

861 819 Kthick
472 F1(7) 7606

THE THREE SCHOOLS OF MAGICK

-- by --

Gérard Aumont.

There is to-day much misunderstanding of the meaning of the term 'Magick'. Many attempts have been made to define it, but perhaps the best for our present purpose will be this: Magick is the Science of the Incommensurables.

It is particularly to be noted that Magick, so often mixed up in the popular idea of religion, has nothing to do with it. It is, in fact, the entire opposite of religion; It is even more than Physical Science, its irreconcilable enemy.

Let us define this difference clearly.

Magick investigates the laws of Nature with the idea of making use of them. It only differs from science ~~in~~^k ~~by~~ by always keeping ahead of it. As Frazer has shown, Magick is science in the tentative stage, but it may be, and often is, more than this. It is science which, for one reason or another, cannot be declared to the profane.

Religion, on the contrary, seeks to ignore the laws of Nature, or to escape them by appeal to a postulated power, which ⁴they assume to have laid them down. The religious man is, in fact, incapable of understanding what the laws of Nature really are.

The History of Magick has never been seriously attempted. For one reason, only initiates pledged to secrecy know much about it; for another, every historian has been talking about some more or less conventional idea of Magick, not of the thing itself. But Magick has led the world from before the beginning of history, if only for the reason that Magick has always been the mother of Science. It is, therefore, of extreme importance that some effort should be made to understand something of the subject, and there is, therefore, no apology necessary for essaying this brief outline of its historical aspects.

There have always been, at least in nucleus, three main Schools of Philosophical practice. (We use the word 'philosophical' in the old good broad sense, as in the phrase "Philosophical ^{ac}Transmutations of the Royal Society for the Advancement of Knowledge;")

It is customary to describe these three Schools as Yellow, Black, and White. It is first necessary to warn the reader that they must by no means be confounded with racial distinctions of colour; ^{and they} which correspond still less with conventional symbols such as yellow caps, yellow robes, black magic, white witchcraft, and the like. The danger is only the greater that these analogies are often as alluring as they prove ~~to be~~ ^{on} examination to be misleading.

These Schools represent three perfectly distinct and contrary theories of the Universe and therefore practices of spiritual science. The magical formula of each is as precise as a theorem of trigonometry. Each assumes as fundamental a certain law of Nature, and the subject is complicated by the fact that each School, in a certain sense, admits the formulae of the other two. It merely regards them as in some way incomplete, secondary, or illusory. Now, as will be seen later, the Yellow School stands aloof from the other two by the nature of its postulates, but the Black School and the White are always more or less in active conflict; and it is because just at this moment that conflict is approaching a climax that it is necessary

to write this essay. The adepts of the White School consider the present danger to mankind so great that they are prepared to abandon their traditional policy of silence, in order to enlist in their ranks the profane of every nation.

We are in possession of a certain mystical document which we may describe briefly, for convenience sake, as an Apocalypse of which we hold the keys, thanks to the intervention of the Master who has appeared at this grave conjuncture of Fate. This document consists of a series of visions, in which we hear the voice of various Intelligences whose nature it would be hard to define, but who are at the very least endowed with knowledge and power far beyond anything that we are accustomed to regard as proper to the human race.

We must quote a passage from one of the most important of these documents. The doctrine is conveyed, as is customary along Initiates, in the form of a parable. Those who have attained even a mediocre degree of enlightenment are aware that the crude belief of the faithful, and the crude infidelity of the scoffer, with regard to matters of fact, are merely childish. Every incident in Nature, true

or false, possesses a spiritual significance. It is this significance, and only this significance, that possesses a ^{ny} ~~spiritual~~ philosophical value to the Initiate.

The orthodox need not be shocked, and the enlightened need not be contemptuous, to learn that the passage which we are about to quote is a parable based on the least decorous of the Biblical legends which refer to Noah. It simply captures for its own purposes the convenience of Scripture.

"And a voice cries: Cursed be he that shall uncover the nakedness of the Most High, for he is drunken upon the wine that is the blood of the adepts. And BABALON hath lulled him to sleep upon her breast, and she hath fled away, and left him naked, and she hath called her children together, saying: Come up with me, and let us make a mock of the nakedness of the Most High.

"And the first of the adepts covered His shame with a cloth, walking backwards, and was white. And the second of the adepts covered his shame with a cloth, walking sideways, and was yellow. And the third of the adepts made a mock of His nakedness, walking forwards, and was black. And these are the three great schools of the Magi, who are also the

three Magi that journeyed unto Bethlehem; and because thou hast not wisdom, thou shalt not know which school prevail-eth, or if the three schools be not one."

We are now ready to study the philosophical bases of these three Schools. We must, however, enter a caveat against too literal an interpretation, even of the parable. It may be suspected, for reasons which should be apparent after further investigation of the doctrines of the Schools, that this parable was invented by an Intelligence of the Black School who was aware of his iniquity, and thought to transform it into righteousness by the alchemy of making a boast of it. The intelligent reader will note the insidious attempt to identify the doctrine of the Black School with the kind of black magic that is commonly called Diabolism. In other words, this parable is itself an example of an exceedingly subtle black magic operation, and the contemplation of such devices carried far enough brings us to an understanding of the astoundingly ophi^ophian processes of Magicians. Let not the profane reader dismiss such subtleties from his mind as negligible nonsense. It is cunning of this kind that determines the price of potatoes.

