

# THE OCCULT REVIEW MAY 1910

## NOTES OF THE MONTH

Certain occult or *soi-disant* occult dovecots have been not a little fluttered during the last few months by the publication in a biennial magazine styled the *Equinox* of some considerable portions of the rituals and ceremonies of a secret society bear-

REVELA-  
TIONS OF  
THE  
"EQUINOX."

ing the name of the "Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn." This society claims, I understand, to be the successor of, or perhaps identical with, that presided over by Eliphaz Levi, Ragon and other Occultists of the early

nineteenth century. Recent, however, as are the times of that celebrated French Occultists, the Abbe Constant, who assumed the pseudonym of Eliphaz Levi, the apostolical succession in this particular society seems to be by no means undisputed, and the claims of the Levi group to have received their power from even greater predecessors, tracing back eventually to the German "Brothers of the Rosy Cross," must obviously be taken with a very large grain of salt. However the position may have been in times past, a certain Count Macgregor Mathers, otherwise styled Comte Liddell Macgregor, whose name is not unknown in the occult world, is apparently top-dog in the Society (if we may use so profane an expression of so illustrious a personage) in this present twentieth century. I say

THE ORDER  
OF THE  
GOLDEN  
DAWN.

apparently, for I gather that owing to the peculiarity of the rules of the order there is a certain quasi-trinitarian equality among the various members, so that none is greater or less than the other, an arrangement which is

not surprising to learn works awkwardly and leads to curiously embarrassing situations in periods of stress and crisis. Thus I gather that although it is stated that the editor of the *Equinox*, Mr. Aleister Crowley, was formally expelled from the order in question, there is another version of this story current in which it is affirmed that Mr. Aleister Crowley, in conjunction with another adept of the same society, of deeper magical knowledge than himself, in actual fact expelled the other members of the cult. So we realize the drawbacks of the democratic principle when put into operation by secret

societies. Let us day, then, that by a process of mutual expulsion a schism took place in the "Order of the Golden Dawn," the bulk of the order continuing to carry on the rites and ceremonies of the society, which have been duly published in the *Equinox*, though not without attempted legal intervention. These even in their greatly abbreviated form as therein appearing run to a formidable number of closely printed pages in two successive issues of the magazine. In full, as I understand, they amount to some twelve hundred pages of manuscript, and contain over a quarter of a million words!



PORTRAIT OF MR. ALEISTER CROWLEY. \*

The man who let the dead cat out of the bag

And so the cat is out of the bag, and I think most of us will agree with Lord Justice Farwell that it is a dead cat after all. It is impossible to deny that, though underlying the whole there is an idea which contains within it the germ of a great occult truth and a great occult scientific possibility, the ritual in the main is rather provocative of merriment than tending to solemnity, and that it is strangely suggestive of the caricature by pretended initiates of a profound truth which is far too big for their comprehension. It is

SOME RITUAL  
A DEAD  
CAT AND  
LORD JUSTICE  
FARWELL."

\* Reproduced by permission from the frontispiece to Mr. Crowley's new volume of poems, "Ambergris." Publishers: Elkin Mathews.

indeed not to be wondered at if those who read, smile, and mutter the word "Charlatan." The evocations irresistible recall the name of a certain—

John Wellington Wells,  
A dealer in magic and spells!

Here is a typical one, the evocation of the great Prince and Spirit Taphthartharath, which I am sure we shall all of us agree is (as stated in the text) an extremely powerful one.

*AN EXTREMELY POWERFUL CONJURATION.*

Behold! Thou Great Powerful Prince and Spirit Taphthartharath, we have conjured Thee hither in this day and hour to demand of Thee certain matters relative to the secret magical knowledge which may be conveyed to us from Thy master Thoth through Thee. But, before we can proceed further, it is necessary that Thou do assume a shape and form more distinctly material and visible. Therefore, in order that Thou mayst appear more fully visible, and in order that Thou mayst know that we are possessed of the means, rites, powers and privileges of binding and compelling Thee unto obedience, do we rehearse before Thee yet again the mighty words; the Names, the Sigils, and the Powers of the conjurations of fearful efficacy: and learn that if Thou wert under any bond or spell, or in distant lands or elsehow employed, yet nothing should enable Thee to resist the power of our terrible conjuration; for if Thou art disobedient and unwilling to come, we shall curse and imprecate Thee most horribly by the Fearful Names of God the Vast One; and we shall tear from Thee Thy rank and Thy power, and we shall cast Thee down unto the fearful abode of the chained ones, and Thou shalt never rise again!

