

*Meditation on the  
Eighth Major Arcanum of the Tarot*

JUSTICE  
LA JUSTICE

The Son and the Spirit — this is all that is granted to us. With respect to absolute unity or the Father, no one has been able to see him nor will see him in this world, if this is not within the *octenary*—which is, in fact, the only way whereby one could attain to him.

(Louis Claude de Saint-Martin,  
*Des nombres*)\*

*Quis custodiat custodes?* (Who will guard the guards?. . . The fundamental problem of jurisprudence)

## LETTER VIII



## JUSTICE

Dear Unknown Friend,

The seventh Arcanum taught us how inner equilibrium is attained; the teaching of the eighth Arcanum is how this equilibrium, once reached, is maintained; and the ninth Arcanum shows us the method or way which opens up to he who knows how to attain and maintain equilibrium. In other words, the seventh Arcanum tells us how to attain equilibrium (or *health*), the eighth Arcanum shows us the "mechanism" of microcosmic and macrocosmic equilibrium and the ninth Arcanum teaches us the "way of peace" or the "middle way"—that of balanced spiritual development—which is proper to Hermeticism, taken as the synthesis of mysticism, gnosis, magic and science.

•Nice, 1946, xiv.

The Card of the eighth Arcanum represents a woman seated on a yellow seat between two pillars, dressed in a red tunic and covered with a blue mantle. She holds a yellow sword and a yellow balance in her hands. On her head she wears a three-part tiara mounted by a crown.

Now, the totality of the Card evokes the idea of law interposed between the free action of the individual will and the essence of being. Man can act from his own free will — law *reacts* to his action through visible and invisible effects. But behind this reaction is found the essential ground of ultimate reality (the *ens realissimum* of St. Thomas Aquinas), which confers universality, regularity and immutability to the reactions of law. Law is interposed between the freedom of man and the freedom of God. She is seated between two pillars: that of will (Jachin) and that of providence (Boaz). She does not act; she can only react. This is why she is represented as a woman and not as a man. The crown which she wears indicates that she derives her dignity and mission from above — from the supreme Being, from providence. The balance and the sword that she holds in her hands indicate what she guards (equilibrium) and how she guards it (the sanction of equilibrium) in the domain of the free will of individuals. Thus she says: "I am seated on the seat which is between the individual will of beings and the universal will of the supreme Being. I am the guardian of equilibrium between the individual and the universal. I have the power to re-establish it each time that it is violated. I am order, health, harmony, *justice*!"

It is the balance which indicates equilibrium —or order, health, harmony and justice—and it is the sword which signifies the power to re-establish it each time that the individual will sins against the universal will.

This is the general meaning of the Card which, so to say, captures our attention from the very beginning of our meditation on the eighth Arcanum. Yet the general meaning —although many consider it as the goal of their efforts towards knowledge—is only the antechamber to the Hermetic meaning. For this latter does not lie in the *generality* obtained by the method of *abstraction*, but rather in the *depth* obtained by the method of *penetration*. The general answers obtained by means of abstraction are, in reality, only so many questions and tasks assigned for penetration. Because the more a general idea is abstract, the more superficial it is. The most general and most abstract idea which exists in philosophy is that of the "Absolute" (cf. Hegel), but it is at the same time the most superficial idea in the world. In signifying all, it expresses nothing. You can certainly die —and even live —for God, but you would never die as a martyr for the Absolute. Because to die for the Absolute amounts to dying for nothing. The idea of the Absolute is only a shadow of shadows, whilst the living God is the prototype of prototypes. . . the prototype of prototypes, this means to say: the universal Father.

One of the meanings of the first commandment—"Thou shalt have no other gods before me" (Exodus xx, 3) —is that one should not substitute an intellectual *abstraction* of God for the spiritual *reality* of God. One therefore sins against the

first commandment when one substitutes for the fiery, luminous and vibrant Being of life the abstractions of a "principle" or "idea"—be it the "First Cause", or the "Absolute"—which are, truth to tell, only mentally "graven images" or mental *idols* created by the human intellect.

Therefore, let us not sin against the first commandment and let us not substitute mentally graven images or abstract ideas for the reality of Justice. But, on the other hand, let us also not embrace the cause of intellectual iconoclasts who want to see only idols in every concept and abstract idea. For all concepts and abstract ideas *can* become *icons* or "sacred images" when one considers them not as the *end*, but rather as the *beginning* of the way of knowledge of spiritual reality. In the domain of the intellectual life, *hypotheses* do not play the role of idols, but rather that of sacred images. Because no one accepts a hypothesis as absolute truth, just as no one worships a sacred image as absolute reality. Yet hypotheses are fruitful in that they lead us to the truth, in guiding us to it within the totality of our experience—just as icons or sacred images are also fruitful in leading us to experience the spiritual reality that they represent. An icon is the beginning of the way to spiritual reality; it does not replace it—as in idolatry—but gives an impulse and direction towards it. Similarly, a concept or abstract idea does not replace spiritual reality, but rather gives an impulse and direction towards it. Therefore, let us avoid the Scylla of idolatry and the Charybdis of the intellectual iconoclastic attitude, and let us take abstract ideas as *hypotheses* leading to the truth, and images or *symbols* as our guides to reality. Let us therefore not commit the error of wanting to "explain" a symbol by reducing it to a few general abstract ideas. Let us also avoid the error of wanting to "concretise" an abstract idea by clothing it in the form of an allegory. Rather, let us seek *practical spiritual experience* of reality and the truth by means of concrete images as well as abstract ideas. For the Tarot is a system or organism of spiritual exercises; in the first place it is *practical*! If this were not so, it would be hardly worthwhile to occupy oneself with it.

Therefore, let us take the Arcanum "Justice" as an invitation towards an effort of consciousness with the intention of arriving at an experience of the reality it represents and an understanding of the truth that it expresses. First of all, the fact may be stated that it is in the domain of *judgement* that the reality and truth of justice manifests itself. Because to pronounce judgement with respect to anything whatsoever amounts to an action having as its aim the finding of justice. It is not only the judges at tribunals who judge; everyone judges in the degree to which he *thinks*. All of us, in so far as we are thinking beings, are judges. Because every problem, every question that we try to resolve, gives way in reality to a session for our inner tribunal, where the "pros and cons" are confronted and weighed before judgement is pronounced. We are all judges, good or bad; we are so, and we exercise the functions of a judge almost unceasingly from morning 'til night. The commandment—"Thou shalt not judge" (Matthew vii, 1)—would therefore amount to the renunciation of thought. For to think is to judge. "True" and "false", "beautiful" and "ugly", "good" and "bad" are judgments that we pronounce many

times each day. Nevertheless, it is one thing to judge and another thing to condemn. One judges *phenomena* and *actions*, but one cannot judge *beings* as such. Because to do so would exceed the competence of the judgement of thought. Therefore one should not judge *beings*, because they are inaccessible to the judgement of thought which is founded only on phenomenal experience. Thus, negative judgement concerning beings, or their condemnation, is in reality impossible. And it is in this sense that there is a ground for understanding the Christian commandment: "Thou shalt not judge"—i.e. do not judge *beings*, do not *condemn*. For he who condemns assumes a function of which he is not capable. He *lies* in presenting as truth and justice a judgement which is devoid of any foundation. It is therefore better to say to one's neighbour, "You are acting like a madman", since whoever says, "You *are* mad", deserves to be punished by the fire of hell (cf. Matthew v, 22).