The above digression is perhaps not so inexcusable as

it may seem on a first reading. Careful study of it should reveal to the reader the nature of the thought-processes which are habitually used by the secret Masters of the human race to determine its destiny.

When every one is done laughing; I will ask them to compare the real effects produced on the course of human affairs by Caesar, Attila, and Napoleon, on the one hand; of Plato, the Encyclopaedists, and Karl Marx, on the other,

.

The Yellow School of Magick considers, with complete scientific and philosophical detachment, the fact of the Universe as a fact. Being itself a part of that Universe, it realizes its impotence to alter the totality in the smallest degree. To put it vulgarly, it does not try to raise itself from the ground by pulling at its socks. It therefore opposes to the current of phenomena no reaction either of hatred or of sympathy. So far as it attempts to influence the course of events at all, it does so in the only intelligent way conceivable: it seeks to diminish internal friction. It remains, therefore, in a contemplative attitude. To use the terms of Western philosophy, there is in its attitude something of the stoicism of Zeno or of the Pickwickianism, if I may use the term, of Epicurus. The

ideal reaction to phenomena is that of perfect elasticity. It possesses something of the cold-bloodedness of mathematics, and for this reason it seems fair to say, for the purposes of elementary study, that Pythagoras is its most adequate exponent in European philosophy.

Since the discovery of Asiatic thought, however, we have no need to take our ideas at second hand. The Yellow School of Magick possesses one perfect classic, The Tao Teh King. (Unfortunately, there is no translation at present published which is the work of an Initiate. All existing translations have been garbled by people who simply failed to understand the text. An approximately perfect rendering is indeed available, but so far it exists only in manuscript. One object of the present essay is to create sufficient public interest to make this work, and others of equal value, available to the public.)

It is impossible to find any religion which adequately represents the thought of this masterpiece. Not only is religion as such repugnant to science and philosophy, but from the very nature of the tenets of the Yellow School, its adherents are not going to put themselves to any inconvenience to enlighten a lot of people whom they consider as hopeless fools.

At the same time, the theory of religion as such being a tissue of falsehood, the only real strength of any religion is derived from its pilferings of Magical doctrine; and religious persons being by definition entirely unscrupulous, it follows that any given religion is likely to contain scraps of Magical doctrine filched more or less haphazard from one School or the other as occasion serves.

Let the reader therefore beware most seriously of trying to get a grasp of this subject by means of siren analogies. Taoism has as little ~~to~~ to do with the Tao Teh King as the Catholic Church with the Gospel.

The Tao Teh King inculcates conscious inaction, or rather, unconscious inaction, with the object of minimizing the disorder of the world. A few quotations from the text should make the essence of the doctrine clear.

X.3 "Here is the Mystery of Virtue. It createth all and nourisheth all; yet it doth not adhere to them; it operateth all, but knoweth not of it, nor proclaimeth it; it directeth all, but without conscious control."

XXII. 2 "Therefore the sage concentrateth upon one Will, and it is as a light to the whole world. Hiding himself, he shineth; withdrawing himself, he attracteth notice; humbling himself, he gaineth force to achieve his Will. Because he striveth not, no man may contend against him."

XLIII. 1 "The softest substance hunteth down the hardest; the Unsubstantial penetrateth where there is no opening. Here is the Virtue of Inertia."

2. Few are they who attain: whose speech is Silence, whose Work is Inertia."

XLVIII.3. "He who attracteth to himself ^{all} that is under Heaven doth so without effort. He who maketh effort is not able to attract it."

XLVIII.3. "The wise man is foursquare, and avoideth aggression; his corners do not injure others. He moveth in a straight line and turneth not aside therefrom; he is brilliant but ~~is~~ doth not blind with his brightness."

LXIII.2 "Do great things while they are yet small, hard things while they are yet easy; for all things, how great or hard soever, have a beginning when they are little and easy. So thus the wise man accomplisheth the greatest tasks without undertaking anything important."

LXXVI.2 "So then rigidity and hardness are the stigmata of death; elasticity and adaptability, of life.

3 "He then who putteth forth strength is not victorious; even as a strong tree filleth the embrace.

4 "Thus the hard and rigid have the inferior place, the soft and elastic the superior."

.

The Black School of Magick, which must by no means be confused with the School of Black Magic or Sorcery, which is a perversion of the White tradition, is distinguished fundamentally from the Yellow School in that it considers the Universe not as neutral, but as definitely a curse. Its primary theorem is the First Noble Truth of the Buddha, Everything is Sorrow. In the primitive classics of this School the idea of sorrow is confused with that of sin.

(This idea of universal lamentation is presumably responsible for the choice of black as its symbolic colour.)

