirely consonant.
6. It will be observed that the line which indicates the successive development of the Sephiroth zigzags from side to side of the glyph and has been aptly named the Lightning Flash in consequence. This indicates graphically that the Sephiroth are successively positive, negative, and equilibrated. This is a far better representation of the process of creation than if the Spheres were represented one above

another in a straight line, for it indicates the difference in the nature of the Divine Emanations and their relations to each other; for when we look at the glyph of the Tree we readily perceive the relations existing between the different Sephiroth, and see how they group, reflect, and react upon each other.

7. At the head of the Pillar of Severity, the negative, feminine Pillar, is Binah, the Great Mother. Now to Binah is assigned the Sphere of Saturn, and Saturn is the Giver of Form. At the head of the Pillar of Mercy is Chokmah, the Supernal Father, a male potency. Thus we see that we have here the apposition of Form and Force.

8. In the Second Trinity we have the apposition of Chesed (Jupiter) and Geburah (Mars). Again we have the pairs of opposites of construction in Jupiter, the lawgiver and beneficent ruler, and destruction in Mars, the warrior and destroyer of evil. It may be asked why such a male potency as Geburah should be placed in the feminine Pillar. It must be remembered that Mars is a destructive potency, one of the infortunes in astrology. The positive builds up, the negative breaks down; the positive is a kinetic force, the negative is a static force.

9. These aspects appear again in Netzach at the base of the Pillar of Mercy, and Hod at the base of the Pillar of Severity. Netzach is Venus, the Green Nature Ray, elemental force, the initiation of the emotions. Hod is Mercury, Hermes, the initiation of knowledge. Netzach is instinct and emotion, a kinetic force; Hod is intellect, concrete thought, the reduction of intuitive knowledge to form.

10. We must remember, however, that each Sephirah is negative, that is to say feminine, in relation to its predecessor, whence it emanates and whence it receives the Divine Influence; and positive, masculine, or stimulating in respect of its successor, to whom it transmits the Divine Influence. Therefore each Sephirah is bi-sexual, like a magnet of which one pole must of necessity be negative and the other positive. We may perhaps explain matters further by an analogy with astrology, and say that a Sephirah in the feminine Pillar is well-dignified when it is functioning in its negative aspect, and ill-dignified when functioning positively; and that in the masculine Pillar the position is reversed. Thus Binah, Saturn, is well-dignified when providing stability and endurance, but ill-dignified when the overplus of resistance causes it to become actively aggressive and we get obstruction and the accretion of effete matter. On the other hand, Chesed, Mercy, is well-dignified when ordering and preserving all things harmoniously; but ill-dignified when mercy becomes sentimentality and it usurps the Sphere of Saturn, preserving that which the fiery energy of Mars, its opposite number, the Sephirah Geburah, should sweep out of existence.

11. The two Pillars, then, represent the positive and negative forces in Nature, the active and passive, the destructive and constructive, concreting form and free-moving force.

12. The Sephiroth on the Middle Pillar may be taken as representing levels of consciousness and the planes on which they operate. Malkuth is sensory consciousness; Yesod is astral psychism; Tiphareth is illuminated consciousness, the highest aspect of the personality with which the individuality has

coalesced; this is the condition which really constitutes initiation; it is the consciousness of the higher self brought through into the personality. It is a gleam of higher consciousness coming from behind the veil Paroketh. It is for this reason that the Messiahs and Saviours of the world are assigned to Tiphareth in the symbolism of the Tree, for they were the Light-Bringers to humanity; and as all who bring fire from heaven must do, they died the sacrificial death for the sake of mankind. It is here, too, that we die to the lower self in order that we may rise in the higher self. 'In Jesu morimur.'

13. The Middle Pillar rises through Daath, the Invisible Sephirah, which we have already seen is Knowledge according to the Rabbis, and conscious awareness or apprehension according to the terminology of the psychologist. At the head of this Pillar is Kether, the Crown, the Root of all Being. Consciousness, then, reaches from the spiritual essence of Kether, through the realisation of Daath, which carries it across the Abyss, into the translated consciousness of Tiphareth, whither it is brought by the sacrifice of the Christ which rends the veil Paroketh; then on into the psychic consciousness of Yesod, the Sphere of the Moon, and thence to the sensory brain consciousness of Malkuth.

14. Thus does consciousness descend in the course of involution, which is the term applied to that phase of evolution which leads down from the First Manifest through the subtle planes of existence to dense matter; the esotericist should, strictly speaking, only use the term evolution when describing the ascent from matter back to spirit, for then is evolved that which was involved in the descent through the subtle phases of development. It is obvious that nothing can be evolved, unfolded, which was not previously involved, infolded. The actual course of evolution follows the track of the Lightning Flash or Flaming Sword, from Kether to Malkuth in the order of development of the Sephiroth previously described; but consciousness descends plane by plane, and only begins to manifest when the polarising Sephiroth are in equilibrium; therefore the modes of consciousness are assigned to the Equilibrating Sephiroth upon the Middle Pillar, but the magical powers are assigned to the opposing Sephiroth, each at the end of the beam of the balance of the pairs of opposites.

15. The Way of Initiation follows the coilings of the Serpent of Wisdom upon the Tree; but the Way of Illumination follows the Path of the Arrow which is shot from the Bow of Promise, Qesheth, the rainbow of astral colours that spreads like a halo behind Yesod. This is the way of the mystic as distinguished from that of the occultist; it is swift and direct, and free from the danger of the temptation of unbalanced force that is met with in either pillar, but it confers no magical powers save those of sacrifice in Tiphareth and psychism in Yesod.

16. We have noted the Three Trinities of the Tree in our preliminary discussion of the Ten Sephiroth. Let us recapitulate these again for clearness' sake. Mathers calls the First Trinity of Kether, Chokmah, and Binah the Intellectual World; the Second Trinity of Chesed, Geburah, and Tiphareth the Moral World; and the Third Trinity of Netzach, Hod, and Yesod the Material World. To my way of thinking, this terminology is misleading, for these words do not connote in our minds what is meant by these Worlds. The intellect is essentially a concreting of intuition and apprehension, and as such is an unsuitable term for the World of the Three Supernals. With the use of the term Moral World for

Chesed, Geburah, and Tiphareth I agree; it is identical with my term, Ethical Triangle; but with the term Material World for the Trinity of Netzach, Hod, and Yesod I emphatically disagree, for this term belongs exclusively to Malkuth. These three Sephiroth are not material but astral, and for this Trinity I propose the term Astral, or Magical World; it is not well to wrest words from their dictionary meaning, even if you define your use of them, and this Mathers has not troubled to do.

17. The Intellectual Sphere is not so much a level as a Pillar, for the intellect, being the content of consciousness, is essentially synthetic. These terms, however, are apparently taken from a somewhat crude translation of the Hebrew names given to the four levels into which the Qabalists divide manifestation.

18. These four levels permit of yet another grouping of the Sephiroth. The highest of these is Atziluth, the Archetypal World, consisting of Kether. The second, Briah, called the Creative World, consists of Chokmah and Binah, the Supernal Abba and Ama, Father and Mother. The third level is that of Yetzirah, the Formative World, consisting of the six central Sephiroth, viz. Chesed, Geburah, Tiphareth, Netzach, Hod, and Yesod. The fourth World is Assiah, the Material World, represented by Malkuth.

19. The Ten Sephiroth are also conformed into Seven Palaces. In the First Palace are the Three Supernals; in the Seventh Palace are Yesod and Malkuth ; and the rest of the Sephiroth each has a Palace to itself. The grouping is of interest as revealing the intimate relationship of Yesod and Malkuth, and enabling the tenfold scale of the Qabalah to be equated with the sevenfold scale of Theosophy.

20. There is also a threefold division of the Sephiroth which is very important in Qabalistic symbolism. In this system Kether is given the title of Arik Anpin, the Vast Countenance. This is manifested as Abba, the Supernal Father, Chokmah, and Ama, the Supernal Mother, Binah, these being the positive and negative aspects of the Three in One. These two differentiated aspects, when united, are, according to Mathers, Elohim, that curious Divine Name which is a feminine noun with a masculine plural attached to it. This union takes place in Daath, the invisible Sephirah.

11. The next six Sephiroth are conformed into Zaur Anpin, the Lesser Countenance, or Microprosopos, whose special Sephirah is Tiphareth. The remaining Sephirah, Malkuth, is called the Bride of Microprosopos.

22. Microprosopos is also sometimes called the King; Malkuth is then called the Queen. She is also called the Lesser Mother or Terrestrial Eve as distinguished from Binah, the Supernal Mother.

23. These different methods of classifying the Sephiroth are not competing systems, but are designed to enable the decimal system of the Qabalists to be equated with other systems, using a threefold notation, such as the Christian, or as we have already noted, a sevenfold system like Theosophy; they are also valuable as indicating functional affiliations among the Sephiroth themselves.

24. The final system of classification which we must note is under the presidency of the Three Mother Letters of the Hebrew alphabet: Aleph, א¹; Mem, מ; and Shin, ש. These three, according to the Yetziratic attribution of the Hebrew alphabet, are assigned to the three elements of Air, Water, and Fire. Under the presidency of Aleph is the Airy triad of Kether, in which is the Root of Air, reflecting downward through Tiphareth, the Solar Fire, into Yesod, the Lunar radiance. In Binah is the Root of Water (Marah, the Great Sea), reflected through Chesed into Hod, under the presidency of Mem, the Mother of Water. In Chokmah is the Root of Fire, reflected downwards through Geburah into Netzach, under the presidency of Shin, the Mother of Fire.