Therefore, one has to know the extent of one's knowledge and ignorance when one makes a judgement. And one is always ignorant of the noumenal being (or the soul) of another. This is why no human judgement has bearing on the soul.

And *intuition*? Is it there for nothing? Certainly it exists and is there for something. Nevertheless, intuition being perception due to sympathy and love never accuses. It always plays the role of the defence, the advocate. As it perceives the soul of beings, it sees only the image of God in them. Seeing and knowing that the soul of the offender is always the first victim of all sin or crime that he could commit, intuition can play no other role than that of the advocate. The saying "to know all is to forgive all" refers to understanding "from within"—that is to say, "intuitive"—and not to external understanding, i.e. phenomenal and discursive understanding. A moving formula for the role of intuition in the exercise of justice is given to us in the prayer of the Master as he was being crucified: "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke xxiii, 34). This formula indicates three facts:

1. what they are doing, from a phenomenal point of view, is criminal;
2. judgement is handed over to the Father;
3. this is accompanied by the plea "forgive them", based on the certainty due to intuitive perception that "they know not what they do".

It is thanks to recognition of the role of intuition in intelligence, as distinct from the role of research and the establishment of facts due to understanding, that the strict justice of the latter faculty has been supplemented by *equity* in the exercise of justice in countries which have accepted the principles of Roman and Anglo-Saxon law. Common law is what is found through understanding after it has compared the facts with the letter of the law. Equity is what intelligence

finds necessary to modify within common law after comparison with the results of efforts to arrive at an intuitive perception of the human being whose lot is at stake. It is for the sake of equity, or the judgement of intuition within intelligence, that the jury became instituted in the exercise of justice within Christian civilisation. Before Christianity the institution of the jury did not exist. Neither the wife of Pilate nor "the great multitude of people and women who bewailed and lamented him" (Luke xxiii, 27) had a voice at Pilate's tribunal. The "jury" (the women of Jerusalem) could then only weep or converse in secret with the "judge" (the wife of Pilate). Then it was equity which cried in the streets of Jerusalem and it was the intuition within intelligence which whispered warnings in Pilate's ear through the mouth of his wife. And it was the absence of a jury as a judicial organ of equity which forced the judge, Pilate, to resort to a monstrous deed of justice-abdicating the function of judge, washing his hands of it and transferring it to the prosecutor.

Now, justice is done only in the case when *all* the pertinent facts for and against the accused are established, then weighed by understanding, and then submitted to the judgement of intelligence. The three functions of justice —instruction, debate, and decision — correspond to the three degrees of knowledge — hypothetical, argumentative, and intuitive—designated by Plato as "δόξα" (*doxa*) or "hypothetical opinion", "διάνοια" (*dianoia*) or "conclusion based on arguments" and ἐπιστήμη (*episteme*) or "intuitive perception". In fact, the facts established and presented by the instruction serve as the basis both for the prosecution and the defence for their respective *hypotheses*: "guilty" and "innocent". The debates which follow pursue the aim of arriving at a *conclusion* based on arguments advanced in favour of one or the other hypothesis. The decision taken by the jury is understood in principle as the result of an effort of consciousness to rise above the appearance of facts and the formalism of logical arguments with a view to an intuitive perception of the matter from a human point of view. It is therefore equity which has the last word.

One can say, therefore, that the process of the exercise of human justice consists in the total exertion of all three cognitive faculties of the human being: the faculty of forming hypotheses on the basis of data supplied by the senses (*doxa*), the faculty of logical discursion or intellectual weighing for and against these hypotheses (*dianoia*) and, lastly, the faculty of intuition (*episteme*).

Now, the structure of "fair human justice" is only—and *can* only be—an "image" or analogy of the structure of divine cosmic justice. The Jewish Cabbala brings this out more clearly than any other current of tradition that I know of.

There the system known as the "Sephiroth Tree" consists of three pillars: the fight, the left and the middle. The right pillar or that of Mercy comprises the Sephiroth *Chokmah* (Wisdom), *Chesed* or *Gedulah* (Grace/Mercy or Magnificence/Majesty) and *Netzach* (Victory or Triumph). The left pillar or that of Severity

is composed of the Sephiroth *Binah* (Intelligence), *Geburah* or *Pachad* (Seventy or Fear) and *Hod* (Glory or Honour). The Sephiroth of the middle pillar are *Kether* (Crown), *Tiphareth* (Beauty), *Yesod* (Foundation) and *Malkuth* (Realm or Kingdom).

The right pillar is often designated as the "pillar of Grace (Mercy)", whilst the left pillar bears the name the "pillar of Severity". Now these two pillars (which the *Zohar* regards as those of metaphysical GOOD and EVIL) correspond, from the point of view of justice, to *defence and prosecution*, whilst the middle pillar corresponds to *equity*. The system often Sephiroth is based on mobile *equilibrium*, with the tendency to re-establish it in an instance where a momentary dissymmetry is produced. *It is a system of balance.*

In its most simple form a balance consists of a fixed axis (a column in the middle), which is generally vertical, a beam which forms a T or a + (cross) with this axis and, lastly, two scales suspended at the ends of the beam. The balance gives rise to three fundamental relationships: (i) the equilibrium between the two scales establishes a relationship of correlation; (ii) the common suspension of the scales at a point of balance and the propping up of the whole system by a support evokes a relationship of subordination; and (iii) the different roles of the two scales in the weighing introduces between the opposite ends a differentiation by virtue of which an orientation or current is produced. (Francis Warrain, *la theodicee de la Kabbale*, Paris, 1949, p. 50)

In the system of Sephiroth it is a matter of a system of balance established simultaneously in four worlds, or on four planes: the world of emanation (*plant ha-atziluth*), the world of creation (*òlam ha-beriah*), the world of formation (*olam ha-yetzirah*) and the world of action (*òlam ha-àssiah*), both in a vertical sense, i.e. the balance establishes and re-establishes equilibrium between that which is above and that which is below, as well as in a horizontal sense, i.e. the balance maintains equilibrium between the right side and the left side, the pillars of Grace and Severity. Therefore, weighing is effected on the one hand by means of scales on the right and left and on the other hand by scales above and below. The working of the "right-left" balance is the law of justice which maintains equilibrium between the individual freedom of beings and universal order. In the last analysis it is KARMA which is the law governing the adjustment of mutual debts between beings. But the working of the "heaven-earth" balance surpasses the justice of karma; it is that of the justice of grace.

*"Gratia gratis data. . ."* The sun shines on the good and wicked alike. Is this morally right? Is it the justice of grace here which is higher than the protective, distributive and punitive justice of the law? This is so. There is the sublime "other justice" of grace, which is the meaning of the New Testament. For the Old Testament is to the New Testament as karma is to grace. Grace also makes use of the



balance, i.e. justice. It is the balance whose one scale is on the earth and whose other scale is in heaven. The Lord's prayer reveals to us the principle of the justice of grace and the operation of weighing by means of the "heaven-earth" balance. There it is said: "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us." And then the Master adds: "For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father also will forgive you; but if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses" (Matthew vi, 12, 14-15).