The analysis of the philosophers of this School refers every phenomenon to the category of sorrow. It is quite useless to point out to them that ~~some~~ certain events are accompanied with joy: they continue their ruthless calculations and prove to your satisfaction, or rather dissatisfaction, that the more apparently pleasant an event is, the more malignantly deceptive is its fascination. There is only one way of escape even conceivable, and this way is quite simply annihilation. (Shallow critics of Buddhism have wasted a great deal of stupid ingenuity on trying to make out that Nirvana or Nibbana means something different from what etymology, tradition, and the evidence of the classics combine to define it. It means quite simply cessation; and it stands to reason that if everything is sorrow the only thing which is not sorrow is nothing, and that therefore to escape from sorrow is the attainment of nothingness.)

Western philosophy has on occasion approached this doctrine. It has at least asserted that no known form of existence is exempt from sorrow. Huxley says, in his *Evolution and Ethics*, "Suffering is the badge of all the tribe of

sentient things."

The philosophers of this School, seeking, naturally enough, to amend the evil at the root, inquire into the cause of this existence which is sorrow, and arrive immediately at the Second Noble Truth of the Buddha: The Cause of Sorrow is Desire. They follow with the endless concatenation of causes, of which the final root is ignorance. (I am not concerned to define ^{end} the logic of this School: I merely state their doctrine.) The practical issue of all this is that every kind of action is both unavoidable and a crime. I must digress to explain that the confusion of thought in this doctrine is constantly recurrent. That is part of the blackness of the ignorance which they confess to be the foundation of their Universe. (And after all, every one has surely the right to have his own Universe the way he wants it.)

This School, being debased by nature, is not so far removed from conventional religion as either the White or the Yellow. Most primitive fetishistic religions may, in fact, be considered fairly faithful representatives of this philosophy. Where animism holds sway, the medicine man personifies this universal evil and seeks to propitiate it by hu-

man sacrifice. The early forms of Judaism, and that type of Christianity which we associate with the Salvation Army, Billy Sunday, and the Fundamentalists of the back blocks of America, are sufficiently simple cases of religion whose essence is the propitiation of a malignant demon.

When the light of intelligence begins to dawn dimly through many fogs upon these savages, we reach a second stage. Bold spirits muster courage to assert that the evil which is so obvious is, in some mysterious way, an illusion. They thus throw back the whole complexity of sorrow to a single cause; that is, the arising of the illusion aforesaid. ~~How-is-that~~ The problem then assumes a final form: How is that illusion to be destroyed?

A fairly pure example of the first stage of this type of thought is to be found in the Vedas; of the second stage, in the Upanishads. But the answer to the question, How is the illusion of evil to be destroyed, depends on another point of theory. We may postulate a **P**arabrahm infinitely good, etc., etc., etc.; in which case we may consider the destruction of the illusion of evil as the reuniting of the consciousness with Parabrahm. The unfortunate part of this scheme of things is that on seeking to define Parabrahm for the purposes of returning to his purity, it is discovered,

sooner or later, that he (or it) possesses no qualities at all! In other words, as the farmer said; on being shown the elephant^s, There ain't no ^sich animile^s. It was G^ota-ma Buddha who perceived the inutility of dragging in this imagin^ary pachyderm. Since your Parabrahm, he said to the Hindu philosophers, is actually nothing, why not stick to our original perception that everything is sorrow, and admit that the only way to escape from sorrow is to arrive at nothingness?

We may complete the whole tradition of the Indian peninsula very simply. To the Vedas, the Upanishads, and the Trāpitika of the Buddhists, we have only to add the Tantras of what are called the Vamacharya Schools. Paradoxical as it may sound, the Tantrics are in reality the most advanced of the Hindus. Their theory is in its philosophical ultim^{at}ion, a primitive stage of the White tradition, for the essence of the Tantric cults is that by the performance of certain rites of Magick, one does not only escape disaster, but obtains positive benediction. The Tantric is not obsessed by the will-to-die. It is a difficult business, no doubt, to get any fun out of existence, but at least it is not impossible. In other words, he implicitly denies the fundamental proposition that existence is sorrow, and he

formulates the essential postulate of the White School of Magick, that means exist by which the universal sorrow (apparent indeed to all ordinary observation) may be unmasked, even as at the initiatory rite of Isis in the ancient days of Khem, a Neophyte presenting his mouth, under compulsion, to the pouting buttocks of the Goat of Mendes, found himself caressed by the chaste lips of a virginal priestess of that Goddess at the base of whose shrine it is written that ~~No~~ man hath lifted her veil.

The basis of the Black philosophy is not impossibly mere climate, with its resulting etiolation of the native, its languid, bilious, ~~anæmic~~, fever-prostrated, emasculation of the soul of man. We accordingly find ~~A~~ few true equivalents of this School in Europe. In Greek philosophy there is no trace of any such doctrine. The poison in its foulest and most virulent form only entered with Christianity.* But even so, few men of any real eminence were found to take the axioms of pessimism seriously. Huxley, for all his harping on the minor key, was a eupeptic Tory. The culmination of the Black philosophy is only found in Schopenhauer, and we may regard him as having been obsessed, on the one hand, by the despair born of false scepticism which he learnt from the bankruptcy of Hume and Kant; on the

* Antisemite writers in Europe - e.g. Weininger - call the Black theory & practice Judaism, while by a curious confusion, the same ideas are called Christian among Anglo-Saxons.