25. These groupings must be borne in mind, for they aid greatly in understanding the significance of individual Sephiroth, for, as we have already pointed out in various connections, a Sephirah is best interpreted by its affiliations.

¹ Although the original text uses transliterated Latin characters, I have used the Hebrew letters due to the nature of the Three Mothers and their value as meditation symbols. -ed.

9. The Ten Sephiroth in the Four Worlds

1. We have already noted the division of the Sephiroth into the Four Worlds of the Qabalists, for this is one of the methods of classification much employed in Qabalistic thought and of great value when studying evolution. We must remember, however, that the Tree is not an arbitrary method of classification, and because a thing is classified under one head in one system it does not mean that it cannot equally properly be classified under another head in another system. The reappearance of the same symbol in a different Sphere often affords valuable clues.

2. Under another method of classification the Ten Holy Sephiroth are considered as appearing in each Qabalistic World upon another arc or level of manifestation; so that just as Ain Soph Aur, the Limitless Light of the Unmanifest, concentrated a point, which was Kether, and the emanations worked down through increasing grades of density to Malkuth, so the Malkuth of Atziluth is conceived of as giving rise to the Kether of Briah, and so on consecutively down the planes, the Malkuth of Briah giving rise to the Kether of Yetzirah, the Malkuth of Yetzirah giving rise to the Kether of Assiah, and the Malkuth of Assiah, in its lowest aspect, abutting upon the Qliphoth.

3. It is Atziluth, however, which is considered the natural sphere of the Sephiroth as such, and for this reason it is called the World of Emanations. It is here, and here only, that God acts directly and not through His ministers. In Briah He acts through the mediation of the Archangels, in Yetzirah through the Angelic Orders, and in Assiah through those centres which I have named the Mundane Chakras—the planets, elements, and signs of the Zodiac.

4. We have, then, in these four sets of symbols a complete system of notation for expressing the mode of function of any given power at any given level, and this system of notation is the basis of ceremonial magic with its Names of Power, and also of talismanic magic and the Tarot system of divination. It is for this reason that it is said of the “barbarous names of evocation” that not so much as a letter may be changed, for these names are formulæ based on the Hebrew alphabet, which is the sacred language of the West as Sanskrit is the sacred language of the East. In Hebrew, moreover, each letter is also a number, so the Names are numerical formulæ; a most intricate system of metaphysical mathematics, called Gematria, is based on this principle. There are aspects of Gematria which I, at the present stage of my knowledge at any rate, consider debased and idle, being the accretions of superstition, but the basic idea of the system of cosmic mathematics unquestionably enshrines great truths and contains great possibilities. Using this system, it is possible to unravel the relationships of all manner of cosmic factors if the correct Hebrew spelling of the Names of Power is known, for these Names were formulated in accordance with the principles of Gematria, and therefore Gematria supplies the key to them. But this aspect of our subject, fascinating as it is, we cannot enter upon now.

5. In the Archetypal World of Atziluth there are assigned to the Ten Sephiroth ten forms of the Divine Name. Anyone who has read the Bible cannot fail to have observed that God is referred to

under divers titles, as the Lord, as the Lord God, as the Father, and by several other appellations. Now these are not literary devices to avoid needless repetition, but are exact metaphysical terms, and according to the Name used we know the aspect of Divine force in question and the plane on which it is functioning.

6. In the world of Briah it is held that the mighty Archangels carry out the mandates of God and give them expression, and assigned to the Sephirothic Spheres on the Tree in this World are the names of these ten mighty spirits.

7. In Yetzirah it is the choirs of angels, innumerable in their concourse, who carry out the Divine commands; and these also are assigned to their Sephirothic Spheres, thus enabling us to know their mode and level of function.

8. In Assiah, as we have already noted, certain natural centres of force are given similar correspondences. We will consider all these associations when we come to study the Sephiroth in detail.

9. In the symbolic rendering of the Ten Holy Sephiroth in the Four Worlds there is another important set of factors to be considered, and these are the four colour scales classified by Crowley as the King scale, assigned to the Atziluthic World; the Queen scale, assigned to the Briatic World; the Emperor scale, assigned to the Yetziratic World; and the Empress scale, assigned to the Assiatic World.

10. This fourfold classification has a far-reaching significance in all Qabalistic matters, and also in Western magic, which is largely based upon the Qabalah. It is said to be under the presidency of the Four Letters of Tetragrammaton, the Sacred Name popularly rendered as Jehovah. In Hebrew, which has no vowels in its alphabet, this word is spelt JHVH, or, according to the Hebrew names of these letters, Yod, Hé, Vau, Hé.² The vowels are indicated in Hebrew by points inserted in and under the square letters of the script, which is written from right to left. These vowel-points were only introduced at a comparatively recent date, and the older Hebrew scripts are unpointed so that the reader cannot see the pronunciation of any proper name for himself, but needs to have it communicated to him by someone who knows it. The true mystical pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton is said to be one of the arcana of the Mysteries.³

11. To the Four Letters of the Name are allotted any fourfold mystical classification, and by means of their correspondences we can trace all manner of relationships, and these are very important in practical occultism, as will be seen later.

² יהוה —This is thought to be the Personal name of God.

³ Pointed Hebrew assigns the vowel points for the word Adonai to Tetragrammaton. This is done in order to remind the reader not to pronounce this particular name but to say, instead, Adonai (Lord). Later translators, not knowing about this convention, tried to render this pseudo-word into a pronounceable form essentially using the vowels from one word with the consonants of another. Jehovah and Yahweh are variations on this attempt. Custom dictates that this aspect of God is referred to as “Hashem” which literally means, “The Name”. -ed.

12. Four important fourfold divisions find a place under them, thus enabling us to see their relationships among themselves. These are the Four Worlds of the Qabalists; the four elements of the alchemists; the fourfold classification of the signs of the Zodiac and the planets into triplicities, employed by the astrologers; and the four suits of the Tarot pack used in divination. This fourfold classification resembles the Rosetta Stone which gave the key to the Egyptian hieroglyphs, for on it were inscriptions in Egyptian and Greek; Greek being known, it was possible to work out the meaning of the corresponding Egyptian hieroglyphs. It is the method of arranging all these sets of factors on the Tree which gives the real esoteric clue to each of these systems of practical occultism. Without this key they have no philosophical basis and become matters of rule of thumb and superstition. It is for this reason that the initiated occultist will have nothing to do with the uninitiated fortune-teller, for he knows that, lacking this key, his system is valueless. Hence the vital importance of the Tree in Western occultism. It is our basis, our standard of measurement, and our textbook.

13. To understand a Sephirah, then, we need to know firstly its primary correspondences in the Four Worlds; its secondary correspondences in the four systems of practical occultism mentioned above; and, thirdly, any other correspondences we can by any means gather together, in order that the testimony of many witnesses may yield the truth. Of this gathering of correspondences there can be no end, for the whole cosmos on all its planes corresponds in endless sequences. We are constantly adding to our knowledge if we are good students of occult science. No better simile than that of the card-index system could possibly have been found.

14. But yet again we must remind the reader in this connection that the Qabalah is as much a method of using the mind as a system of knowledge. If we have the knowledge without having acquired the Qabalistic technique of mentation, it is of little use to us. In fact, we might go so far as to say that it is not possible to acquire any great degree of knowledge until this technique of the mind has been mastered; for it is not the conscious mind to which the Tree appeals, but subconsciousness, for the logical method of the Qabalah is the logical method of dream association; but in the case of the Qabalah the dreamer is the racial subconsciousness, the oversoul of the peoples, the Earth-spirit. Into communion with this Earth-soul the adept enters by means of meditation on the prescribed symbols. This is the real import of the Tree and its correspondences.

15. The highest of the Four Worlds, Atziluth, the plane of pure Deity, is called by the Qabalists the Archetypal World. It is also called, in the somewhat clumsy translation of MacGregor Mathers, the Intellectual World. This term is misleading. It is only intellectual as we commonly understand the word as relating to the mind, the rational intellect, in so far as it is the realm of archetypal ideas. But these ideas are entirely abstract, and are conceived by a function of consciousness quite outside the range of mind as we know it. Therefore to call this level the Intellectual World is to mislead the reader, unless at the same time we say that by intellect we mean something quite different to what the dictionary means. This is a poor way of expressing our ideas. It is far better to coin a new term with a precise meaning than to use an old one in a misleading sense, especially as, in the case of Atziluth, there is an excellent term already current, the term Archetypal, which exactly describes it.

16. The Atziluthic World is said by the Qabalists to be under the presidency of the Yod of the Sacred Name of Tetragrammaton. We may justly deduce from this that in any other fourfold system whatever is said to be also under the presidency of Yod will refer to the Atziluthic, or purely spiritual aspect of that force or subject. Among other associations given by different authorities are the Wands suit of the Tarot pack and the Element of Fire. It will be apparent to anyone who has any knowledge of occult matters that as soon as we know the element to which a symbol is assigned, we know a good deal, for it opens up all the ramifications of astrology for us, and we can trace out its astrological affinities through the triplicities of the Zodiac and the affinities of the planets with them. As soon as we know what Zodiacal and planetary associations exist, we are in a position to explore the correlated symbolism of any pantheon, for all the gods and goddesses of all the systems that the human mind has ever invented have astrological associations. The stories of their adventures are really parables of the workings of cosmic forces. Through this maze of symbolism we could never hope to find our way unaided, but if we anchor the end of each chain of correspondences to its Sephirah, we have the clue we need.