The Master is explicit with respect to the balance operating between earth and heaven—" . . . if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses"—this is the law, this is the infallible and implacable operation of the "heaven-earth" balance. That this balance governs not only forgiveness but also the entire domain of gifts from above, understood as the Holy Spirit, is evident in the words of the Master concerning the Lord's prayer in the Gospel of Luke: "If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!" (Luke xi, 13)

The sun shines on the good and wicked alike. But it is certainly necessary to open the windows of a dark room in order for light to be able to enter there. The *light* of the sun is in no way created or merited by us. It is a gift, pure and simple — *gratia gratis data*. Nevertheless, it is necessary to open our windows in order for it to enter into our abode, just as it is necessary to open our eyes in order to see it. The practical meaning of the "heaven-earth" balance is that of *cooperation* with grace. Human effort is therefore not for nothing in the domain of the working of grace. Neither election alone from above (Calvinism) nor faith alone below (Lutheranism) suffice for the requirements of the "heaven-earth" balance. Chosen or not chosen, having faith or not, it is necessary for us, for example, to "forgive those who trespass against us" here below in order for our trespasses to be forgiven above. There is a correlation—not in *measure*, but rather in *nature*—between the scale below, "effort", and the scale above, "gift", of the "heaven-earth" balance. The correlation between effort below and gift from above is not, I repeat, one of measure or *quantity*, but rather one of substance or *quality*. It can be that the forgiveness on my part of one single offence by another can produce the forgiveness of a thousand or so offences of the same nature by me. The "heaven-earth" balance does not weigh *quantity*; its working belongs entirely to the domain of *quality*. This is why there is no quantitative justice in the relationship between efforts below and gifts from above. The latter always surpass the measure of quantitative justice. This is important to understand above all with regard to the glaring injustice of eternal hell, that one life—or more, it does not matter—which is limited in time can bring about. Eternal hell is unjust, however, only from a purely quantitative point of view. One compares the limited number of years of life—or lives—on earth with the unlimited number of years of eternity and thus one arrives at the conclusion that the measure of chastisement is out of all proportion with the measure of the transgression and that, consequently, there is no justice. But let

us consider the problem of eternal hell not from the point of view of quantity (which is absurd, as time does not exist in eternity), but rather from that of quality.

How is it with this problem, then?

The following is the answer we arrive at when we abandon a quantitative correlation between time and eternity: whoever enters the region of eternity without an ounce of love, enters it without an ounce of love, i.e. he enters eternal hell. For to live without love—this is hell. And to live without love in the region of eternity—this is to live in eternal hell.

Hell is the state of the soul powerless to come out of itself, absolute self-centredness, dark and evil isolation, i.e. final inability to love. (Nicolas Berdyaev, *The Destiny of Man*, London, 1937, P- 351)

This subjective state of soul is neither long nor short—it is as *intense* as eternity is. Similarly, the blessedness that a saint experiences in the vision of God is as intense as eternity—although it could not so last, since someone present at the ecstasy of a saint would time it as a few minutes. The "region" of eternity is that of *intensity*, which surpasses the measures of quantity that we employ in time and space. "Eternity" is not a duration of infinite length; it is the "intensity of quality" which, if compared with time and thus translated into the language of quantity, is comparable with an infinite duration. Concerning this, Nicholas A. Berdyaev says:

In our life on earth it is given to us to experience torments that appear to us to go on for ever, that are not for a moment, for an hour or a day, but seem to last an infinity. . . Objectively this infinity may last a moment, an hour, or a day, but it receives the name of everlasting hell. . . When Origen said that Christ will remain on the cross so long as a single creature remains in hell, he expressed an eternal truth. (Nicolas Berdyaev, *The Destiny of Man*, London, 1937, p. 342 and p. 347)

What can one add to this, if not "amen"? Eternal hell is the state of a soul imprisoned within itself, where the *soul* has no hope of coming out. "Eternal" means to say "without hope". All suicides committed through desperation bear witness to the reality of eternal hell as a state of soul. Before committing suicide, the person who commits it experiences a state of complete despair, i.e. *eternal hell*. This is why he prefers nothingness to the state of despair. Nothingness is therefore his last hope.

Eternal bliss—"heaven"—is, in contrast, the state of soul which is filled with boundless hope. This is not a blissfulness which lasts for an infinite number of years; it is the *intensity* of hope which gives the quality "eternal". Similarly, it is

the intensity of despair which imparts to the state of soul designated "hell" the quality "eternal".

The anguish of Gethsemane which gave rise to perspiration of blood was *eternal*. This night, the night of Gethsemane, was not measured in hours. It was — it is — immeasurable, therefore eternal. It is due to its eternity that he sweated blood, and not because of the temporary, and therefore passing, trial. He knew eternal hell through experience, and as he came out of it, we have the "good news" that not only death is vanquished by the Resurrection, but also that hell is — through Gethsemane. The majesty of the victory over hell announced by the words "I am he" caused many to prostrate themselves on the ground, from amongst the band of soldiers and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees who had come to arrest him (John xviii, 5-6). The soul of Origen was also prostrated in the face of the victory over eternal hell and moved by the revelation contained in the words: "It is I," spoken by Him who had just come out from eternal hell. This is why Origen himself knew with certain knowledge that there would be no "damned" at the end of the world and that the devil, also, would be saved. And whoever meditates on the sweat of blood in Gethsemane and on the words "It is I" (or "I am he"), announcing the eternal victory over eternal hell, also will know with certain knowledge that eternal hell *exists* as a reality, but that it will be *empty* at the end of time. The sweat of blood in Gethsemane is the source of "Origenism"; here is the source of its inspiration.

But the "good news" of the eternal victory over eternal hell has not been understood by the "Greeks" (those seeking wisdom), nor by the "Jews" (those wanting miracles). It can be understood only by *Christians*. For "Greeks" deny the reality of eternal hell as being incompatible with the idea of God who is at one and the same time good and all-powerful. "Jews" abide by eternal damnation, i.e. they insist on a *populated* eternal hell, because otherwise God (as the judge) would be lacking the absolute power of punishment. They deny the infinity of divine love. And it is Christians alone who accept and understand the "folly and weakness" of the cross (cf. 1 Corinthians i, 22-25), i.e. the work of infinite love achieved by no other means than by love itself. For them, not only do the means not sanctify the aim, but also the means must be identical with the aim. They know that love will never be taught and understood through severity and fear. They apprehend hearts directly through goodness, beauty and truth, whilst the fear of hell and eternal damnation has not given birth to love in any human heart hitherto — and will never do so. And it is not the severity of strict justice which teaches us the love of the father for the prodigal son, but rather the joyous feast with which the son was welcomed home by him.

Nevertheless, the "Greeks" would say that the father knew in advance that the son would come back, since the son had, in fact, no other choice, and everything is only a *drama in appearance*. The father's way of acting was only a "clever ruse" (Hegel's *List der Vernunft*). And the "Jews" would say that it was the power of

the father which acted within the soul of the prodigal son and commanded him to return to his father's home, which irresistible power he could only obey.

Thus, *the joy* and the *feast* of welcome from the father remain incomprehensible both to the worshippers of God's wisdom ("Greeks") and the worshippers of God's power ("Jews"). The meaning of both is understandable only to the worshippers of the love of God ("Christians"). They understand that the story of the prodigal son is a real drama of real love and real freedom, and that the joy and celebration of the father are genuine, just as the suffering of the father and also that of the son, which preceded their reunion, was genuine. Moreover, they understand that the story of the prodigal son is the history of the whole human race, and that the history of the human race is a real drama of real divine love and real human freedom.