Magick, that means exist by which the universal sorrow (apparent indeed to all ordinary observation) may be unmasked, even as at the initiatory rite of Isis in the ancient days of Khem, a Neophyte presenting his mouth, under compulsion, to the pouting buttocks of the Goat of Mendes, found himself caressed by the chaste lips of a virginal priestess of that Goddess at the base of whose shrine it is written that ~~No~~ man hath lifted her veil.

The basis of the Black philosophy is not impossibly mere climate, with its resulting etiolation of the native, its languid, bilious, anæmic, fever-prostrated, emasculation of the soul of man. We accordingly find ~~A~~ few true equivalents of this School in Europe. In Greek philosophy there is no trace of any such doctrine. The poison in its foulest and most virulent form only entered with Christianity.* But even so, few men of any real eminence were found to take the axioms of pessimism seriously. Huxley, for all his harping on the minor key, was a eupeptic Tory. The culmination of the Black philosophy is only found in Schopenhauer, and we may regard him as having been obsessed, on the one hand, by the despair born of false scepticism which he learnt from the bankruptcy of Hume and Kant; on the

* Antisemite writers in Europe - e.g. Weininger - call the Black theory & practice Judaism, while by a curious confusion, the same ideas are called Christian among Anglo-Saxons.

formulates the essential postulate of the White School of Magick, that means exist by which the universal sorrow (apparent indeed to all ordinary observation) may be unmasked, even as at the initiatory rite of Isis in the ancient days of Khem, a Neophyte presenting his mouth, under compulsion, to the pouting buttocks of the Goat of Mendes, found himself caressed by the chaste lips of a virginal priestess of that Goddess at the base of whose shrine it is written that ~~No~~ man hath lifted her veil.

The basis of the Black philosophy is not impossibly mere climate, with its resulting etiolation of the native, its languid, bilious, ~~anæmic~~, fever-prostrated, emasculation of the soul of man. We accordingly find ~~A~~ few true equivalents of this School in Europe. In Greek philosophy there is no trace of any such doctrine. The poison in its foulest and most virulent form only entered with Christianity.* But even so, few men of any real eminence were found to take the axioms of pessimism seriously. Huxley, for all his harping on the minor key, was a eupeptic Tory. The culmination of the Black philosophy is only found in Schopenhauer, and we may regard him as having been obsessed, on the one hand, by the despair born of false scepticism which he learnt from the bankruptcy of Hume and Kant; on the

* Antisemitic writers in Europe - e.g. Weininger - call the Black theory & practice Judaism, while by a curious confusion, the same ideas are called Christian among Anglo-Saxons.

other, by the direct obsession of the Buddhist documents to which he was one of the earliest Europeans to obtain access. He was, so to speak, driven to suicide by his own vanity, a curious parallel to Kirilloff in The Possessed of Dostoevsky.

We have, however, examples plentiful enough of religions deriving almost exclusively from the Black tradition in its different stages. We have already mentioned the Evangelical cults with their ferocious devil-god who creates mankind for the pleasure of damning it and forcing it to crawl before him while he yells with drunken glee over the agony of his only son.^x But in the same class, we must place Christian Science, so grotesquely afraid of pain, suffering, and evil of every sort, that they can think of nothing better than to bleat denials of its actuality, in the hope of hypnotizing themselves into anaesthesia.

Practically no Westerners have reached the third stage of the Black tradition, the Buddhist stage. It is only isolated mystics, and these men who rank themselves with a contemptuous compliance under the standard of the nearest religion, the one which will bother them least in their quest of nothingness.

The documents of the Black School of Magick have al-

x. N. B. Christianity was in its first stage a Jewish Communism, hardly distinguishable from Leninism

sky.

We have, however, examples plentiful enough of religions deriving almost exclusively from the Black tradition in its different stages. We have already mentioned the Evangelical cults with their ferocious devil-god who creates mankind for the pleasure of damning it and forcing ^{ing} it to crawl before him while he yells with drunken glee over the agony of his only son.* But in the same class, we must place Christian Science, so grotesquely afraid of pain, suffering, and evil of every sort, that they can think of nothing better than to bleat denials of its actuality, in the hope of hypnotizing themselves into anaesthesia.

Practically no Westerns have reached the third stage of the Black tradition, the Buddhist stage. It is only isolated mystics, and these men who rank themselves with a contemptuous compliance under the standard of the nearest religion, the one which will bother them least in their quest of nothingness.

The documents of the Black School of Magick have al-

* N. B. Christianity was in its first stage a Jewish Communism, hardly distinguishable from Leninism.

sky.