17. All systems of esoteric thought, as well as all popular theologies, attribute the construction and presidency of the different parts of the manifested universe to the mediation of intelligent and purposive beings, working under the instruction of Deity. Modern thought has tried to escape from the implications of this concept by reducing manifestation to a matter of mechanics; it has not succeeded, and there are signs that it is not far from the point when it will perceive mind as being at the root of form.

18. The concepts of the Ancient Wisdom may be crude from the standpoint of modern philosophy, but we are forced to admit that the causative force behind manifestation is more akin in its nature to mind than to matter. To go a step further and personify the different types of force is a legitimate analogy, provided we realise that the entity which is the soul of the force may differ as much in kind and degree from our minds as our bodies differ in type and scale from the bodies of the planets. We shall be nearer an understanding of nature if we look for mind in the background than if we refuse to admit that the visible universe has an invisible framework. The ether of the physicists is closer akin to mind than to matter; time and space, as understood by the modern philosopher, are more like modes of consciousness than linear measures.

19. The initiates of the Ancient Wisdom made no bones about their philosophy; they took each factor in Nature and personified it, gave it a name, and built up a symbolic figure to represent it, just as British artists have by their collective efforts produced a standard Britannia, a female figure with shield charged with the Union Jack, a lion at her feet, a trident in her hand, a helmet on her head, and the sea in the back ground. Analysing this figure as we would a Qabalistic symbol, we realise that these individual symbols in the complex glyph have each a significance. The various crosses which make up the Union Jack refer to the four races united in the United Kingdom. The helmet is that of Minerva, the trident is that of Neptune; the lion would need a chapter to himself to elucidate his symbolism. In fact, an occult glyph is more akin to a coat of arms than anything else, and the person who builds up a glyph goes to work in the same way as a herald designing a coat of arms. For in heraldry every symbol has its

exact meaning, and these are combined into the coat of arms that represents the family and affiliations of the man who bears it, and tells us his station in life. A magical figure is the coat of arms of the force it represents.

20. These magical figures are built up to represent the different modes of the manifestation of cosmic force in its different types and on its different levels. They are given names, and the initiate thinks of them as persons, not troubling himself about their metaphysical foundations. Consequently, for all practical purposes they are persons, for whatever they may be in actual fact, they have been personalised, and thought-forms have been built up on the astral plane to represent them. These, being charged with force, are of the nature of artificial elementals; but the force with which they are charged being cosmic, they are much more than what we ordinarily imply when we speak of artificial elementals, and we assign them to the angelic kingdom and call them angels or archangels according to their grade. An angelic being, then, may be defined as a cosmic force whose apparent vehicle of manifestation to psychic consciousness is a form built up by the human imagination. In practical occultism, these forms are built up with great care and the most elaborate attention to the details of the symbolism, and are used to evoke the force required; anyone who has had experience of their use will agree that they are peculiarly effectual for the purposes for which they are designed. By holding the magical image in mind and vibrating the traditional name assigned thereto, remarkable phenomena are obtained.

21. As we have already noted, it is necessary to use the mental technique of the Qabalists in order to get any sense out of the Qabalah; this formulation of the image and vibration of the name is designed to put the student in touch with the forces behind each Sphere of the Tree, and when he comes into touch in this way his consciousness is illuminated and his nature energised by the force thus contacted, and he obtains remarkable illuminations from his contemplation of the symbols. These illuminations are not a generalised flooding of light, as in the case of the Christian mystic, but a specific energising and illumination according to the Sphere opened up; Hod gives understanding of sciences, Yesod understanding of life-force and its tidal modes of functioning. When Hod is contacted we become filled with enthusiasm and energy for research; when Yesod is contacted we enter deeply into psychic consciousness and touch the hidden life-forces of the earth and our own natures. These are matters of experience; those who have used the method know what it yields them. Whatever may be the rational foundations of the system, as an empirical method it yields results.

22. If we want to study a Sephirah — in other words, if we want to investigate the aspect of Nature to which it refers — we not only study it intellectually and meditate upon it, but we try to get into psychic and intuitive touch with its influence and Sphere. In order to accomplish this, we always start at the top and try to get into spiritual touch with the aspect of Deity which emanated that Sphere and manifests in it. If this is not done, the forces belonging to the Sphere on the elemental levels may get out of hand and cause difficulties. Starting under the presidency of the Divine Name, however, no evil can enter.

23. Having adored the Creator and Sustainer of All under His Holy Name in the Sphere we are investigating, we next invoke the Archangel of the Sphere, the mighty spiritual being in whom we personify the forces that built up that level of evolution and continue to function in the corresponding aspect of Nature. We ask the blessing of the Archangel, and beg that he will bid the Order of Angels assigned to that Sphere that they shall be friendly and helpful towards us in the realm of nature in which they function. By the time we have done this, we shall be thoroughly tuned to the keynote of the Sphere we are investigating, and be ready to follow out the ramifications of the correspondences of that Sephirah and its cognate symbols.

24. Approached in this way, we shall find the association-chains far richer in symbolism than we have ever believed to be possible, for the subconscious mind has been stirred and one of its many chambers of imagery thrown open, to the exclusion of all the others. The association-chains that rise into consciousness should therefore be free from any admixture of extraneous ideas and true to type.

25. First we review in our minds all the possible symbols that we can recollect, and as these present themselves to consciousness we try and see their import and bearing upon the secrets of the Sphere under investigation. But we do not try too hard; for if we concentrate upon a symbol and strain at it, as it were, we shall close the meshes of the tenuous veil that shields the subconscious mind. In these investigations, half meditation, half reverie, we want to work on the borders of consciousness and subconsciousness so as to induce that which is subconscious to cross the threshold and come within our reach.

26. As we proceed thus, following out the ramifications of the association-chains, we shall find that a running comment of intuition accompanies the process, and after the experiment has been repeated two or three times we shall feel that we know that Sephirah in a peculiarly intimate way, that we feel at home there, that the feel of it is quite different to that of the other Sephiroth which we have not yet worked with. We shall also find that some Sephiroth are more congenial to us than others, and that we get better results when working with them than we do with the uncongenial ones, where the associations-chains keep on breaking and the doors of subconsciousness resolutely refuse to open to our knocking. One pupil of mine could do excellent meditations on Binah—Saturn, and Tiphareth, the Redeemer, but did not get on at all well with Geburah—Severity—Mars.

27. I shall never forget my own experience with the first attempt I made at this method. I was working on the Thirty-second Path, the Path of Saturn, uniting Malkuth and Yesod, a very difficult and treacherous Path. In my horoscope Saturn is not well aspected, and I have often experienced his opposing influence in my affairs. But after I had succeeded in treading the Path of Saturn out into the indigo darkness of the Unseen until the Moon of Yesod rose in purple and silver over the horizon, I felt that I had received the initiation of Saturn, that he was no longer inimical to me, but a friend who, though candid and stern, was to be trusted to protect me from mistakes and rash judgments. I realised his function as the tester, and not the antagonist or avenger. I realised him as Time with his scythe, but knew also why he was called in Hebrew Shabbathai, rest, “for he giveth his beloved sleep.” After that, the

Thirty-second Path was open to me, not only on the Tree, but in life, for the forces and problems symbolised by that Path and its correspondences had become harmonised in my soul. From these two brief examples it will be seen that the meditations upon the Tree form a most practical and exact system of mystical development; and one that is peculiarly valuable in that it is equilibrated, for the different aspects of manifestation are, as it were, dissected out and dealt with in turn, nothing being neglected. By the time we have trodden all the Paths of the Tree we shall have learnt the lessons of Death and the Devil, as well as of the Angel and the High Priest.

10. *The Paths Upon The Tree*

1. The *Sepher Yetzirah* refers to the Ten Sephiroth themselves, as well as the lines connecting them, as Paths, and justly so, for they are all equally channels of Divine influence; but it is usual in practical working to consider the lines between the Sephiroth only as the Paths, and the Sephiroth themselves as Spheres upon the Tree. This is one of the many tricks and blinds to be found in the Qabalistic system, for if we think of the Paths as thirty-two in number, as they are given in the *Sepher Yetzirah*, we shall not be able to equate them with the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet which, with their numerical value and correspondences, form the key to the Paths.

2. Each Path is said to represent the equilibrium of the two Sephiroth it connects, and we have to study it in the light of our knowledge of these Sephiroth if we are to appreciate its significance. Certain symbols are also assigned to the Paths themselves. These are, as already noted, the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet; the signs of the Zodiac, the planets, and the elements. Now there are twelve signs in the Zodiac, seven planets, and four elements, making in all twenty-three symbols. How are these to be arranged on Twenty-two Paths? Here is another Qabalistic blind to puzzle the uninitiated. The answer is quite simple when it is known. Our consciousness being in the element of Earth, we do not need the symbol of earth in our calculations when we make contact with the Unseen, so we leave it out and then find ourselves with the correct set of correspondences. Malkuth is all the earth we need for practical purposes. The third set of symbols to go upon the Paths are the twenty-two trumps or major arcana of the Tarot pack. With these three sets of symbols and the colours of the four colour scales, our major symbolism is complete; the minor symbolism consists of the innumerable ramifications of the correspondences through all systems and planes.

4. The Tree of Life, astrology, and the Tarot are not three mystical systems, but three aspects of one and the same system, and each is unintelligible without the others. It is only when we study astrology on the basis of the Tree that we have a philosophical system; equally does this apply to the Tarot system of divination, and the Tarot itself, with its comprehensive interpretations, gives the key to the Tree as applied to human life.