Wherefore make haste, O Thou mighty spirit Taphthartharath, and appear very visibly before us, in the magical triangle without this circle of Art. I bind and conjure Thee unto very visible appearance in the Divine and Terrible Name

IAHDONHI,  
By the Name IAHDONHI,  
And in the Name IAHDONHI,



Zodâcar Ęca od Zodamerahnu odo kikalè Imayah piape piamoel od VAOAN!

[If at this time that spirit be duly and rightly materialized, then pass on to the request of the Mighty Magus of Art; but if not, then doth the Magus of Art assume the God form of Thoth, and say:]

Thou comest not! Then will I work and work again. I will destroy Thee and uproot Thee out of Heaven and Earth and Hell.

Thy place shall become empty; and the horror of horrors shall abide in Thy heart, and I will overwhelm Thee with fear and trembling, for "SOUL mastering Terror" is my name.

[If at this point he manifest, then pass on to the final Request of the Mighty Magus of Art; if not, continue holding the arms in the sign of Apophis.]

Brother Asistant Magus! Thou wilt write me the name of this evil serpent, this spirit Taphthartharath, on a piece of pure vellum, and thou shalt place thereon His seal and character; that I may curse, condemn and utterly destroy Him for His disobedience and mockery of the Divine and Terrible Names of God the Vast One.

[Assistant Magus does this.]

Hear ye my curse, O Lords of the Twofold Manifestation of Thmaist.

I have evoked the Spirit Taphthartharath in due form by the formulae of Thoth.

But He obeys not. He makes no strong manifestation.

Wherefore bear ye witness and give ye power until my utter condemnation of the Mocker of your Mysteries.

I curse and blast Thee, O Thou Spirit Taphthartharath. I curse Thy life and blast Thy being. I consign Thee unto the lowest Hell of Abaddon.

By the whole power of the Order of the Rose of Ruby and the Cross of Gold—for that Thou hast failed at their behest, and hast mocked by Thy disobedience at their God-born knowledge—by that Order which riseth even unto the white throne of God Himself do I curse Thy life and blast Thy being; and consign Thee unto the lowermost Hell of Abaddon!

In the Names of IAHDONHI, Elohim Tzebaoth, Michael, Raphael, Beni Elohim and Tiriel:

I curse Thy Life  
And Blast Thy Being!  
Down! Sink down to the depths of horror.

By every name, symbol, sign and rite that has this day been practised in this Magic Circle: by every power of my soul, of the Gods, of the Mighty Order to which we all belong!

I curse Thy Life  
And Blast Thy Being!  
Fall, fall down to torment unspeakable!

If Thou dost not appear then will I complete the sentence of this curse.

God will not help Thee. Thou, Thou hast mocked His Name.

[Taking the slip of vellum and thrusting it into the magical Fire.]

I bid Thee, O sacred Fire of Art, by the Names and Powers which gave birth unto the Spirit of the Primal Fire: I bind and conjure Thee by every name of God, the Vast One, that hath rule, authority and domination over Thee; that Thou do spiritually burn, blast, destroy and condemn this spirit Taphthartharath, whose name and seal are written herein, causing Him to be removed and destroyed out of His powers, places and privileges: and making Him endure the most horrible tortures as of an eternal and consuming Fire, so long as He shall come not at my behest!

The Earth shall suffocate Him, for mine are its powers, and the Fire shall torment Him, for mine is its magic. And Air shall not fan Him, nor

Water shall cool Him. But Torment unspeakable, Horror undying, Terror unfaltering, Pain unendurable; the words of my curse shall be on Him for ever; God shall not hear Him, nor holpen Him never, and the curse shall be on Him for ever and ever!

At this point one begins really to feel quite sorry for Prince Taphthartharath. Perhaps after all he had something more important to do than to attend one of Count Macgregor Mather's séances, or he may have been doing his best to keep the appointment and missed his train connection or suffered from one of those hundred and one inevitable causes of delay to which we are all subject. Certainly the language seems a trifle overdone under the circumstances. Imagine our poor friend T—— (I can't manage that name again) arriving breathless at the last moment, having interrupted a good meal to obey the Count's behest, only to hear himself condemned to

the most horrible tortures and torments unspeakable. Frankly my sympathies are entirely on the side of the spectre Prince!

The truth is this is mystery-mongering *in excelsis*, and no other word will fit it. The main drawback of its publication is not that it casts a richly deserved ridicule on the order in ques-

SHOULD  
SECRET  
SOCIETIES  
EXIST?

tion, but that it conveys to an ignorant public an entirely false idea of what a genuine Occultist is. Personally I have never been able to appreciate the necessity for such things as secret occult societies at the present day.