We have, however, examples plentiful enough of religions deriving almost exclusively from the Black tradition in its different stages. We have already mentioned the Evangelical cults with their ferocious devil-god who creates mankind for the pleasure of damning it and forcing ^{ing} it to crawl before him while he yells with drunken glee over the agony of his only son.* But in the same class, we must place Christian Science, so grotesquely afraid of pain, suffering, and evil of every sort, that they can think of nothing better than to bleat denials of its actuality, in the hope of hypnotizing themselves into anaesthesia.

Practically no Westerns have reached the third stage of the Black tradition, the Buddhist stage. It is only isolated mystics, and these men who rank themselves with a contemptuous compliance under the standard of the nearest religion, the one which will bother them least in their quest of nothingness.

The documents of the Black School of Magick have al-

* N. B. Christianity was in its first stage a Jewish Communism, hardly distinguishable from Leninism.

other, by the direct obsession of the Buddhist documents to which he was one of the earliest Europeans to obtain access. He was, so to speak, driven to suicide by his own vanity, a curious parallel to Kirilloff in The Possessed of Dostoevsky.

We have, however, examples plentiful enough of religions deriving almost exclusively from the Black tradition in its different stages. We have already mentioned the Evangelical cults with their ferocious devil-god who creates mankind for the pleasure of damning it and forcing it to crawl before him while he yells with drunken glee over the agony of his only son.* But in the same class, we must place Christian Science, so grotesquely afraid of pain, suffering, and evil of every sort, that they can think of nothing better than to bleat denials of its actuality, in the hope of hypnotizing themselves into anaesthesia.

Practically no Westerners have reached the third stage of the Black tradition, the Buddhist stage. It is only isolated mystics, and these men who rank themselves with a contemptuous compliance under the standard of the nearest religion, the one which will bother them least in their quest of nothingness.

The documents of the Black School of Magick have al-

* N. B. Christianity was in its first stage a Jewish Communism, hardly distinguishable from Leninism

ready been indicated. They are, for the most part, tedious to the ~~last~~ degree and repulsive to every wholesome-minded man; yet it can hardly be denied that such books as The Dhammapada and Ecclesiasties are masterpieces of literature. They represent the agony of human despair at its utmost degree of intensity, and the melancholy contemplation which is induced by their perusal is not unfavourable to the inception of that mood which should lead every truly courageous intelligence to the determination to escape from the ~~ferule~~ of the Black School master to the outstretched arms of the White ^{mistress} ~~ministers~~ of Life.

.

Let us leave the sinister figure of Schopenhauer for the mysteriously radiant shape of Spinoza. This latter philosopher, in respect at least of his Pantheism, represents fairly enough the fundamental of the White tradition. Almost the first observation that we have to make is that this White tradition is hardly discoverable outside Europe. It appears first of all in the legend of Dionysus. (In this connection read carefully Browning's "Apollo and the Fates".) The Egyptian tradition of Osiris is not dissimilar. The central idea of the White School is that, admitted that everything is sorrow for the profane, the Initiate has the

means of transforming it to, Everything is joy. There is no question of any ostrich ignoring a fact, as in Christian Science. There is no even any more or less sophisticated argument about the point of view altering the situation as in Vedantism. We have, on the contrary, an attitude which was perhaps first of all, historically speaking, defined by Zoroaster, "Nature teaches us, and the Oracles also affirm, that even the evil germs of Matter may alike become useful and good." "Stay not on the ~~percipice~~^{perch} with the dross of Matter; for there is a place for ~~thys~~^{thy} Image in a realm ever splendid." "If thou extendest the Fiery Mind to the work of piety, thou wilt preserve the fluxible body."

It appears that the Levant, from Bysantium and Athens to Damascus, Jerusalem, Alexandria and Cairo, was preoccupied with the formulation of this School in a popular religion, beginning in the days of Augustus Caesar. For there are elements of this central idea in the works of the Gnostics, in certain rituals of what Frazer conveniently calls the Asiatic God, as in the remnants of the Ancient Egyptian Cult. The doctrine became abominably corrupted in committee, so to speak, and the result was Christianity, which may be regarded as a White ritual overlaid by a mountainous mass of Black doctrine, ^{like} ~~as~~ the baby of the mother that King Solomon non-suited.

We may define the doctrine of the White School in its purity in very simple terms.

Existence is pure joy. Sorrow is caused by failure to perceive this fact, but this is not a misfortune. We have invented sorrow, which does not matter so much after all, in order to have ^{the} exuberant satisfaction of getting rid of it. Existence is thus a sacrament.

Adepts of the White School regard their brethren of the Black very much as the aristocratic English Sahib of the days when England was a nation regarded the benighted Hindu. Nietzsche expresses the philosophy of this School to that extent with considerable accuracy and vigour. The man who denounces life merely defines himself as the man who is unequal to it. The ^{brave} ~~man~~ man rejoices in giving and taking hard knocks, and the brave man is joyous. The Scandinavian idea of Valhalla ^{may be primitive, but it is manly;} ~~brings to mind~~ a heaven of popular concert, like the Christian; of unconscious repose, like the Buddhist; or even of sensual enjoyment, like the Moslem, excites his nausea and contempt. He understands that the only joy worth while is the joy of continual victory, and victory itself would become as tame as croquet if it were not spiced by equally continual defeat.