5. Astrology is so elusive because the uninitiated astrologer works on one plane only; but the initiated astrologer, with the Tree as his ground-plan, interprets on the four planes of the Four Worlds, and the effect of, shall we say, Saturn, is very different in Atziluth, where it is the Divine Mother, Binah, to what it is in Assiah.

6. All systems of divination and all systems of practical magic find their principles and philosophy based upon the Tree; whoever tries to use them without this key is like the foolhardy person who has a pharmacopoeia of patent medicines and doses himself and his friends according to the descriptions given in the advertisements, wherein backache includes every disease which does not cause pain in

front. The initiate who knows his Tree is like the scientific physician who understands the principles of physiology and the chemistry of drugs, and prescribes accordingly.

7. Various methods of attributing the Tarot cards have been worked out from traditional sources. In his little book, *The Key to the Tarot*, A. E. Waite gives the chief of these; but refrains from indicating which, in his opinion, is the correct one. In his valuable tabulation of esoteric symbolism, "777," Crowley has no such reticence, but gives the system as it is known among initiates. This is the method I propose to follow in these pages, for I believe it to be the correct one because the correspondences work out without discrepancies, a thing they do in none of the other systems.

8. According to this system, the four suits of the Tarot pack are assigned to the Four Worlds of the Qabalists and the four elements of the Alchemists. The suit of Wands is assigned to Atziluth and Fire. The suit of Cups to Briah and Water. The suit of Swords to Yetzirah and Air. The suit of Pentacles or Coins to Assiah and Earth.

9. The four aces are assigned to Kether, the first Sephirah; the four twos to Chokmah, the second Sephirah; and so on down the pack, the four tens being assigned to Malkuth. It will thus be seen that the cards of the four suits of the Tarot pack represent the action of the Divine Forces in each sphere and on each level of nature. Equally, if we know the significance of the Tarot cards we shall obtain much light on the nature of the Paths and Spheres to which they are assigned. Both these systems, the Tarot and the Tree, being of immemorial antiquity, their origins lost in the vistas of the ages, there is an enormous mass of symbolic correspondences accumulated around each of them. Every practical occultist who has ever worked with the Tree has added to this stock of associations, making the symbols live in the Astral by means of his operations. The Tree and its keys are infinite in their adaptability.

10. The four court-cards of the Tarot are called in modern packs, King, Queen, Knight, and Knave; but in the traditional packs they are, according to Crowley, arranged and symbolised differently. The King, being a mounted figure, indicating the swift action of the Yod of Tetragrammaton in the sphere of the suit, and thus equating with the Knight in the modern pack. The Queen, as in the modern packs, is a seated figure, representing the steadfast forces of the Hé of Tetragrammaton; the Prince of the esoteric Tarot is a seated figure, corresponding to the Vau of Tetragrammaton; and the Princess, the Knave of the modern packs, correspond to the Hé final of the Sacred Name.

11. The twenty-two trumps are arranged in various ways by various authorities, of which Mr. Waite gives a selection, but in our system we will follow the order given by Crowley for reasons already discussed.

12. In these pages we propose to give the philosophical Tree of Life, and enough practical instruction to render it available for meditation purposes; but we do not propose to give the Practical Qabalah, which is used for magical purposes; because that can only properly be learnt and safely practised in a Temple of the Mysteries. Reference must be made to the Practical Qabalah, however, in

order to render some of the concepts intelligible, but those who are rightfully in possession of its keys need have no fear that these keys will be revealed to the uninitiated in these pages, for I am quite alive to the consequences of so doing.

13. If, from the information here given, and as a result of pursuing the methods described herein, anyone is able to work out for himself the keys of the Practical Qabalah, as he well may, can any dispute that he is entitled to them?

14. The Tree is enormously valuable as a meditation glyph, quite apart from its use in magic. By meditation such as I have described in my account of my own experiences on the Thirty-second Path, it is possible to equilibrate the warring elements in one's own nature and bring them into harmonious balance. It is also possible to get into sympathetic rapport with the different aspects of Nature which these symbols represent when applied to the Macrocosm, even if these forces are not given a definite form in talismanic magic. The information that is obtained from the study of one's own horoscope is not to be accepted passively as the dispensation of Fate from which there is no appeal. We ought to realise that talismanic magic, or the less concentrated method of meditation upon the Tree, should be used to compensate all unbalanced force in the horoscope and bring all into equilibrium. Talismanic magic is to astrology what medical treatment is to medical diagnosis.

15. It is not possible for me to give any formulæ of practical magic here; before such formulæ can be made use of it is necessary to have received the grades of initiation to which they belong. Without these grades the student is no better off than the person who tries to diagnose and treat his own complaints after reading a medical textbook. That delightful humorist, Jerome K. Jerome, has told us what happens in such a case. The unfortunate imagines that he has every disease described therein, except housemaid's knee, and cannot make up his mind as to the appropriate treatment, for everything he fancies is contraindicated.

16. The ritual initiations of the Greater Mysteries of the Western Esoteric Tradition are based upon the principles of the Tree of Life. Each grade corresponds to a Sephirah and confers, or should confer, if the Order working them is worthy of the name, the powers of that sphere of nature. Likewise it opens up the Paths leading to that Sephirah, so that the initiate is said to be Lord of the Thirty-second Path when he has taken the initiation that corresponds to Yesod, or Lord of the Twenty-fourth, Twenty-fifth, and Twenty-sixth Paths when he has taken the initiation corresponding to Tiphareth, which constitutes him a full initiate. Beyond this lie the higher grades of adepthood.

17. The aim of each grade of initiation of the Greater Mysteries is to introduce the candidate to the Sphere of each Sephirah in turn, working from Malkuth up the Tree. The instructions given in each grade concern the symbolism and forces of the Sphere to which it refers and the Paths that equilibrate it. The sign and word of the grade are used when treading these Paths in the spirit-vision or projecting by them on the astral plane. Consequently the initiate is able to move with accuracy and certainty into whatsoever sphere of the Unseen he desires to penetrate, and to countercheck all beings he meets and

all visions he sees, for he knows what the colours of the Paths are in all four scales, and he checks his vision by these. If he is working up the Thirty-second path of Saturn, whose colours are all in the sombre hues of indigo, dark blue and black, he knows that something is amiss if a scarlet-robed figure presents itself. Either that figure is illusive, or he himself has wandered off the Path.

18. To project the astral body along the Paths it is necessary for many reasons to hold the degrees of initiation to which they correspond; chief among which is that, unless one has received the grade, one will be unknown to guardians of the Paths, and they will be inimical rather than helpful, and do all in their power to turn the wanderer back. Secondly, if one should succeed in forcing one's way past the guardian, one still has no means of counterchecking the vision or knowing whether one is on or off the Path, and there are plenty of beings in the lower sphere who are only too ready to take advantage of presumptuous ignorance.

19. These considerations, however, need in no way discourage anyone who wishes to meditate upon the Paths and Spheres in the manner I have described; and in the course of his meditations he may so enter into the spirit of the Path that its guardian shall come to know him and make him welcome. He will then literally have initiated himself, and no one can deny his right to be there.

20. The Tree, considered from the initiatory standpoint, is the link between the microcosm, which is man, and the Macrocosm, which is God made manifest in Nature. A ritual initiation is the act of linking the microcosmic Sephirah, the chakra, with the Macrocosmic Sephirah; it is the introduction of a newcomer to the Sphere by those who are already there. They construct a symbolic representation of the Sphere on the physical plane in the furniture of the temple; they construct an astral replica of it by concentrated imagination; and by means of invocation they call down into this temple not made with hands the forces of the Sphere of the Sephirah they are working upon.

21. These forces stimulate the corresponding chakras of the initiate and wake them to activity in his aura. The process of self-initiation by the meditations I have described is slower than the processes of ritual initiation, but it is sure enough if persevered with by a suitable person, but one cannot teach a jelly-fish to sing by feeding it on canary-seed.

11. The Subjective Sephiroth

1. As above, so below, man is a miniature macrocosm. All the factors that go to the make-up of the manifested universe are present in his nature. Hence, in his perfection, he is said to be higher than the angels. At the present time, however, the angels are fully evolved beings and man is not. Thus he is as much lower than the angels as a three-year-old child is less developed than a three-year-old dog.

2. Hitherto we have considered the Tree of Life as an epitome of the Macrocosm, the universe, and the use of its symbols to put us in touch with the different spheres of objective Nature. We will now consider it in relation to the subjective sphere of the nature of the individual.

3. The accepted correspondences, as given by Crowley (who, unfortunately, never gives his authorities, so we do not know when he is using MacGregor Mathers' system and when he is relying upon his independent researches), are based partly on the astrological attribution of the planets assigned to the different Sephiroth, and partly upon a crude anatomical scheme of the human form standing with its back to the Tree. This is too crude for our purposes, and probably represents the work of later generations of scribes; during the Middle Ages the Qabalah was rediscovered by European philosophers, and they grafted astrological and alchemical symbolism upon its system. Moreover, the Rabbis themselves used an extremely detailed set of anatomical metaphors, discussing in detail the significance of every hair on the head of God, and even the more intimate parts of His anatomy. Such references cannot be taken literally and applied to the human form.