"Greeks", "Jews", and "Christians"—worshippers of the wisdom, power and love of God! There are always plenty of "Greeks" and "Jews" in the lap of the Church, and within Christianity in general. It is they who are responsible for all heresies of faith and all moral heresies, and it is they who cause the scissions and schisms in the universal community of Christians. Thus the central fact of divine love, the Incarnation of the Word and the person of the God-Man, was from the beginning the special object of efforts by "Jews" and "Greeks" with a view to transforming it into a deed of power or a fact of wisdom. "Jesus Christ is only the Messiah, the chosen and anointed man *sent* by God" taught the "Jews" (Ebionites and Cerinthians), who denied the divine Incarnation as being incompatible with the omnipotence of God. "The Word incarnated, but is not God: the Word is his creation", taught the "Jews" of the fourth century, disciples of Arius. inspired by the idea that the power of God is sufficient to create a being of such perfection that he could accomplish the work of salvation without himself incarnating.

"There are two persons in Jesus Christ, one divine and the other human," said the "Greeks" known under the name of "Nestorians", who saw an impassable abyss between absolute divine wisdom and relative human wisdom, and who were unable to admit that the former united itself with the latter without diminution and obscuration. On the contrary: "There is only a single nature in Jesus Christ," taught the "Jews" known under the name of "Eutychians" who—being blind in that which concerns the union of the two natures, divine and human, through *love*, without either losing itself in the other or the two losing themselves in giving birth to a third nature—believed that the union of two natures could only be *substantial*, and that divine omnipotence could certainly accomplish this alchemical miracle of the fusion of two natures *substantially*. Later "Jews" known as "Monophysites" and "Jacobites" took over the doctrine of Eutychianism and founded their own churches.

At the same time "Greeks", convinced that there is only wisdom or ignorance—the former being pure spirit and the latter being matter—denied the reality of the two natures in the God-Man, and therefore the *Incarnation* itself, since the *incarnation* of wisdom would amount to its reduction to a state of ignorance. This

is why the "Doceta" (the name that is attributed to them) taught that the human nature of the Word was only apparent, and that the body of Jesus Christ was only a phantom.

The "Greek" Apollinaris (fourth century) believed it necessary to change the proportion between the two natures and to reduce the presence of human nature in Jesus Christ by a third. He taught that the complete human nature consists of three principles: body, soul (*psyche*) and spirit (*pneuma*), whilst the human nature in Jesus Christ consisted only of two principles — body and soul — his human spirit having been replaced by the divine Word. Here one can see again the same "Greek" scruple of wanting to preserve divine wisdom intact and unobscured by the human element.

Thus, the "Greeks", devoted to the cause of the supremacy of wisdom, and the "Jews", devoted to that of the supremacy of the power of God, have endeavoured through the course of centuries to de-throne the principle of love in favour either of the principle of wisdom or that of power.

The struggle for the principle of love commenced in antiquity, and continued during the Middle Ages and after; it still continues today around the Church, at the heart of the Church, and within the soul of every Christian individual. For what was the struggle between the extreme "realists" and the extreme "nominalists" at the heart of the mediaeval and modern Scholastic School, if not the struggle between the "Greeks" ("realists") and the "Jews" ("nominalists")? . . . and the struggle between the "rationalists" ("*ratio nobilior potestas*") and the "voluntarists" ("*voluntas nobilior potestas*") at the heart of the same School? For the "realists" and "rationalists", ideas were objective realities and God's faculty of reason was higher than his will, whilst for the "nominalists" and "voluntarists" ideas were only names under which one classes phenomena — useful *abstractions* with a view to the classification of phenomena — and it was will which was higher than the faculty of reason within God. For the latter God is, in the first place, all-powerful will, whilst for the former he is, above all, reason — infinite wisdom.

And the *love* of God? It is this third, essentially Christian, principle which has held the *balance* through the course of the centuries, and holds it still in preventing the complete scission and disintegration of Christianity. In so far as there is peace at the heart of Christianity, it is due only to the principle of the supremacy of love.

For the complete victory of "realism", with its faith in that which *is general* at the expense of that which is individual, would have drowned Christianity in severity and cruelty. This is manifested with sufficient certainty in the historical fact of the inquisition — this latter being the practical conclusion of the fundamental dogma of realism: "the general is superior to the individual", which was consequently acted upon.

And the complete victory of "nominalism" would have drowned Christianity in the element of the relativity of the individual and personal opinions, beliefs and revelations of a kind such that it would have disintegrated to dust. The hun-

dreds of Protestant sects and modes of belief at the core of these sects proves this with absolute certainty.

No, in so far as there is unity in space (the Church) and in time (tradition) for Christianity, this is due neither to "realist" severity nor to "nominalist" indulgence, but rather to the peace of equilibrium between the "Greek" and "Jewish" tendencies that the "Christian" tendency of love has succeeded in establishing and maintaining. If this were not so, the whole Christian world would not be divided into two spheres: a sphere where one would suffocate under "puritanical severity", "Huguenot boredom" and a kind of Calvinism (Calvin himself was a "realist"); and a sphere where each family or even each person would have a small religion and a little private church (Luther himself was a "nominalist") of a kind where *Christianity* as such would be only an abstraction, only a *name* or *word* (*mere vox* or *flatus vocis*).

Hence, these are the things at work when one evokes the problem of *balance*.

One generally encounters the same things that are in Christianity also at the heart of the Hermetic tradition or "occult movement". Here also there are "Greeks", "Jews" and "Christians". The "Jews" seek for miracles, i.e. deeds of magical realisation, and the "Greeks" aspire to an absolute theory which would be to exoteric philosophies as algebra is to arithmetic. Thus, Martinez de Pasqually and the circle of his disciples practised ceremonial magic with the intention of bringing about the evocation of the Risen One himself. Hoene-Wronski, in contrast, elaborated an absolute system of the "philosophy of philosophies", the purpose of which was to understand within its framework, and to put in its proper place within it, every philosophy of the past, present and future.

Fabre d'Olivet (author of *The Philosophical History of the Human Race*) and Saint-Yves d'Alveydre (author of *Archeometry or the System of Principles and Criteria for all Philosophical, Religious and Scientific Doctrines of the Past, Present and Future*) represent the "Greek" tendency *par excellence* within the framework of the Hermetic or occult movement. Eliphas Levi and authors on magic and the practical Cabbala who have continued his work from the nineteenth and twentieth century to the present day represent, in contrast, the "Jewish" tendency.

Louis Claude de Saint-Martin, after having collaborated with the intimate circle of disciples of Martinez de Pasqually, dissociated himself from this circle and the work of its master. He did so as a friend, not as an adversary, and in no way doubted the reality of the magic practised in this circle. He did so because he had found the "inner way", the experiences and realisation of which surpass in value the experiences and realisations of magic, theurgy, necromancy and artificial magnetism:

This sort of clarity (issuing from the practice of the rites of high theurgy) must belong to those who are called directly to make use of it, by the order of God and for the manifestation of his glory. And when they are called there in this way there is no

uneasiness about their instruction, for then they receive, without any darkening, a thousand times more notions, and notions a thousand times more sure than those that a simple amateur such as myself could give them on all these fundamentals.

Wanting to speak to others, and above all to the public (via books), is to want—to no purpose—to stimulate and to work up a vain curiosity, rather for the vanity of the writer than for the benefit of the reader. Now, if I have made errors of this sort in my earlier writings, I would continue to do so if I were to persist in marching on the spot. Thus, my recent writings speak much more about this central initiation which, through our union with God, can teach us all that we must know, and there is very little about the descriptive anatomy of those delicate points concerning which you would like me to disclose my view. (Louis Claude de Saint-Martin in a letter dated 1797; cf. Robert Ambelain, *Le Martinisme*, Paris, 1946, p. 113)

He found the "true theurgy" in the domain of the inner spiritual life and consequently abandoned outer or ceremonial theurgy. On the other hand, Saint-Martin did not take up the "Greek" way: the grandiose intellectual adventure of creating an absolute philosophical system. He remained *practical*; he only changed the form of the practice, namely the practice of ceremonial magic for that of sacred or divine magic, which is founded on mystical experience and gnostic revelation. Thus Saint-Martin represents the third tendency in the occidental Hermetic movement—the Christian tendency.