When, as throughout the Middle Ages, speaking the truth and even looking at religious questions through the spectacles of common sanity inevitably involved the death penalty, secret societies were unquestionable a vital necessity for deep and serious thinkers, and to cloak the truth in the veil of allegory was the only way of conveying it at all with impunity. But no such danger exists at the present time. Nor do I think that there is any real risk of the outside public mastering the secrets that the "Order of the Golden Dawn" has in its keeping (if indeed it has them) through perusing its ritual as given in the pages of the *Equinox*. The Way—that is, the Real Way—is far too difficult of attainment for this to be a real danger, and I venture humbly to suggest that it is in fact far too difficult of attainment for the Count and his associates. Surely if it had

SURVIVAL OF  
MR. ALEISTER  
CROWLEY

been otherwise, long ere this the editor of the *Equinox* would have shared the assumed fate of our poor friend T——! What then is the use of secrecy? Unless its object is effectively to

protect a pontifical pose from too rude exposure, I confess I fail to see its point. It seems to me that all this secret society business arises from a failure on the part of their members to realize the true meaning of the word "Occultism." The aim of Occultists is not or should not be to keep dark the knowledge that they possess, and I confess that I regard the pledge to secrecy which these societies enjoin as neither more nor less than a crime against science. To hold back knowledge which may be of value to your fellow-men is, at any rate in my creed, sinning against the Light.

This view, however, does not involve a justification for publishing to the world a secret ritual, knowledge of which had been obtained under pledge of secrecy, and whatever the relations between individual members of the society may have been. I cannot see that such publication was permissible. It is,

however, somewhat difficult to dogmatize in the absence of any proper understanding of the bearing of the rules of the order upon the action of individual members, or of any coherent statement as to what occurred at the date of the alleged expulsion. An illegal expulsion might have been held to free the hands of the expelled member and to void his pledge of secrecy. But I do not gather that this is the attitude that Mr. Crowley takes up. On the other hand, the expulsion of the bulk of the members of the society for violation of its rules, if such a proceeding were possible, might leave it open to the remainder to act conjointly as they thought fit. The question at issue is in any case rather one which concerns the members of the order than the outside public. Mr. Crowley, I gather, takes up the position that he had no personal wish to give publicity to the ritual, but that he did it "under command." The ritual, he claims, was faulty and misleading, and therefore had to be destroyed by giving it publicity. The true ritual of adeptship still lies concealed behind the veil.

MUST  
PLEDGES  
BE KEPT?

As a result it is questionable if the world is the richer or the poorer. That there is something more than mere foolery in the ceremonial of the order I am willing to admit. There are methods

THE  
EVOKING  
OF  
SIMULCRA

outside young Boozington's experiences with the bottle which will give visible shape to the phantoms of the imagination, but when the mighty Prince Taratiddles appears to Count Macgregor Mather, if appear he does it may safely be affirmed that he is cousin-gentleman to the monstrous reptiles that crawl up young Boozington's bedroom walls as an accompaniment to his attacks of delirium tremens in spite of the diversity of the method of evocation. There is, however—or there may be this difference. Boozington is the slave of his familiars. The magician is their master. The conscious existence of either, apart from him who willingly (or unwillingly) brought them to birth through the power (or uncontrolled play) of his imagination, is doubtless on a par. Prince Taratiddles then (call him by what high and mighty name you will) is the creature of Count Macgregor's imagination. But there are cases, as many a lunatic asylum will bear witness, where the creator is obsessed and finally driven to madness by these creatures of his imagination.

THE EVI-  
DENCE OF  
OUR  
ASYLUMS



Are the members of the Order of the Golden Dawn immune from such a danger? and if not, are they not playing with edged tools?

So much for the grain of truth that underlies the obvious childishness of the ritual in question. The trouble, however, is that such folly is mistaken for Occultism by the ignorant public; in other words, that mere mystery-mongering is accepted as the reality, in lieu of the profoundest philosophy that gets behind the mere phenomenal and probes the deep and secret sources of existence. The evoking of simulacra, the playing upon the imagination of fools, even the acquiring of powers such as the Lady of Branksome was said to have learned from the wizard Michael Scott when—

OCCULTISM  
TRUE AND  
COUNTER-  
FEIT

Of his skill, as bards avow,  
He taught that ladye fair,  
Till to her bidding she could bow  
The viewless forms of air—

all these have about the same relation to true Occultism that a cinematograph has to the story of this planet. At best they are but sidelights, scraps of evidence when genuine, of forces the existence of which is unsuspected by modern science.

In conclusion and as moral to the whole of this secret society scandal I would venture to suggest that it is in reality a far prouder and nobler thing to be a humble servant in the cause of scientific truth than to be high-priest of the most renowned order of potent magicians that the world has ever seen or is likely to see.