4. The Sephiroth, individually and in their pattern of relationships, represent in relation to the Macrocosm the successive phases of evolution, and in relation to the Microcosm the different levels of consciousness and factors of character. That these levels of consciousness have some relation to the psychic centres of the physical body is a reasonable assumption, but we must not be crude and mediaeval in the conclusions we draw. Occult anatomy and physiology have been worked out in detail in the Yoga science of the Hindus, and we can learn much from their teachings. The latest advances in physiology are pointing to the conclusion that the link between mind and matter is to be sought primarily in the endocrine system of ductless glands and only secondarily in the brain and central nervous system. We can learn much from this source of knowledge also, and piecing together all the information we can collect from every source, we may finally arrive by inductive reasoning at what the ancients learnt by means of the intuitive and deductive methods which they brought to such a high degree of perfection in their Mystery schools.

5. It is generally agreed that the chakras, or psychic centres described in Yoga literature, are not situated inside the organs with which they are associated, but in the auric envelope at spots roughly approximating thereto. We shall do well, therefore, not to associate the different Sephiroth with the limbs and other parts of our anatomy, but to regard the use of such analogies as metaphorical and look for the psychic principles which they may be held to represent.

6. Before proceeding to a detailed study of each Sephirah from this standpoint, it is very helpful to have a general survey of the Tree as a whole, because so much of the elucidation of the symbolism depends upon the relationship of one symbol to another in the pattern of the Tree. This chapter must needs be discursive and inconclusive, but it will enable the detailed study of the individual Sephiroth to be much more effectually carried out.

7. The first and most obvious division of the Tree is into the three Pillars, and this immediately reminds us of the three channels of Prana described by the yogis, Ida, Pingala, and Shushumna; and the two principles, the Yin and the Yang of Chinese philosophy, and the Tao, or Way, which is the equilibrium between them. By the agreement of witnesses truth is established, and when we find three of the great metaphysical systems of the world in complete agreement we may conclude that we are dealing with established principles and should accept them as such.

8. The Central Pillar should, in my opinion, be taken to represent consciousness, and the two side pillars as the positive and negative factors of manifestation. It is noteworthy that in the Yoga system consciousness is extended when Kundalini rises through the central channel of the Shushumna, and that the Western magical operation of Rising on the Planes takes place up the Central Pillar of the Tree; that is to say, the symbolism employed to induce this extension of consciousness does not take the Sephiroth in their numerical order, commencing with Malkuth, but goes from Malkuth to Yesod, and Yesod to Tiphareth, by what is called the Path of the Arrow.

9. Malkuth, the Sphere of Earth, is taken by occultists as signifying brain-consciousness, as is proved by the fact that after any astral projection the ceremonial return is made to Malkuth and normal consciousness re-established therein.

10. Yesod, the Sphere of Levanah, the Moon, is taken as psychic consciousness, and also as the reproductive centre. Tiphareth is taken as the higher psychism, the true illuminated vision, and is associated with the highest grade of the initiation of the personality, as is evidenced by the fact that to it is assigned, in the system taken by Crowley from Mathers, the first of the grades of adepthood.

11. Daath, the mysterious, invisible Sephirah, which is never marked upon the Tree, is associated in the Western system with the nape of the neck, the point where the spine meets the skull, the spot at which the development of the brain from the notochord took place in our primeval ancestors. Daath is usually held to represent the consciousness of another dimension, or the consciousness of another level or plane; it essentially represents the idea of change of key.

12. Kether is called the Crown. Now a crown is above the head, and Kether is generally held to represent a form of consciousness which is not achieved during incarnation. It is essentially outside the scheme of things so far as the planes of form are concerned. The spiritual experience associated with Kether is Union with God, and whoso achieves that experience is said to enter into the Light and come not forth again.

13. These Sephiroth unquestionably have their correlations in the chakras of the Hindu system, but the correspondences are given differently by different authorities. As the method of classification is different, the West using a fourfold system and the East a sevenfold system, correlation is not easy to obtain, and in my opinion it is better to look for first principles rather than obtain a tidy pattern of arrangement which does violence to the correspondences.

14. The only two writers known to me who have attempted this correlation are Crowley and General J. F. C. Fuller. General Fuller assigns the Muladhara Lotus to Malkuth, pointing out that its four petals correspond with the four elements. It is interesting to note that in the Queen scale of colour, as given by Crowley, the Sphere of Malkuth is represented as divided into four quarters, coloured respectively citrine, olive, russet, and black, to represent the four elements, and bearing the closest resemblance to the usual representations of the Four-petalled Lotus.

15. This Lotus is represented as situated in the perineum and is associated with the anus and the function of excretion. In column XXI of the table of correspondences given by Crowley in "777" he attributes the buttocks and anus of the Perfected Man to Malkuth. I consider that from every point of view the attribution of Fuller, who refers the Muladhara Lotus to Malkuth, is to be preferred to that of Crowley, who in column CXVIII refers it to Yesod, thus contradicting himself. In the infantile mind, according to Freud, the functions of reproduction and excretion are confused, but I don't consider that this attribution is one that can be generally accepted or ought to be perpetuated.

16. Malkuth, viewed as the Muladhara Lotus, represents, we may take it, the end-result of the life processes, their final concretion in form, and their submission to the disintegrating influences of death in order that their substance may be utilised again. The form into which they have been organised by the slow processes of evolution has served its purpose, and the force must be set free; this is the spiritual significance of the processes of excretion, putrefaction, and decomposition,

17. The Svadisthana Chakra, the Six-petalled Lotus, at the base of the generative organs, is assigned by General Fuller to Yesod. This agrees with the Western tradition, which assigns Yesod to the reproductive organs of the Divine Man; its astrological correspondence with the Moon, Diana-Hecate, also agrees with this attribution. Crowley, though assigning Yesod to the phallus in column XXI of "777," assigns the Svadisthana Lotus to Hod, Mercury. It is difficult to understand this attribution, and as he does not give his authority, I consider it better to adhere to the principle of referring the levels of consciousness to the Central Pillar.

18. Tiphareth, by universal consent, represents the solar plexus and breast; it therefore seems reasonable to attribute to it the Manipura and Anahata Chakras, as Crowley does. Fuller attributes these chakras to Geburah and Chesed, but as these two Sephiroth find their equilibrium in Tiphareth, this attribution presents no difficulty and causes no discrepancy.

19. In the same way the Visuddhu Chakra, which in the Hindu system correlates with the larynx and is referred to Binah by Crowley, and the Ajna Chakra at the root of the nose, which correlates with the pineal gland and is referred to Chokmah by the same authority, may be taken as uniting for function in Daath, situated at the base of the skull.

20. The Sahasrara Chakra, the Thousand-petalled Lotus, situated above the head, is referred by Crowley to Kether, and there can be little reason to quarrel with this attribution, for it is foreshadowed in the very name of the First Path, Kether, the Crown, which rests upon and above the head.

21. The two flanking pillars of Severity and Mercy can be seen as representing the positive and negative principles, and their respective Sephiroth as representing the modes of functioning of these forces upon the different levels.

22. The Pillar of Severity contains Binah, Geburah, and Hod, or Saturn, Mars, and Mercury. The Pillar of Mercy contains Chokmah, Chesed, and Netzach, or the Zodiac, Jupiter, and Venus. Chokmah and Binah, in the symbolism of the Qabalah, are represented by male and female figures and are the supernal Father and Mother, or in more philosophical language, the positive and negative principles of the universe, the Yin and the Yang, of which maleness and femaleness are but specialised aspects.

23. Chesed (Jupiter) and Geburah (Mars) are both represented in Qabalistic symbolism as crowned figures, the former a lawgiver upon his throne, and the latter a warrior king in his chariot. These are the constructive and destructive principles respectively. It is interesting to note that Binah, the supernal Mother, is also Saturn, the solidifier, who connects through his sickle with Death with his scythe, and Time with his hour-glass. In Binah we find the root of Form. It is said of Malkuth in the *Sepher Yetzirah* that it sitteth upon the throne of Binah—matter has its root in Binah—Saturn—Death; form is the destroyer of force. With this passive destroyer goes also the active destroyer, and we find Mars-Geburah immediately below it on the Pillar of Severity; thus is the force locked up in form set free by the destructive influence of Mars, the Siva aspect of the Godhead. Chokmah, the Zodiac, represents kinetic force; and Chesed, Jupiter, the benign king, represents organised force; and the two are synthesised in Tiphareth, the Christ-centre, the Redeemer and Equilibrator.

24. The next trinity, of Netzach, Hod, and Yesod, represents the magical and astral side of things. Netzach (Venus) represents the higher aspects of the elemental forces, the Green Ray; and Hod (Mercury) represents the mind side of magic. The one is the mystic and the other the occult, and they synthesise in the elemental Yesod. This pair of Sephiroth should never be considered apart, any more than the upper pair of Geburah and Gedulah, which is another name for Chesed. This is indicated by the fact that the Qabalah attributes them respectively to the right and left arms and the left and right legs.

25. It will thus be seen that the three form-Sephiroth are in the Pillar of Severity, and the three force-Sephiroth in the Pillar of Mercy, and between them, in the Pillar of Equilibrium, are set the different levels of consciousness. The Pillar of Severity, with Binah at its head, is the female principle, the

Pingala of the Hindus and the Yang of the Chinese; the Pillar of Mercy, with Chokmah at its head, is the Ida of the Hindus and the Yin of the Chinese; and the Pillar of Equilibrium is Shushumna and Tao.

11. The Gods Upon the Tree

1. All students of comparative religion and its poor relation, folk-lore, are agreed that primitive man, observing and beginning to analyse the natural phenomena surrounding him, attributed them to the agency of beings akin to himself in nature and type, but transcending him in power. As he could not see them, he not unnaturally called them invisible; and as he could not see his own mind during life, or his friend's soul after death, he concluded that the beings that produced natural phenomena were of the same nature as the invisible but active mind and soul.