Just as with Christianity in general, Hermeticism has not entirely disintegrated—thanks to the "Christians" at its core, who maintain equilibrium between the "Jews" and the "Greeks". If this were not so, we would now have two divergent literatures and movements, which would have in common only a few vestiges of a once common terminology. One current, the "Greek" current, would perhaps at some time arrive at the "Archeometry of past, present and future Archeometries" and the other current, the "Jewish" current, would perhaps attain to the "zodiacal operation of the evocation of the twelve Thrones".

However, the *source* of the life and viability of the entire Hermetic current through the course of the ages is to be found neither in intellectual theory nor in magical practice. It is quite precisely stated by Hermes Trismegistus, the pre-Christian sage, in the dialogue *Asclepius*:

For speaking as a prophet speaks, I tell you that in after times none will pursue philosophy in singleness of heart. Philosophy is nothing else than striving through constant contemplation and saintly piety to attain to knowledge of God; but there will be many who will make philosophy hard to understand, and corrupt it with manifold speculations. . . philosophy will be

mixed with diverse and unintelligible sciences, such as arithmetic, music and geometry. Whereas the student of philosophy undefiled, which is dependent on devotion to God, and on that alone, ought to direct his attention to the other sciences only so far as he may. . . be led to revere, adore, and praise God's skill and wisdom. . . For to worship God in thought and spirit with singleness of heart, to revere God in all his works, and to give thanks to God, whose will, and his alone, is wholly filled with goodness —this is philosophy unsullied by intrusive cravings for unprofitable knowledge. (*Asclepius* i; trsl. Walter Scott, *Hermetica*, vol. i, Oxford, 1924, pp. 309 and 311)

Let us now place this statement of pre-Christian Hermeticism into the Christian epoch, with all the transformations that this transference entails, and we have the eternal foundation of Hermeticism —the source of its life and viability.

The text quoted, considered from the point of view of its value in advancing *knowledge*, appears quite banal; it appears as banality itself. Any pious Cistercian monk of the twelfth century—proud of his pious ignorance—would have been able to be the author of this text. But let us consider it from the point of view of the *will*, taking it as a programme of action—action through millennia, from the past and into the future. What does it then say to us?

At first it tells us that there are three basic diverse impulses underlying this kind of human endeavour (the endeavour of aspiration to knowledge) which aim at building the edifice of the body of philosophy and the sciences. These are: *curiosity*, where one wants to know for the sake of knowledge, according to the principle of "art for art's sake"; *usefulness*, where one is led to the work of research, experimentation and invention through the needs of human life, so as to make labour more fruitful, to preserve health and to prolong life; and, lastly, the *glory of God*, where there is neither curiosity nor practical utility but, as the great palaeontologist of our time, Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, said: ". . . the tremendous power of the divine attraction. . . the specific effect of which is . . . to make man's endeavour holy" (Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, *Le Milieu divin. An essay on the interior life*, London, 1964, p. 65).

Thus, there is knowledge for the sake of knowledge, knowledge for the sake of better serving one's neighbour, and knowledge in order to better love God. Knowledge for the sake of knowledge comes down in the last analysis to the promise of the serpent in paradise: "You shall be as gods, knowing good and evil" (Genesis iii, 5). Therefore, it is for his own glory that man takes up this way. This is why ancient Hermeticism, Jewish Cabalistic Hermeticism and Christian Hermeticism unanimously condemn curiosity or knowledge for the sake of knowledge as vain, foolhardy and baneful. Thus, it is said in an extract from the sacred book of Hermes Trismegistus entitled *Kore Kosmu* ("The Virgin of the World", or "The Eye-Pupil of the World"):



Hermes, you are doing a rash thing in making man; for he is like to be a creature that sees with inquisitive eyes, and hears things he has no right to hear, and indulges greedily his sense of taste, and makes voluptuous use of his sense of smell, and misuses to all extremes his sense of touch. Tell me, you that are the author of his being, is it your settled purpose to leave him free from care, this being that is going to look with audacious gaze upon the beautiful mysteries of Nature? . . . They will dig up roots of plants, and investigate the properties of stones. They will dissect the lower animals—yes, and one another also—seeking to find out how they have come to be alive, and what manner of thing is hidden within. . . They will dig mines, and search into the uttermost darkness of the depths of the earth. And all this might be borne, but they will do yet more: they will press on to the world above, seeking to discover by observation the laws of movement of the heavens. Are they then to meet with no impediment? Shall they never be overpowered by the cruel stings of fear, and shall they luxuriate in a life exempt from cares? . . . that they may fail to get the things they hoped for, and be subdued by the pangs of grief. Let their presumptuous eagerness be disappointed of its expectations. (*Kore Kosmu*; trsl. Walter Scott, *Hermetica*, vol. i, Oxford, 1924, p. 483)

Such is the *accusation* of the demon Momus—"a mighty spirit . . . who had a body of enormous bulk, and a mind of surpassing power" (*ibid.*, p. 481)—the spirit inquisitor of the human race quoted in *Kore Kosmu*. But here follows Hermes' defence of man's cognitive faculty in the discourse dedicated to his son Tat, entitled *The Key*:

For man is a being of divine nature; he is comparable, not to the other living creatures upon earth, but to the gods in heaven. Nay, if we are to speak the truth without fear, he who is indeed a man is even above the gods of heaven, or at any rate he equals them in power. None of the gods of heaven will ever quit heaven, and pass its boundary, and come down to earth; but man ascends even to heaven, and measures it; and what is more than all beside, he mounts to heaven without quitting the earth; to so vast a distance can he put forth his power. We must not shrink then from saying that a man on earth is a mortal god, and that a god in heaven is an immortal man. (*Corpus Hermeticum*, book x, "A discourse of Hermes Trismegistus. The Key"; trsl. Walter Scott, *Hermetica*, vol. i, Oxford, 1924, p. 205)

Here we have accusation (prosecution) and defence. The judgement which ensues is that knowledge for the sake of knowledge, which Momus, the prosecutor, has in mind, is to be condemned, since Momus is right in so far as his accusation

is applied to the impulse which aspires to knowledge for the sake of knowledge. On the other hand, the defence advanced by Hermes Trismegistus, in so far as it is applied to the use of the cognitive faculty either for the glory of God or for the service of one's neighbour, is well-founded and just. There is, therefore, a legitimate—even glorious—knowledge, and an illegitimate, vain, indiscreet and foolhardy knowledge.

Now, Hermeticism—in its life and soul—is the millennial-old current in human history of *knowledge for the sake of the glory of God*, whilst the corpus of today's official sciences is due either to utility or to the desire for knowledge for the sake of knowledge (curiosity).