The purist documents of the White School are found in

the Sacred Books of Thelema. The doctrine is given in excellent perfection both in the book of The Heart Girt with the Serpent and in the book of Lapis Lazuli. A single passage is adequate to explain the formula.

7. Moreover I beheld a vision of a river. There was a little boat thereon; and in it under purple sails was a golden woman, an image of Asi wrought in finest gold. Also the river was of blood, and the boat of shining steel. Then I loved her; and, loosing my girdle, cast myself into the stream.

8. I gathered myself into the little boat, and for many days and nights did I love her, burning beautiful incense before her.

9. Yea! I gave her of the flower of my youth.

10. But she stirred not; only by my kisses I defiled her so that she turned to blackness before me.

11. Yet I worshipped her, and gave her of the flower of my youth.

12. Also it came to pass, that thereby she sickened, and corrupted before me. Almost I cast myself into the stream.

13. Then at the end appointed her body was whiter than the milk of the stars, and her lips red and warm as the sunset, and her life of a white heat like the heat of the midmost sun.

14. Then rose she up from the abyss of Ages of Sleep, and her body embraced me. Altogether I melted into her beauty and was glad.

15. The river also became the river of Amrit, and the little boat was the chariot of the flesh, and the sails thereof the blood of the heart that beareth me, that beareth me.

Liber LXV, Cap. II.

(We find even in profane literature this doctrine of the White School of Magick.

• • • • •
O Buddha! couldst thou nowhere rest
A pivot for the universe?
Must all things be alike confessed
Mere changes rung upon a curse?

I swear by all the bliss of blue
My Phryne with her powder on
Is just as false—and just as true—
As your disgusting skeleton.

Each to his taste: if you prefer
This loathly brooding on Decay,
I call it Growth, and lovelier
Than all the glammers of the day.

You would not dally with Doreen
Because her fairness was to fade,
Because you know the things unclean
That go to make a mortal maid.

I, if her rotten corpse were mine,
Would take it as my natural food,
Denying all but the Divine
Alike in evil and in good.

Aspasia may skin me close,
And Lais load me with disease.
Poor pleasures, bitter bargains, those?
I still despise Diogenes.

Follow your fancy far enough!
At last you come to God.
surely

There is thus in this School no attempt to deny that
Nature is, as Zoroaster said, 'a ~~fair~~^{evil} and evil force'; but
Nature is, so to speak, "the First Matter of the Work" which
is to be transmuted into gold. The joy is a function of

our own part in this alchemy. For this reason we find the boldest and most skilful adepts deliberately seeking out the most repugnant elements of Nature that their triumph may be the greater. The formula is evidently one of dauntless courage. It expresses the ideal of vitality and manhood in its most dynamic sense.

The only religion which really corresponds to this School at all is that of Ancient Egypt; possibly also that of Chaldea. This is because those religions are Magical religions in the strict technical sense; the religious compound in them is negligible. So far as it exists, it exists only for the ^{un}initiate.

There are, however, traces of the beginning of the influence of the School in Judaism and in Paganism. There are, too, certain documents of the pure Greek spirit which bear traces of this. It is what they called Theurgy.

The Christian religion in its simplest essence, by that idea of overcoming evil through a Magical ceremony, the Crucifixion, seems at first sight a fair example of the White tradition, but the idea of sin and of propitiation tainted it abominably with Blackness. There have been, however, certain Christian thinkers who have taken the bold logical step of regarding evil as a device of God for exer-

cising the joys of combat and victory. This is, of course, a perfectly White doctrine, but it is regarded as the most dangerous of heresies. (*Romans VI. 1. 2. et al.*)

For all that, the idea is there. The Mass itself is essentially a typical White ritual. Its purpose is to transform crude matter directly into Godhead. It is thus a cardinal operation of Talismanic Magick. But the influence of the Black School has corroded the idea with theological accretions, metaphysical on the one hand and superstitious on the other, so completely as to mask the Truth altogether.

At the Reformation we find a nugatory attempt to remove the Black element. The Protestant thinkers did their best to get rid of the idea of sin, but it was soon seen that the effort could only lead to antimonianism, and they recognized that this would infallibly destroy the religious idea as such.

Mysticism, both Catholic and Protestant, made a further attempt to free Christianity from the dark cloud of iniquity. They joined hands with the Sufis and Vedantists. But this again led to the mere denial of the reality of evil. Thus drawing away, little by little, from clear appreciation of the facts of Nature, their doctrine became purely theoretical and faded away, while the thundercloud of sin settled

down more heavily than ever.

The most important of all the efforts of the White School, from an exoteric point of view, is Islam. In its doctrine there is some slight taint, but much less than in Christianity. It is a virile religion? It looks facts in the face and admits their horror, but it proposes to overcome them by sheer dint of manhood. Unfortunately, the metaphysical conception^s of its quasi-profane Schools are grossly materialistic. It is only the Pantheism of the Sufis which eliminates the conception of propitiation; and in practice, the Sufis are too closely allied to the Vedantists to retain hold of reality.