2. Now all this sounds very crude as it is put by the anthropologists, but that is only because when translating savage ideas they choose words that have crude associations. For instance, the standard translation of one of the chief scriptures of China refers to the venerable philosopher Lao Tse as "the Old Boy." This sounds comical to European ears, yet it is not so far removed from the words of another Scripture which has been fortunate enough to receive translation at the hands of those who revered it— "Except ye become as a little child—— " I am not a sinologue, but I incline to the opinion that the translation "Eternal Child" would have been equally accurate and in better taste.

3. There is a saying in the Mysteries, "See that ye blaspheme not the Name by which another knoweth his God. For if ye do this in Allah, ye will do it in Adonai."

4. And after all, was primitive man so very far off the mark when he attributed the causation of natural phenomena to activities of the same nature as the thought-processes of the human mind, but upon a higher arc? Is not that the point towards which both physics and metaphysics are gradually converging? Supposing we were to re-cast the statement of the savage philosopher and say, The essential nature of man is similar in type to that of his Creator, would we be held to have said anything either blasphemous or ridiculous?

5. We may personalise natural forces in terms of human consciousness; or we may abstract human consciousness in terms of natural forces; both are legitimate proceedings in occult metaphysics, and the process yields some very interesting clues and some very important practical applications. We must not, however, make the mistake of the ignorant, and say A is B when we mean A is of the same nature as B. But equally we may legitimately avail ourselves of the Hermetic axiom, "As above, so below," because if A and B are of the same nature, the laws governing A can be predicated concerning B. What is true of the drop is true of the ocean. Consequently, if we know anything concerning the nature of A, we may conclude that, allowing for the difference in scale, it will apply to B. This is the method of analogy used in the inductive science of the ancients, and provided it is counterchecked by observation and experiment, it can yield some very fruitful results and cut out many leagues of weary wandering in the dark.

6. The personification and deification of the natural forces was man's first crude and shrewd attempt to evolve a monistic theory of the universe and save himself from the destructive and crippling influence of an unresolved dualism. As age by age extended his knowledge and elaborated his intellectual processes, he read more and more significance into the first simple classifications. Nevertheless, he did not discard his original classifications, because they were fundamentally sound and represented actualities. He simply elaborated and extended them, and finally, when he fell on evil times, overlaid them with superstition.

7. We should not, therefore, regard the pagan pantheons as so many aberrations of the human mind; nor should we try to understand them from the viewpoint of the uninstructed and uninitiated; we should try to find out what they must have meant to the highly intelligent and cultured high-priests of the cults in their heyday. Compare Mme David Neel and W. B. Seabrook on the subject of heathen rites with the reports of the average missionary. Seabrook shows us the spiritual significance of voodoo, and Mme David Neel shows us the metaphysical aspect of Thibetan magic. These things appear in one way to the sympathetic observer who wins the confidence of the exponents of these systems and succeeds in being received into their holy of holies as a friend, and who goes to learn instead of merely to observe and ridicule, and in another way to the "beef-fed zealot" who walks into the holy place in his dirty boots and gets stoned by the indignant worshippers.

8. In judging these things let us consider the form Christianity would present if approached in the same way. Unsympathetic observers would probably conclude that we worshipped a sheep, and the Holy Ghost would yield some spectacular interpretations. Let us credit other people with using metaphors if we do not expect to be taken literally ourselves. The outer form of the ancient pagan faiths is no cruder than Christianity in backward Latin countries, where Jesus Christ is represented in topper and tails and the Virgin Mary in lace-edged pantaloons. The inner form of the ancient faiths can compare very favourably with the best of our modern metaphysicians. After all, they produced Plato and Plotinus. The human mind does not change, and what is true of ourselves is probably true of the pagans. The Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world is only another version of the Bull of Mithra which does the same thing, the only difference being that the ancient initiate was literally "washed in blood" and the modern one takes it metaphorically. *Autres temps autres mours.*⁴

9. If we approach those whom we elect to call pagans, both ancient and modern, in a reverent and sympathetic spirit, knowing that Allah and Brahma and Amen Ra are but other names for that which we worship as God, we shall learn a very great deal that was forgotten in Europe when the Gnosis was stamped out and its literature destroyed.

10. We shall find, however, that the pagan faiths present their teaching in a form that is not readily assimilable by the European mind, and that if we are to arrive at its significance we must re-state it in our own terms. We must correlate the metaphysical concept with the pagan symbol; then we shall be able to apply to the former the vast mass of mystical experience which generations of contemplatives and

⁴ French: "Other times, other customs."

experimental psychologists have organised about the latter. And when we speak of experimental psychologists, we must not make the mistake of thinking that they are an exclusively modern product, because the priests of the ancient Mysteries, with their temple sleep and deliberately induced hypnogogic visions, were nothing more nor less than experimental psychologists, though their art has been lost, like many other of the ancient arts, and is only being laboriously recovered piecemeal in the more advanced circles of scientific thought.

11. The method used by the modern initiate for interpreting the language spoken by the ancient myths is a very simple and effectual one. He finds in the Qabalistic Tree of Life a link between the highly stylistic pagan systems and his own more rational methods; the Jew, Asiatic by blood and monotheistic by religion, has a foot in both worlds. Upon the Tree of Life with its Ten Holy Sephiroth the modern occultist bases both a metaphysic and a magic. He uses a philosophical conception of the Tree to interpret what it represents to his conscious mind, and he uses a magical and ceremonial application of its symbolism to link it up with his subconscious mind. The initiate, consequently, makes the best of both worlds, ancient and modern; for the modern world is all surface consciousness, and has forgotten and repressed the subconsciousness, to its own great hurt; and the ancient world was mainly subconsciousness, consciousness having been but recently evolved. When the two are linked up and brought into polarised function they yield super-consciousness, which is the goal of the initiate.

12. Holding the foregoing conceptions in mind, let us now try to co-ordinate the ancient pantheons with the Spheres upon the Tree of Life. There are ten such Spheres, the Ten Holy Sephiroth, and between these we must distribute, according to type, the different gods and goddesses of whatever pantheon we wish to study; we are then in a position to interpret their significance in the light of what we already know concerning the principles represented by the Tree, and to add to our knowledge of the Tree all that is available concerning the significance of the ancient deities.

13. This is, obviously, of great intellectual value—but there is another value which does not so readily appear to the average man who has had no experience of Mystery-workings; the performance of a ceremonial rite symbolically representing the working of the force personified as a god, has a very marked and even drastic effect on the subconscious mind of any person who is at all susceptible to psychic influences. The ancients had brought these rites to a very high pitch of perfection, and when we moderns are trying to reconstruct the lost art of practical magic we can go to them with great profit. The whole philosophy of European magic is based upon the Tree, and no one can hope to understand it or use it intelligently who has not been trained in the Qabalistic methods. It is this lack of training which makes popular occultism so very apt to degenerate into the crudest superstition. “Your number in your name” becomes a different thing when we understand the mathematical Qabalah; fortunes in tea-cups are another matter when we understand the significance of the Magical Images and the method of their formulation and interpretation as a psychological device for penetrating the veil of the unconscious.

14. Broadly speaking, then, we sort out the gods and goddesses of all the pagan pantheons into the ten pigeon-holes of the Ten Holy Sephiroth, relying chiefly upon their astrological associations to guide

us, because astrology is the one universal language, for all people see the same Planets. Space is referred to Kether, the Zodiac to Chokmah, the seven planets to the next seven Sephiroth, and Earth to Malkuth, Consequently, any god who has an analogy with Saturn will be referred to Binah, as will any goddess who might be termed the primordial mother, the Superior Eve, as distinguished from the Inferior Eve, the Bride of Microprosopos, Malkuth. The Supernal triangle of Kether, Chokmah, and Binah always refers to the Old Gods, which every pantheon recognises as the predecessors of those forms of godhead worshipped by the current faith. Thus Rhea and Kronos would be referred to Binah and Chokmah, and Jupiter to Chesed. All the corn goddesses refer to Malkuth, and all the lunar goddesses to Yesod. The war gods and destructive gods, or divine devils, refer to Geburah, and the goddesses of love to Netzach. The initiator gods of wisdom are referred to Hod, and the sacrificed gods and redeemers to Tiphareth. So great an authority as Richard Payne Knight in his valuable book, *The Symbolic Language of Ancient Art and Mythology*, speaks of “the remarkable concurrence of the allegories, symbols, and titles of ancient mythology in favour of the mystic system of emanations.” With this clue we sort out the pantheons, thus enabling ourselves to compare like with like and make the one illuminate the other.

15. In the system he gives in his book of correspondences, “777,” Crowley assigns the gods to the Paths as well as to the Sephiroth. This, in my opinion, is a mistake and leads to confusion. It is the Sephiroth alone that represent natural forces; the Paths are states of consciousness. The Sephiroth are objective and the Paths are subjective. It is for this reason that in the working glyph of the Tree used by initiates the Sephiroth are always represented in one Colour Scale and the Paths in another. Those who possess this glyph will know to what I refer.

16. The Paths themselves, in my opinion, should be regarded as under the direct presidency of the Holy Names governing their Sephirothic attributions only, and should not be confused with other pantheons; for although we may go to other systems for intellectual enlightenment, we are unwise to attempt to mix the methods of practical working and unfoldment of consciousness.