We Hermeticists are theologians of that Holy Scripture revealing God which is named "the world"; similarly, theologians of the Holy Scriptures revealing God are Hermeticists in so far as they dedicate their effort to the glory of God. And just as the world is not only a material body but is also soul and spirit, so is the Holy Scripture not simply the "dead letter" but is also soul and spirit. This is why our threefold knowledge (mystical-gnostic-magical) of the world has dedicated itself through the course of the centuries to the glory of the Holy Trinity, just as the threefold knowledge of divine revelation through the Holy Scripture (i.e. through the Old Testament, the New Testament, and the Apocalypse) does. Are we not called, we theologians of the world, and you, theologians of the Holy Scripture, to watch at the same altar and to fulfill the same task of not letting the lamp illumined to the glory of God be extinguished in the world? Is it not our common duty to provide for it, to provide the holy oil of human endeavour so that its flame is never extinguished, so that it always bears witness to God by the very fact of its existence, and so that it continues to burn from century to century? Has not the time finally arrived when we Hermeticists shall take account of the incontestable fact that it is thanks to the Church that we have air to breathe and that we have a place of shelter and refuge in this world of materialism, imperialism, nationalism, technologism, biologism and psychologism? It is in so far that the Church lives that we live. The church bells once reduced to silence, all human voices desiring to serve the glory of God will also be reduced to silence. We live and we die with the Church. Because in order to live, we need air to breathe; we need the atmosphere of piety, sacrifice, and appreciation of the invisible as a higher reality. This air, this atmosphere in the world, exists in the world only by grace of the Church. Without it Hermeticism—indeed, every idealistic philosophy and all metaphysical idealism—would be drowned in utilitarianism, materialism, industrialism, technologism, biologism and psychologism. Dear Unknown Friend, imagine to yourself a world without the Church. Imagine a world of factories, clubs, sports, political meetings, utilitarian universities, utilitarian arts or recreations—in which you would hear not a single word of praise for the Holy Trinity or of benediction in its name. Imagine to yourself a world in which you would never hear a human voice say: "*Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto, sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper, et in saecula saeculorum*", or "*Benedicat vos*

*omnipotent Deus, Pater, Filius et Spiritus Sanctus*". A world without worship and without benediction. . .how deprived of ozone the psychic and spiritual atmosphere would then be, and how empty and cold it would be! Do you think that Hermeticism could exist and live for a single day?

Therefore make use of the balance of Justice and judge impartially. When you have done so, you will no doubt say: Never will I throw stones—in thought, or through word or deed—against the Church, since it is she who makes possible, and stimulates and protects, human endeavour for the glory of God. And as Hermeticism is such an endeavour, it could not exist without the Church. We Hermeticists have only one choice: either to live as parasites (for it is thanks to the Church that we are able to live), if we are strangers to, or are hostile to, the Church; or to live as her faithful friends and servants, if we understand what we owe to her and so begin to love her.

Now is the time for the Hermetic movement to make true Christian peace with the Church and to cease to be her semi-illegitimate child, leading a half-tolerated life more or less in the shadow of the Church—and to become eventually an adopted child, if not a recognised legitimate child. But "it takes two to love". And there is many a pretension to be abandoned in order to accomplish this. What is sure, however, is that if the two parties in question have at heart only the glory of God, all obstacles to this peace will evaporate in smoke.

May the pretension of certain Hermeticists evaporate in smoke—namely to have the authority to found small churches under their own leadership and to set up altar against altar and hierarchy against hierarchy.

On the other hand, may the pretension of certain theologians evaporate in smoke—namely to be a supreme tribunal, without recourse to further appeal, concerning all planes of existence beyond the five senses. The lesson learnt through Copernicus and Galileo by theologians who arrogated to themselves the authority of a supreme tribunal for the perceptible world can also be repeated on higher levels of the world—in case of a relapse into the arrogant spirit of Galileo's judges concerning other planes of existence. The revealed, and therefore absolute, truths of salvation—yes, these are entrusted to the magisterium of the Church, and therefore to the work of interpretation, explanation and presentation of competent theologians. But the immense domain where salvation operates—the physical, vital, psychic and spiritual worlds: their structure, forces, beings, their reciprocal relationships, their transformations and the history of these transformations—aren't all these aspects of the macrocosm and microcosm, and many others, the field of work to be accomplished for the glory of God and for the benefit of one's neighbour, for all those who want to do so and who do not want to bury in the earth the talents given to them by the Master (cf. Matthew xxv, 14-30) and thus to be unprofitable servants?

Let us therefore appeal to the balance of Justice—which is at the same time the balance of peace—let us take recourse to it, let us dedicate ourselves to it, let us serve it! Then we shall operate with the universal and eternal magic of Justice,

for universal and general good. Since he who invokes the balance of justice—who takes it as a method of practical training in thinking, feeling, and the will—such a one, I may say, falls under the title of the fourth beatitude of the Sermon on the Mount: "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after justice, for they shall be satisfied" (Matthew v, 6), "Satisfied"—this means to say: justice will be done.

Let us therefore be just towards the theologians, and they will be just towards us. Let us recognise our just debts towards the Church, and she will recognise our just rights. And there will then be *peace*, i.e. the operation of the balance of justice.

We who are occupied with the way of the spiritual exercise of the balance of Justice (for *all* the Arcana of the Tarot are, in the first place, spiritual exercises) have to do so thoroughly and completely—which would not be the case if we were to fail to put to work the balance of justice in our thought and in our hearts with respect to another domain where there is no peace, and where justice is yet to be established: this is the sphere of relationships existing between Hermeticism and official science.

Just as it is time that Hermeticism made peace with the Church and finds its rightful place within its heart, so is it time that it made true peace with Academia, and finds its rightful place there. Because, until now, Hermeticism in the eyes of Academia is only an illegitimate child: the fruit of an obscure liaison between a religion unfaithful to its own vocation and a science that is likewise untrue to its own vocation. In other words, Hermeticism is a badly-coined alloy of false religiosity with a false scientific spirit. In the eyes of Academia, Hermeticists are only a clique, which makes its recruits amongst mistaken believers and misguided scientists.

Now let us again make use of the balance of justice. Is the above-mentioned criticism valid?—Yes it is.

It is well-founded, because Academia as well as the Church is based on the three sacred vows—obedience, poverty and chastity—whilst we Hermeticists behave as pontiffs, without the sacraments and the discipline that this entails, and as academics, without due experience and discipline. We do not want to *obey* either religious or scientific discipline. At the same time, it is obedience or *discipline* which underlies the moral greatness of the Church and the intellectual greatness of Academia.

The "asceticism" of Academia entails, as well as obedience to the authority of facts, strict rules for proofs and for collaboration, and chastity in the guise of complete sobriety, and also poverty in the form of ignorance, postulated as the basis of all research work. A true scientist is an objective man—sober and open to all experience or new thought.

The fact that true scientists are as rare as saints in the Church does not at all alter the fact that it is they who represent science. Because it is not the sick and deformed who represent a family, but rather its healthy members.

Now, true science is the discipline of objectivity, sobriety and diligence or, in other words, the discipline of the vows of obedience, chastity and poverty. For one

cannot be diligent if one is not poor; richness always entails idleness. One cannot be sober without having a dislike of all that intoxicates; and this is chastity. Lastly, one cannot be objective without obedience to experience and the strict rules of research.

It is by virtue of the practice of these three sacred vows that science makes true progress. Thanks to this practice it advances in the direction of *depth*, i.e. into the same domain as Hermeticism. Science has made three great discoveries in the domain of depth: it has penetrated in the depths of the sphere of biology to discover the *law of evolution*; it has penetrated into the depths of matter and has found *pure energy*; it has dared to penetrate into the realm of psychic depth, to discover the world of *occult consciousness*. The three great discoveries of science — evolution, nuclear energy and the unconscious — have certainly made science a collaborator, if not a rival, of Hermeticism, by the fact of having entered the domain which is proper to Hermeticism, the domain of depth.