There is in history only one movement whose object has been to organize the isolated adepts of the White School of Magick, and this movement was totally unconnected with religion, except in so far as it lent its influence to the reformer of the Christian church. Its appeal was not at all to the people. It merely offered to open up relations and communicate certain practical secrets of wisdom to isolated men of science through^{out} Europe. This movement is generally known by the name of Rosicrucianism.

The word arouses all sorts of regrettable correspondences, but the adepts of the Society have never worried them-

selves in the least about the abuse of their name for the purposes of charlatanism or the attacks directed against them by envious critics. Indeed, so wisely have they concealed their activities that many modern scholars have declared that no such movement ever existed, that it ^{was} ~~is~~ a kind of practical joke played upon the curiosity of the credulous Middle Ages. It is at least certain that no official publications have been put forward. The essential secrets have been maintained inviolate. If, during the last few years, a considerable number of documents have been published by them, though not in their name, it is on account of the impending crisis to civilization, of which mention will later be made.

There is no good purpose, even were there license, to discuss the nature of the basis of scientific attainment which is the core of the doctrines of the Society. It is only necessary to point out that its correspondence with alchemy is the one genuine fact on the subject which has been allowed to transpire; for the Rosicrucian, ^{as} indicated by his central symbol, the barren cross on which he has made the rose to flower, occupies himself primarily with spiritual and ^{allogi} physical alchemy. Taking ^{for} "the First Matter of the Work" as a neutral or inert substance (it is constantly described

as the commonest and least valued thing on earth, and may really connote any substance whatever) he deliberately poisons it, so to speak, bringing it to a stage of transmutation generally called the Black Dragon, and he proceeds to work upon this virulent poison until he obtains the perfection theoretically possible.

Incidentally, we have an almost precise parallel with this operation in modern bacteriology. The apparently harmless bacilli of a disease are cultivated until they become a thousand times more virulent than at first, and it is from this culture that is prepared the vaccine which is an efficacious remedy for all the possible ravages of that kind of micro-organism.

.

We have been obliged to expose, perhaps at too considerable a length, the main doctrines of the three Schools. The task, however tedious, has been necessary in order to explain with reasonable lucidity their connection with the world which their ideas direct; that is to say, the nature of their political activities.

The Yellow School, in accordance with its doctrine of perfectly elastic reaction and non-interference, holds itself, generally speaking, entirely apart from all such

questions. We can hardly imagine it sufficiently interested in any events soever to react ^{aggressively} It feels itself strong enough to deal satisfactorily with anything that may turn up; and, generally speaking, it feels that any conceivable action on its part would be likely to increase rather than to diminish the mischief.

~~It~~
~~They~~ remains somewhat contemptuously aloof from the eternal conflict of the Black School with the White. At the same time, there is a certain feeling among the adepts that should either of these Schools become annihilated, the result might well be that the victor would sooner or later turn his released energy against themselves.

In accordance, therefore, with their general plan of non-action, as expressed in the Tao Teh King of dealing with mischief before it has become too strong to be dangerous, they interfere gently from time to time to redress the balance.

During the last two generations the Masters of the Yellow School have been compelled to take notice of the progressive ruin of the White adepts. Christianity, which possesses at least the semblance of a White formula, is in the agonies of decomposition, even before it is actually dead. Materialistic science has overwhelmed the faith and hope

of the Christians (they never possessed any charity to overwhelm) with a demonstration of the sorrow, transitoriness and cruel futility of the Universe. A vast wave of pessimism has engulfed the fortress of Mansoul.

It was indeed a deadly blow to the adepts of the White School when Science, their own familiar friend in whom they trusted, lifted up his heel against them. It was in this conjuncture that the Yellow adepts sent forth into the Western world a messenger, Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, with the ~~distinct mission to destroy~~ distinct mission to destroy, on the one hand, the crude schools of Christianity, and, on the other, to eradicate the materialism from Physical Science. She made the necessary connection with Edward Maitland and Anna Kingsford, who were trying rather helplessly to put the exoteric formula of the White School into the hands of students, and with the secret representatives of the Rosicrucian Brotherhood. It is not for us in this place to estimate the degree of success with which she carried out her embassy, but at least we see to-day that Physical Science is at last penetrating to the spiritual basis of material phenomena. The work of Henri Poincaré, Einstein, Whitehead, and Bertrand Russell is sufficient evidence of this fact.

Christianity, too, fell into a lower degree of contempt than ever. Realizing ^{that was} its moribund, it made a supreme and suicidal effort, and plunged into the death-spasm of the world-war. It was too far corrupt to react to the injections of the White formula which might have saved it. We see to-day that Christianity is more bigoted, farther divorced from reality than ever. In some countries it has again become a persecuting church.

With horrid glee the adepts of the Black School looked on at these atrocious paroxysms. But it did more. It marshalled its forces quietly and prepared to clean up the debris of the battle-field. It is at present pledged to a supreme attempt to chase the manly races from their spiritual halcyon.