17. For instance, the Seventeenth Path, between Tiphareth and Binah, is assigned by the *Sepher Yetzirah* to the Element of Air. We are far wiser to work it with the rite of the Element of Air and the Holy Names assigned thereto, and to approach it through the appropriate Tattva, rather than confuse the issue with the associations of the assorted collection of deities, Castor and Pollux, Janus, Apollo, Merti, and other incompatibles assigned to it by Crowley, whose correspondences present an inextricable tangle of associations.

18. The Sephiroth should be interpreted macrocosmically, and the Paths microcosmically; thus we shall find the clue to the Tree in both man and nature.

13. Practical Work Upon the Tree

1. If among the readers who have followed these studies in the Qabalah thus far there are any of the more advanced students of Western occultism, they will no doubt have found much more that is familiar than is new or original. In working upon this storehouse of ancient knowledge we are in the position of excavators working on the site of a buried temple; we are digging up fragments rather than studying a coherent system; for the system, though coherent enough in its heyday, was broken and scattered and defaced by the persecutions of twenty centuries of unenlightened bigotry and spiritual jealousy.

2. More work has been done upon these scattered fragments than is generally realised, however. Mme Blavatsky gathered together a great mass of data and exposed it to the gaze of a public which understood it little better than the child gazing at the cases in a museum and marvelling at the queer things they contain. The scholarly work of G. R. S. Mead has given us much information concerning the Gnosis, the esoteric tradition of the Western world during the earlier centuries of our epoch; Mrs Atwood's monumental book has revealed the significance of the Alchemical symbolism to us. None of these, however, have expounded the Western Tradition as initiates of that Tradition, but have approached it from outside and either pieced together its fragments, or, as in the case of Mme Blavatsky, interpreted it by analogy in the light of the more familiar system of another Tradition.

3. Those who approached the study of the subject from the inside—that is to say, with the initiatory keys—and employed it as a practical system for the exaltation of consciousness have, for the most part, maintained a secrecy which, though it might have been not only justifiable and even essential in the days when the Holy Inquisition rewarded such researches with the stake, is difficult to assign to any more creditable motive in our liberal age than a desire to create and maintain prestige. A very effectual “corner” in occult practice, if not in occult knowledge, has been established and maintained among English-speaking peoples for the last quarter of a century. A “corner” that effectually defeated the spiritual impulse which should have given rise to a renaissance of the Mysteries during the last quarter of the last century. Consequently, the earth being ripe for the sowing and the wheat not being broadcast therein, the four winds brought strange seeds to the waiting ground, and a tropical growth sprang up that, having no roots in racial tradition, withered away or developed strange forms.

4. The buried temple of our native tradition has in actuality been excavated in part at any rate, but the rescued fragments have not been made available for students according to the honourable traditions of European scholarship, but have been gathered together into private collections the keys whereof have rested in the pockets of individuals who have opened and closed the doors in an entirely arbitrary fashion. I have no doubt these pages will cause heart-burnings in certain quarters whose private collections they depreciate in value. But I have no doubt also that the innumerable students who essayed the Western Path in vain may find in these pages the keys to what was incomprehensible to them in the method, or perhaps, to be more accurate, the complete lack of method, in which they were trained. Speaking for myself, it took me ten years' work in the dark before I found the keys, and I only found

these in the end because I was sufficiently psychic to pick up the Inner Plane contacts. I find it difficult to believe that any useful purpose is served by deliberately darkening counsel or by withholding from the student keys and explanations that are essential to his work. If the student is unworthy to be trained, do not let us train him. If he is to be trained at all, let us train him properly.

5. In the following pages I have done my best to elucidate the principles governing the use of magical symbolism. The practical use of the ceremonial method is best attempted under the guidance of one who is already experienced in its use; to work alone or with equally inexperienced comrades is to run unnecessary risks, but there is no reason why anyone should not experiment with the meditative method.

6. In order to use the magical symbols effectually one has to make the contact of each individual symbol. It is of little use to make a list of symbols and proceed to the construction of a ritual. In magic, as in violin-playing, one has to “make one’s notes”; one does not find them ready-made as on the piano. The student of the violin has to learn to make each individual note before he can play an air. So it is with any occult operation, we must know how to construct and contact the magical images before we can work with them.

7. The sets of symbols associated with each of the Thirty-two Paths are used by the initiate to build up the magical images; it is necessary that he should know these symbols not only in theory, but also in practice; that is to say, he must not only have them thoroughly well rooted in his memory, but must also have performed meditations upon them individually, until he has penetrated their significance and experienced the force they represent. To know the vast range of symbols associated with each Path is, of course, the work of a lifetime, but the student must learn the key-symbols of each Path as the essential preliminary to his studies; he is then able to recognise all other symbol-forms as they come his way and assign them to their proper classification. His knowledge will thus develop under two aspects: firstly, the knowledge of the symbolism in its infinite ramifications; and secondly, the philosophy of the interpretation of that symbolism. Once he has mastered a working knowledge of the concepts of esoteric cosmogony and has the general scheme of symbolism assigned to each Sephirah well fixed in his memory, the student is equipped with a card-index system and can commence filing, collecting the material for his files from every imaginable source in archæology, folk-lore, mystical religion, travellers’ tales, and the speculations of ancient and modern philosophy and ultra-modern science.

8. The uninitiated inquirer may wonder how the enormous mass of data is kept sorted in the memory. To begin with, the serious student who uses the Tree as his meditation method works at it regularly every day. Moreover, it will be found by experience that the assignation of symbols to each Sephirah has a peculiar logical basis, hidden somewhere deep in the subconscious mind, and the symbol-sequences are not nearly so difficult to remember as might be supposed, especially if they have been used for meditation. Some of the symbols refer to the concepts of esoteric philosophy, some to the methods of projecting consciousness in vision, and some to the composing of ceremonial. The student must remember, however, that the symbols will never yield their significance to conscious meditation

alone, however correctly and completely they are known; they must be used as the initiates intended them to be used, to evoke images from the subconscious mind into conscious content.

9. One set of symbols is assigned to the Ten Holy Sephiroth themselves, and another set to the Twenty-two Paths that connect them. Some of the symbols, however, occur in both sets, and all of them interconnect through their astrological and numerical correlations. This sounds most perplexingly complex, but in actual practice it is far simpler than it sounds, because the work is not done with the conscious mind, but with the subconscious mind, and it matters very little in what manner the symbols are pitchforked into it, the strange dæmon that sits behind the censor sorts them out, picking that which it requires and rejecting all else, until finally a coherent pattern reappears in consciousness that only requires analysis to yield its significance after the same manner as a dream.

10. A vision evoked by the use of the Tree is, in fact, an artificially produced waking dream, deliberately motivated and consciously related to some chosen subject whereby not only the subconscious content, but also the superconscious perceptions are evoked and rendered intelligible to consciousness. In a spontaneous dream the symbols are drawn at random from experience; in the Qabalistic vision, however, the picture is evoked from a limited set of symbols to which consciousness is rigidly restricted by a highly trained habit of concentration. It is this peculiar power to turn the mind loose within determined limits which constitutes the technique of occult meditation, and it is only to be acquired by constant practice over a considerable period. It is this which constitutes the difference between the trained and the untrained occultist; the untrained person may be able to detach consciousness from the control of the directing personality and thus allow the images to rise, but he has no power to restrict and select what shall appear, and consequently anything may appear, including a varying proportion of subconscious content. The trained occultist, however, accustomed to use this method in his meditations, is able to swing instantly clear of the normal subconscious content unless it is disturbed by emotion, in which case he is liable to be entangled in its meshes; but even in this case his method is his protection, for he is immediately able to recognise confused symbolism in the images because he has a definite standard of comparison with which to compare them.

11. In studying the Tree the student should always think of each Sephirah under the threefold aspect we have already mentioned of philosophy, psychism, and magic; to this end he should always think of it firstly as representing a certain factor in the evolution of the cosmos in the immemorial past of cosmic time, whether it remains in manifestation, has passed away, or has not yet arrived at the level of dense matter.

12. With this aspect of the Tree are also taken the curious cryptic texts of the Sepher Yetzirah, one to each Path. These most baffling utterances have a curious way of yielding sudden flashes of illumination to meditation and are by no means to be rejected as rubbish, incomprehensible though they may appear at first sight.

13. Another source of illumination is to be found in the additional titles of the Sephiroth, each of which has anything from one to two or three dozen. These are graphic descriptive names applied to the various Sephiroth by the ancient Rabbis and found scattered through the Qabalistic literature, and they tell us a great many things. For instance, the titles “Concealed of the Concealed” and “Primordial Point” that are applied to Kether convey a good deal to those who know where to look for it.

14. We can also, once we are acquainted with the symbolism, assign to the various Sephiroth their equivalent gods in other systems, and when we look up the symbols, functions, cosmic concepts, and methods of worship assigned to these deities we get a fresh flood of illumination. By the use of a good mythological dictionary or an encyclopaedia, *Frazer's Golden Bough*, and Mme Blavatsky's *Secret Doctrine* and *Isis Unveiled*, we can, by the mere application of diligence, read a great many riddles that at first appeared insoluble, and the exercise is a fascinating one. When used thus the Tree is peculiarly valuable, because its diagrammatic form causes things to be seen in relation to each other, thus causing them to throw light upon each other.