Therefore Hermeticism now shares its hereditary domain with science. . . as a sister or as a rival? This is the question upon which everything depends.

All depends on our decision, we Hermeticists of today, to take either the part of *service* towards science in its endeavour to explore the realm of depth or that of *rivalry* with it. The decision to serve implies and entails renunciation of the role of representing an esoteric and sacred science different from exoteric and profane science. It is a matter of renouncing the desire to set up "chair against chair", just as with respect to the Church it is a matter of renouncing the desire to erect "altar against altar". Hermeticism, in pretending to be science — i.e. a body of doctrines of general validity, and generally demonstrable — can only cut a poor shape. For, being essentially *esoteric*, i.e. intimate and personal, it cannot with any appreciable success play the role of a science of general validity demonstrable to everyone. The esoteric character of Hermeticism and the general validity of science are mutually exclusive. One cannot — and must not — present what is intimate and personal, that is to say *esoteric*, as having a general validity, that is to say *scientific*.

Yes, I know with one-hundred per cent certainty that there are great truths in Hermeticism, but these truths are not *scientific*, i.e. of general validity. They are valuable only for *personalities*, each individually, who have the same hunger and the same thirst as I, the same ideal as I, and perhaps the same memories from past recall as I have. They are valuable only for members of "my family" — the people whom I call my "Unknown Friends" to whom these Letters are addressed.

Hermeticism is not a science which differs from other sciences or which even opposes itself to them. No more is it a religion. It is a uniting — in the inner forum of personal and intimate consciousness — of revealed truth with truth acquired through human endeavour. Being a synthesis — intimate and personal for each person — of religion and science, it cannot rival either the one or the other. A hyphen does not have the function of replacing the two terms that it unites. The true Hermeticist is therefore one who applies to himself a *double discipline* — that of the Church and that of Academia. He prays and he thinks. And he does

so with the fervour and sincerity of a son of the Church, concerning his praying, and with the discipline and diligence of an academic, concerning his thinking. *Ora et labora*—"Pray and work"—is certainly his formula, where "and" is the legitimate place of Hermeticism. It is an open door, in the inner forum of his consciousness, between the oratory and the laboratory. It is the *door* between the two — and not *another* laboratory or *another* oratory.

*Ora et labora*. . . oratory and laboratory united in the inner forum of the personality. . . what is this, in the last analysis, if not the practice of the balance of justice?

Hermeticism, understood as the balance *ora et labora*, implies a great deal of readjustment with respect to habits of thought which have taken root amongst Hermeticists since the second half of the nineteenth century. The following is an example that I have chosen because of its great spiritual significance.

Christian Hermeticists are unanimous concerning the pre-eminence of the mission and the person of Jesus Christ in the spiritual history of mankind. For them, Jesus Christ is to other spiritual masters of mankind (Krishna, Buddha, Moses, Orpheus, etc.) as the sun is to the other visible planets in the heavens. In this they distinguish themselves from modern Theosophists of the school of Blavatsky and from oriental occultists and esotericists, e.g. Yoga, Vedanta, Sufi, Mazdaznan, Gurdjieffs school, etc. They are Christian, therefore, in the sense that they recognise the uniqueness of the divine Incarnation who is Jesus Christ.

At the same time, the tendency is certainly accentuated, if not prevalent, amongst contemporary Hermeticists to occupy themselves more with the "Cosmic Christ" or the "Logos" than with the human person of the "Son of Man", Jesus of Nazareth. More importance is attributed to the divine and abstract aspect of the God-Man than to his human and concrete aspect.

Therefore, let us once again take recourse to the balance of Justice and weigh up the alternatives: "cosmic principle" and "concrete personality of the Master".

Firstly, let us look at results or fruits in the domain of experience of aspiration to knowledge of the Logos, and those of aspiration to contact with Jesus Christ, the Master.

It must be pointed out, in the first place, that it was not the revelation or knowledge of the cosmic Logos which gave rise to the new spiritual impulse that manifested itself in the apostles, martyrs and saints—which we call "Christianity"—but rather the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It was not through the name of the Logos that demons were exorcised, the sick were healed, and the dead were brought back to life, but rather through the name of Jesus (cf. Acts iv, 12; Ephesians i, 21).

Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Philippians ii, 9-11)

It was contact with the person of Jesus Christ which opened up the current of miracles and conversions. And it is the same even today.

With respect to the cosmic Logos, the idea was neither new nor activating at the beginning of Christianity. Hellenistic Hermeticists (cf. *The Divine Pymander of Hermes Trismegistus*), Stoics and Philo of Alexandria had said almost everything there is to be said on it in philosophical, gnostic and mystical terms. Consequently St. John did not have in mind the advancement of a new doctrine of the Logos in his Gospel, but rather to bear witness to the fact that the Logos "became flesh and dwelt among us" (John i, 14).

Now, it was Jesus Christ who gave to the idea of the Logos the warmth and life which created living Christianity, whilst the idea of the Logos held by the sages of antiquity, although it was true, was lacking this warmth and life. It had light, but *magic* was lacking here. And it is the same even today.

Monsieur Philip of Lyons (1849-1905), the Thaumaturgist, attributed all his miraculous healings and other prodigies to the *friend*: "All I do is to ask him on your behalf, this is all" (Dr. Philippe Encausse (Papus), *Le Maitre Philippe de Lyon*, Paris, 1958, p. 146). Now, Monsieur Philip's friend was Jesus Christ.

Monsieur Philip was Papus' "spiritual master". Papus had yet another master, who was his "intellectual master". This was Marquis Saint-Yves d'Alveydre, the author of *Mission desjuifs* ("Mission of the Jews") and *Archeometre* ("Archeometry"). The latter gave himself up entirely to the endeavour to understand, and to make understood, the Logos or the Cosmic Christ. At the same time, Monsieur Philip of Lyons, the "father of the poor", served the work of Jesus Christ in healing, comforting and illumining people from all social classes (e.g. both the Russian imperial family and the workers of Lyons), by making himself an instrument of Jesus Christ. The one brought about the invention of an *intellectual* instrument — archeometry—which he (Saint-Yves d'Alveydre) used to comprehend and express the cosmic logic of the work of the Logos in the history of mankind; the other (Monsieur Philip) made *himself* an instrument of the divine magic of Jesus Christ in order to serve his neighbour.

Papus found himself between a master of universal logicism and a master of divine magic. He found himself faced with a choice between the way of logicism exemplified by Fabre d'Olivet, Hoene-Wronski and Saint-Yves d'Alveydre, and the way of divine magic — of individual contact with Jesus Christ — represented by Eliphas Levi (in his maturity), Monsieur Philip, and all the Christian saints. Did he make a choice between these two ways? Yes and no. *Yes*, he made one in the sense of having understood the superiority of the magic of love over ceremonial magic, and the superiority of contact with the Master to all theoretical knowledge of the cosmic Logos and to contact with any "magical chain". *No*, in the sense

that he did not turn his back on Saint-Yves d'Alveydre and his work, but remained faithful to him until his death and even after his death—which, to its glory, will turn the eyes of all people of heart to the fact that the way of acting according to the principle "the feast is over, goodbye to the saint" can only distress. Nevertheless, the attitude taken by Papus, faced with the two ways and two masters, was not only noble in a human sense. It divulges something more.