The Black School has always worked insidiously by treachery. We need then not be surprised by finding that its most notable representative is the renegade follower of Blavatsky, Annie Besant, and that she has been charged by her Black Masters with the mission of persuading the world to accept for its Teacher a negroid Messiah. To make the humiliation more complete, a wretched creature has been chosen who, to the most loathsome ^{moral} qualities, adds the most fatuous imbecility.

.

This, then, is the present state of the war of the Three Schools. We cannot suppose that humanity is so entirely base as to accept Krishnamurti; yet that such a scheme could ever have been conceived is a symptom of the almost hopeless decadence of the White School. The Black adepts boast openly that they have triumphed all along the line. *Their formula* ~~It~~ has attained the destruction of all positive qualities. It is only one step to the stage when the annihilation of all life and thought will appear as a fatal necessity. The materialism and vital scepticism of the present time, its frenzied rush for pleasure in total disregard of any idea of building for the future, testifies to a condition of complete moral disorder, of abject spiritual anarchy.

The White School has thus been paralyzed. We are reminded of the spider described by Fabre, who injects her victims with a poison which paralyzes them without killing them, so that her own young may find fresh meat. And this is what is going to happen to Europe and America unless something is done about it, and done in very short order.

The Yellow School could not remain impassive spectators of the abomination. Madame Blavatsky was a mere forerunner. They, in conjunction with the Secret Chiefs of the White School in Europe, Chiefs who had been compelled to suspend

all attempts at ~~e~~^xoteric enlightenment by the general moral debility which had overtaken the races from which they drew their adepts, have prepared a guide for mankind. This man, of an extreme moral force and elevation, combined with a profound sense of worldly realities, has stood forth in an attempt to save the White School, to rehabilitate its formula, and to fling back from the bastions of moral freedom the howling savages of pessimism. Unless his appeal is heard, unless there comes a truly virile reaction against the creeping atrophy which is poisoning them, unless they enlist to the last man under his standard, a great decisive battle will have been lost.

This prophet of the White School, chosen by its Masters and his brethren, to save the Theory and Practice, is armed with a sword far mightier than ~~Excalibur~~. He has been entrusted with a new Magical formula, one which can be accepted by the whole human race. Its adoption will strengthen the Yellow School by giving a more positive value to their theory; while leaving the postulates of the Black School intact, it will transcend them and raise their Theory and Practice almost to the level of the Yellow. As to the White School, it will remove from them all taint of poison of the Black, and restore vigour to their central formula of spiritual al-

chemy by giving each man an independent ideal. It will put an end to the moral castration involved in the assumption that each man, whatever his nature, should deny himself to follow out a fantastic and impracticable ideal of goodness. Incidentally, this formula will save Physical Science itself by making negligible the despair of futility, the vital scepticism which has emasculated it in the past. It shows that the joy of existence is not in a goal, for that indeed is clearly unattainable, but in the going itself. [This law is called The Law of Thelema. It is summarized in the four words, Do what thou wilt.

It should not be necessary to explain that a full appreciation of this message is not to be obtained by a hasty examination. It is essential to study it from every point of view, to analyze it with the keenest philosophical acumen, and finally to apply it as a key for every problem, internal and external, that exists. This key, applied with skill, will open every lock.

From the deepest point of view, the greatest value of this formula is that it affords, for the first time in history, a basis of reconciliation between the three great Schools of Magick. It will tend to appease the eternal conflict by understanding that each type of thought shall go

on its own way, develop its own proper qualities without seeking to interfere with other formulae however opposed to its own.

What is true for every School, is equally true for every individual. Success in life, on the basis of the Law of Thelema, implies severe self-discipline. Each being must progress, as biology teaches, by strict adaptation to the conditions of the organism. If, as the Black School continually assert, the cause of sorrow is desire, we can still escape the conclusion by the Law of Thelema. What is necessary is not to seek after some fantastic ideal, utterly unsuited to our real needs, but to discover the true nature of those needs, to fulfil them, and rejoice therein.

This process is what is really meant by initiation; that is to say, the going into oneself, and making one's peace, so to speak, with all the forces that one finds there.

It is forbidden here to discuss the nature of the Book of the Law, the Sacred Scripture of Thelema. Even after two and twenty years of close expert examination, it remains to a great extent mysterious; but the little we know of it is enough to show that it is a sublime synthesis of all Science and all ethics. It is by virtue of this Book that man may attain a degree of freedom hitherto never suspected

to be possible, a spiritual development altogether beyond anything hitherto known: and what is really more to the point, a control of external nature which will make the boasted achievements of the last century appear no more than childish preliminaries to an incomparably mighty manhood?

It has been said by some that the Law of Thelema appeals only to the élite of humanity. No doubt there is this much in that assertion, that only the highest can take full advantage of the extraordinary opportunities which it offers. At the same time, the Law is for all. Each in his degree, every man may learn to realize the nature of his own being, and to develop it in freedom. It is by this means that the White School of Magick can justify its past, redeem its present, and assure its future, by guaranteeing to every human being a life of Liberty and of Love.