15. In order to manipulate the psychic aspect of the Tree and its Paths the occultist uses images, because it is by means of images and the names that evoke them that vision is formulated. He associates with each Sephirah a primary symbol, which is called its Magical Image. Secondly, he associates with it in his mind a geometrical form which, in various ways, embodies its characteristics, and when he composes symbols he uses that form as the basis. For instance, Geburah, Mars, the Fifth Sephirah, has assigned to it a pentagon or five-sided figure. Any symbol of Geburah, whether it be a talisman, an altar to Mars, or a mental picture of a symbol, would be in the form of a pentagon coloured in one of the colours of the Mars colour scale.

16. The most important forms upon the Tree, however, are those associated with the four Names of Power assigned to each Sephirah; with these are associated four colours in which they are conceived to manifest in a symbolic form in each of the Four Worlds of the Qabalists. The highest of these is the God-name, which manifests in Atziluth, the plane of spirit, and is the supreme Name of Power of that Sephirothic Sphere and dominates all its aspects, whether cosmic, evolutionary, or subjective. It represents the idea underlying the development of manifestation in that Sphere; the idea that runs through all subsequent evolution and expresses itself in all ensuing effects and manifestations.

17. The second Name of Power is that of the Archangel of the Sphere, and represents the organised consciousness of the being through the activities of which the evolution of that phase was inaugurated and directed. Although these beings are represented pictorially as of human form, though etherealised, it must not be thought that life and consciousness as we know them in any way correspond to their nature. They are more akin in essence to natural forces, yet if we consider them simply as unintelligent energy we shall have no adequate concept of their nature, because they are essentially individualised, intelligent; and purposive. Both these ideas must enter into our concept, modifying each other, till finally we shall arrive at a realisation that differs very widely from anything to which Western thought is accustomed.

18. The third Name of Power denominates, not one being, but a whole class of beings, the choirs of angels as they are called by the rabbis, and these again represent intelligent natural forces.

19. The fourth denominates what we have called the Mundane Chakra, that is to say the celestial object which is looked upon as the product of the particular phase of evolution which took place under the presidency of that Sephirah and which represents it.

20. The third aspect under which we consider the Sephiroth is the magical aspect and is essentially practical. To arrive at this, we think of what may be experienced under the presidency of these different aspects of deity-manifestation, and what powers may be wielded by the magician when he has mastered their lessons.

21. Each Sephirah has assigned to it a virtue, which represents its ideal aspect, the gift which it brings to evolution; and a vice which is the result of the overplus of its qualities. For instance, Geburah, Mars, has for its virtues energy and courage, and for its vices cruelty and destructiveness. The student of astrology will at once recognise that the virtues and vices attributed to the various Sephiroth are derived from the characteristics of the planets associated with them, and will find that in this correspondence a whole new line of approach to astrology is opened up.

22. The spiritual experience as I prefer to call it, or occult power as Crowley calls it, is a profound realisation or vision of some aspect of cosmic science. This constitutes the essence of the initiation of the grade assigned to each Sephirah, for in the Greater Mysteries of the West the grades are associated with the Sephiroth.

23. The mediaeval Qabalists also assigned a part of the body to each Sephirah, but this must not be taken too literally; the real key is to be found in the realisation that the different Sephiroth represent factors in consciousness, and if we take Geburah as the strong right arm, we must realise that it really means the dynamic will, the executive capacity, the destruction of the effete and unbalanced.

24. Each Sephirah and Path has assigned to it symbolic animals, plants, and precious stones. It is necessary that the student should know these for two reasons: firstly, they give some very important keys to the relations of the gods of the different pantheons to the Sephiroth; and secondly, they form part of the symbolism of the Astral Paths and serve as landmarks when travelling in the spirit-vision. For instance, if one saw a horse (Mars) or a jackal (Luna) in the sphere of Netzach (Venus), one would know that there was confusion of plane and the vision was not reliable. In her Sphere one would expect to see her doves, and a spotted beast, such as a lynx or leopard.

25. It may be thought that the association of the symbolic beasts with the gods and goddesses in the old myths is entirely arbitrary and the fruit of the poetic imagination, which, like the wind, bloweth where it listeth. To this the occultist answers that the poetic imagination is not an arbitrary thing and refers the sceptic to the works of Dr Jung of Zurich, the famous psychiatrist, and to the essays of the Irish poet,

“A. E.,” in particular *Song and its Fountains*, wherein he analyses the nature of his own sources of inspiration. From the intrinsic nature of his poetry, and from many passing references in his works, I think we may be entitled to claim “A. E.” as one of that band of students who have been nurtured on the mystical Qabalah. At any rate, what he has to say is sound Qabalistic doctrine and extremely illuminating to our present argument.

26. Dr Jung has a great deal to say concerning the myth-making faculty of the human mind, and the occultist knows it to be true. He knows also, however, that its implications are much farther reaching than psychology has yet suspected. The mind of poet or mystic, dwelling upon the great natural forces and factors of the manifested universe, has, by the creative use of the imagination, penetrated far more deeply into their secret causes and springs of being than has the scientist; it is not for nothing that the racial imagination, working thus, has come to associate certain animals with certain gods; a brief examination of the examples cited serves to show the basis of the association. The doves of Venus show her gentler aspect, and the cat-beasts her sinister beauty.

27. The association of plants with the different Paths rests upon a twofold basis. Firstly, there are plants traditionally associated with the legends of the gods, as is corn with Ceres and the vine with Dionysos; these we find associated with the Sephiroth, with which the functions of these gods are correlated; corn with Malkuth and the vine with Tiphareth, the Christ-centre, wherewith are associated all the Sacrificed Gods and the givers of illumination.

28. Plants are also associated with the Sephiroth in another way; the old doctrine of signatures assigned various plants to the presidency of various planets in a somewhat erratic fashion. In some cases there was a genuine association, in others it was arbitrary and superstitious. Old Culpepper and other ancient herbalists have a great deal to say on the subject, and some very interesting researches are being done on the Anthroposophical experimental farms.

29. In a similar way certain drugs are associated with the different Sephiroth; and here again we need to distinguish the superstitious from the mystical. The arbitrary attribution of drugs cannot always be justified by actual experiment, but we may safely say that whole classes of drugs could be regarded as under the presidency of certain Sephiroth because they partake of the nature of certain modes of activity which are classified under these Sephiroth. For instance, all aphrodisiacs could justly be assigned to Netzach (Venus), and all abortifacients to Yesod in her Hecate aspect; analgesics to Chesed (Mercy), and irritants and caustics to Geburah (Severity).

30. This opens up a very interesting aspect of the study of materia medica, the psychic and psychological aspect of drug activity. It was this aspect which was especially studied by the initiate-physicians such as Paracelsus, and it was the ignorant and superstitious abuse of this aspect by uninitiated physicians that led to the extraordinary aberrations of folk-medicine.

31. The occultist knows that there is a psychological aspect to every physiological action and function; he also knows that it is possible powerfully to reinforce the action of all drugs by the appropriate mental action, and that certain chemically inert substances lend themselves effectually to the transmission and storing of mental activities, just as other substances are effectual conductors or insulators of electricity.

32. This consideration brings us to the question of the association of certain precious stones and metals with the different Sephiroth, an association determined by both astrological and alchemical considerations. As is well known to psychics, crystalline substances, metals, and certain liquids are the best media for conveying or storing subtle forces. Colour plays an important part in the visions induced by meditation on the various Sephiroth, and it is found by experience that a crystal of the appropriate colour is the best material out of which to make a talisman: a blood-red ruby for the fiery Martian forces of Geburah; an emerald for the Green Ray nature forces of Netzach.

33. Perfumes, especially incense, are also associated with the different Sephiroth. As has already been noted, certain spiritual experiences and certain modes of consciousness are assigned to each Sphere on the Tree; it is well known that nothing induces states of mind or stimulates psychic consciousness more effectually than odours. "Scents are surer than sights or sounds to make your heart-strings crack," says the most objective of poets, and the experience of practical occultists proves this to be true. There are certain aromatic substances associated by tradition with the different gods and goddesses, and these are most effectually potent to stimulate the mood which is in harmony with the function of that deity.

34. Magical weapons are also included in the long lists of symbols and substances associated with each Path. A magical weapon is an instrument of some sort which is used in the evocation of a particular force, or is the vehicle of its manifestation, such as the rod of the magician or the bowl of water or crystal sphere of the seer. The assignation of the magical weapons to the Paths tells us a good deal about the nature of the Paths, because we can deduce therefrom the kind of power that operates in the particular sphere in question.

35. As already noted, the various divinatory systems have their relations with the Tree and find their subtlest clues therein. The associations of astrology are readily traced through the symbolism of the planets and elements and their triplicities, houses, and rulership; geomancy links with the Tree via astrology; and the Tarot, the most satisfactory of all the systems of divination, rises from and finds its explanation in the Tree and nowhere else. That may seem a dogmatic statement to the scholarly historian searching for traces of the origin of those mysterious cards, and, may we add, most unamentably failing to find it; but when it is realised that the initiate works the Tarot and the Tree together, and that they dovetail into each other at every imaginable angle, it will be seen that such an array of correspondences could be neither arbitrary nor fortuitous.

36. A most interesting and important aspect of the practical work of the Tree concerns the manner in which ceremonial and talismanic magic are used to compensate the findings of the divinatory sciences. Each prick-symbol of geomancy, each card of the Tarot, and each horoscopic factor have their places assigned to them on the Paths of the Tree, and the occultist with the necessary knowledge can put together a ritual or design a talisman to compensate or reinforce each and any of these.

37. It is for this reason that divination by the uninitiated is apt to bring bad luck in its train, for it stirs the subtle forces by concentrating the mind upon them, without compensating that which is out of equilibrium by the appropriate magical effort.