It is the faithfulness of Papus to Hermeticism which it discloses. For Hermeticism is an *athanor* ("alchemical furnace") erected in the individual human consciousness, where the mercury of intellectuality undergoes transmutation into the gold of spirituality. St. Augustine acted as a Hermeticist in transmuting Platonism into Christian thought. Similarly, St. Thomas Aquinas acted as a Hermeticist in doing the same thing with Aristotelianism. Both of them accomplished the sacrament of baptism with respect to Greece's intellectual heritage.

Now, this is precisely what Papus did—or was in the process of doing—with regard to the logicism of Saint-Yves d'Alveydre and his precursors after meeting his spiritual master, Monsieur Philip of Lyons. It was neither a compromise nor hesitation to take sides, but rather the Hermetic hope of achieving a synthesis of intellectuality and spirituality. Papus took upon himself this inner work, whose beginning is a rending conflict between two contraries. We cannot say with certainty if, or how far, his endeavour was crowned with success—a premature death having deprived us of the possibility of being witness to the mature fruits of Papus' spiritual life. With respect to his endeavours in the outer world of serving as a link between Monsieur Philip and Saint-Yves d'Alveydre, Papus was not successful. As proof of this lack of success is the fact that Saint-Yves did not want to see Monsieur Philip at Lyons, nor did he invite him to see him. Concerning other people, Papus' endeavours were crowned with success: notably, it was Papus who procured for Monsieur Philip a circle of intelligent people—mainly occultists and doctors—which was important for both parties.

Papus' work has remained unfulfilled, at least on the visible plane. This work is the synthesis of intellectuality and spirituality, of the cosmic Logos and the Logos made flesh—or, briefly, *Christian Hermeticism* as such. For Christian Hermeticism is a task—it is not a fact of history. This means to say that it is not a matter of "renaissances" of Hermeticism (such as those of the Hellenistic epoch which took place in the twelfth century, the fifteenth century, the seventeenth century and the nineteenth century) but rather of the *resurrection* of Hermeticism. Renaissances are only reminiscences of the past which surge up to the surface from the depths of human souls from time to time, whilst *resurrection* signifies an appeal to present and future life, to the accomplishment of a mission for the future, addressed to what was of eternal value in the past by the same voice which called Lazarus back to life.

The spiritual history of Christianity is the history of successive resurrections of that which is valuable from the past, worthy of eternity. It is the history of the magic of love reviving the dead. It was thus that Platonism became resuscitated



and will go on living for ever—thanks to the vivifying breath of he who is the resurrection and the life ("*Ego sum resurrectio et vita*"— John xi, 25). It is thus that Aristotelianism will participate in eternal life. And it is thus that Hermeticism, also, will live until the end of the world and, perhaps, beyond the end of the world.

Moses and the prophets will live on for ever, for they have acquired their place in the eternal constellation of the Word of resurrection and life. The magical poetry and songs of Orpheus will be resuscitated and will live for all eternity as colour and sound of the Word of resurrection and life. The magic of Zarathustra's mages will be revived and will live as the eternal human endeavour of aspiration towards light and life. The truths revealed by Krishna will join the retinue of the "recalled to eternal life". The ancient cosmic revelations of the Rishis will live again and will awaken in humanity anew a sense for the marvels of the "blue, white and gilded. . ."

All these souls of mankind's spiritual history will be resuscitated, i.e. will be called to join the work of the Word that became flesh, that died and rose again from the dead—so that the truth of the promise—"I have come so that *nothing* should be lost but that *all* should have eternal life" (John vi, 38-40)-will be accomplished.

Hermeticism also is called to live—not only as a reminiscence, but also as a resuscitation. This will take place when those who are faithful to it—i.e. in whom reminiscences of its past are living—comprehend the truth that man is the key to the world, and that Jesus Christ is the key to man. and that Jesus Christ is the key to the world, and that the world—such as it was before the Fall and such as it will be after its Reintegration—is the Word, and that the Word is Jesus Christ, and that, lastly, Jesus Christ reveals God the Father who transcends both the world and man.

Through Jesus Christ one arrives at the Word or Logos; through the Word or Logos one understands the world; and through the Word and the world, whose unity is the Holy Spirit, one arrives at an eternally-increasing knowledge of the Father.

This is one of the teachings of the balance of Justice taken as a spiritual exercise. But it can give us many other teachings relating to such problems as: karma. or the law of equilibrium in mankind's history and in the history of the human individuality; the problem of the relationships between fate (historical, biological and astrological), freedom and providence; the problem of the three swords (of the Cherubim of Eden, the Archangel Michael and the Angel of the Apocalypse) or the problem of sanction in the work of cosmic justice; and lastly, the gnostic problem of the ogdoad ("eightfoldness"). All these problems certainly merit treatment under the title of—or better, by means of—the balance of Justice. Truth to tell, they not only merit it, but they badly *need it*. I certainly know this to be so. but I must renounce doing it, because I cannot write an entire volume on the eighth Arcanum alone, let alone twenty-two volumes on the twenty-two Arcana of the Tarot—having undertaken to write only *letters* on the Arcana. A letter must

not become a volume. I must therefore renounce many—yes, the majority—of the things that I would very much like to put into writing. But I hope that the *method* of using the balance of Justice (that I want only to *illustrate* in this Letter) will find an active and sympathetic reception and that you, dear Unknown Friend, will set to work with weighing the problems not dealt with here, by means of the balance of Justice.

In doing this, you will have, perhaps, not only the satisfaction and the joy of fresh enlightenment but also that of breathing the air of the honesty and moral courage of impartial justice. Perhaps, moreover, you will have an experience which will be a conclusive answer to the question posed at the end of the preceding Letter, namely: What is the *eighth* force which puts the seven forces of the astral body in equilibrium? For it is this eighth force which works in judging and weighing up by means of the balance of Justice, in the inner forum of consciousness. It is the "eighth planet" or the unknown factor upon which so much depends in the interpretation of a traditional astrological horoscope, with seven planets, and in the interpretation of the traditional characterological formula of the composition and proportions of the psychic organism or "character".

Whether it is a matter of an astrological horoscope or of a characterological formula is not important, there is always an X-factor upon the *use* of which astrological or characterological data depends. It is the factor of *free will* which underlies the traditional astrological rule: *Astra inclinant, non necessitant* ("the stars incline, they do not compel"). The same rule is valuable for "microcosmic astrology" or characterology. There also free will is the indeterminable factor which does not allow the part that a man with a well-determined character will take in some circumstances or other to be predicted with certainty. For it is not *character* which is the source of judgement and conscious choice, but rather this force in us which weighs and judges by means of the balance of Justice. *Freedom* is a fact which one experiences when someone judges not by his temperament ("etheric body") or by his character ("astial body"), but rather by the balance of Justice — or by his own *conscience*. The word *conscience* ("con-science") contains the idea of balance, for it implies "simultaneous knowing", i.e. knowledge of the facts of the *two scales* suspended at the extremities of the beam of the balance. Conscience is neither a product nor a function of *character*. It is above it. And it is here — and only here — that there begins and there is found the domain of *freedom*. One is not at all free when one judges or acts according to character or temperament; but one certainly is when one judges and acts according to the balance of Justice, or *conscience*. But Justice, the practice of the balance, is only the beginning of a long path of the development of conscience — and therefore of the growth of freedom.

The following Arcanum, the Hermit, invites us to a meditative endeavour dedicated to the path of conscience.