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# THE OMNI EXPERIENCE

## POWER TRIPS: CONTROLLING YOUR DREAMS

Release Date: Thursday, 19 March 1987

A number of techniques facilitate lucid dreaming. One of the simplest is asking yourself many times during the day whether you are dreaming. Each time you ask the question, you should look for evidence proving you are not dreaming. The most reliable test: Read something, look away for a moment, and then read it again. If it reads the same way twice, it is unlikely that you are dreaming. After you have proved to yourself that you are not presently dreaming, visualize yourself doing what it is you'd like. Also, tell yourself that you want to recognize a nighttime dream the next time it occurs. The mechanism at work here is simple; it's much the same as picking up milk at the grocery store after reminding yourself to do so an hour before.

At night people usually realize they are dreaming when they experience unusual or bizarre occurrences. For instance, if you find yourself flying without visible means of support, you should realize that this happens only in dreams and that you must therefore be dreaming.

If you awaken from a dream in the middle of the night, it is very helpful to return to the dream immediately, in your imagination. Now envision yourself recognizing the dream as such. Tell yourself, "The next time I am dreaming, I want to remember to recognize that I am dreaming." If your intention is strong and clear enough, you may find

yourself in a lucid dream when you return to sleep.

Even if you're a frequent lucid dreamer, you may not be able to stop yourself from waking up in mid-dream. And even if your dreams do reach a satisfying end, you may not be able to focus them exactly as you please.

During our years of research, however, we have found that spinning your dream body can sustain the period of sleep and give you greater dream control. In fact, many subjects at Stanford University have used the spinning technique as an effective means of staying in a lucid dream. The task outlined below will help you use spinning as a means of staying asleep and, more exciting, as a means of traveling to whatever dream world you desire.

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Before retiring, decide on a person, time, and place you would like to visit in your lucid dream. The target person and place can be either real or imaginary, past, present, or future. Write down and memorize your target person and place, then visualize yourself visiting your target and firmly resolve to do so in a dream that night.

To gain lucidity, repeat the phrase describing your target in your dream, and spin your whole dream body in a standing position with your

arms outstretched. You can pirouette or spin like a top, as long as you vividly feel your body in motion.

The same spinning technique will help when, in the middle of a lucid dream, you feel the dream imagery beginning to fade. To avoid waking up, spin as you repeat your target phrase again and again. With practice, you'll return to your target person, time, and place.

When spinning, try to notice whether you're moving in a clockwise or counter-clockwise direction.

- Stephen LaBerge and Jayne Gackenbach

Stephen LaBerge, Ph.D., of the Stanford University Sleep Research Center, is also the author of LUCID DREAMING, Ballantine Books, New York, (C) 1985. LUCID DREAMING is a 305 page book which costs \$3.95 and is available in the "Psychiatry" or "Self-Help" section of most major bookstores. (957)

## DREAM NEWS

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NUCLEAR NIGHTMARES: With the threat of nuclear war hanging overhead, it is not surprising that our dreams might reflect this source of anxiety. In fact, reports peace psychologist Randy Morris, PhD, many children in our country, not

to mention in other nations, have had nuclear imagery in their dreams. Are such dreams simply another example of how daily anxieties are reflected in our nighttime ruminations? Possibly, but Dr. Morris offers another explanation. "Could it be some kind of collective survival mechanism to come as close as possible to experiencing, in order to reject, our self-destruction?"

. "I believe," he states, in answer to his question, "that nuclear nightmares represent an impulse on the part of this collective psyche to confront directly the horror of nuclear war, literally, to 'imagine the unimaginable,' and by so doing to take the first step toward healing this festering rupture in the family of man. These dreams, as expressions of pure emotion, have the power to motivate people to work in new ways for peace movement." Dr. Morris notes that the threat of nuclear war is increased by the number of people who simply cannot imagine that it would ever happen. Nuclear nightmares tend to be very "real" in their feeling, and thus may be a natural counterbalance to the ostrich syndrome.

. Anyone who has had a nuclear nightmare, or any kind of dream involving nuclear imagery, is invited to write a letter to Randy Morris, PhD, Hiroshima International School, 2-2-6 Ushita-naka, Higashi-ku, Hiroshima 730, Japan, leave a message in ANECDOTAL PSI or PREMONITIONS REGISTRY.

SUDDEN DEATH SYNDROME: SUICIDE BY NIGHTMARE: A healthy adult goes to sleep at night but then never wakes up. The medical examiners can find no cause of death? What happened. No one knows, but it happens enough to have earned a name, "sudden death syndrome," and to warrant having the Atlanta Center for Disease Control monitor the incidence of such cases. One population group,

Laotian refugees, has a higher than average mortality from sudden death syndrome. Dr. Joseph Jay Tobin, reporting in the *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry* (July, 1983), presents a case study that leads him to suggest that this phenomenon may be suicide by nightmare.

. The patient was a male refugee from war-torn Laos, who had been recently relocated with his family to their own apartment in an American city. Shortly thereafter, the man complained of difficulty sleeping. He reported nightmares in which something (once a cat, once a dog and once a woman) came to him in his bedroom, sat on his chest and tried to prevent his breathing. Dr. Tobin arranged for a Laotian healer to perform a "spirit cure," which was consistent with the patient's world view. Afterwards, Dr. Tobin investigated further into the patient's background.

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. Examination of the patient's history revealed that he was suffering from "survivor's guilt." This post-traumatic malady, first identified in survivors of the Holocaust, combines depression and paranoia with the nagging feeling, "why was I saved when so many others died?" Dr. Tobin also discovered that among South Asian persons there is the belief in something akin to "voodoo death," called *banqunqut*, or "Oriental nightmare death," in which a person is believed to be killed during sleep by a spirit which squeezes out the breath. Apparently a similar belief was held in Europe during the Middle Ages. At that time, the name, "incubi" was given to the presumed spirit, from the Latin word for nightmare, *incubus*.

. Previous medical research has indicated that heart attacks can be precipitated in dreams and that certain psychosomatic disorders can be dangerously aggravated during the sleep state. Other research focussing on the healing potential of dreams, nevertheless receives indirect support for the physical potency of dreams by the suggestion that they might also be a vehicle of death.

DREAM AFTER SURGERY RESTORES INTEGRITY OF PERSONALITY: Major surgery is a harrowing experience, a trauma to the personality, for the person submits their life, while unconscious under anesthesia, to the operation of other people's hands upon their vital organs. The most critical aspect of the surgery experience--the operation itself--seems beyond the reach of the patient's personality to integrate, as would be needed following any traumatic experience, because of the anesthesia. Patient's occasional reports of "witnessing" their operation, and statements, by psychics such as Edgar Cayce or philosophers such as Alfred North Whitehead, that the mind never sleeps, that it registers everything, would suggest that despite the anesthesia, it should be theoretically possible for the post-operative patient to regain access to the surgery experience so that it could be digested and the recovery made more complete. Dr. Paul W. Pruyser, of the Menninger Foundation, reporting in the Bulletin of the Menninger Clinic (June, 1983) suggests that such an integration of the surgery experience may occur through a dream!

. Dr. Pruyser writes about his experience undergoing emergency, triple coronary bypass surgery and how his recuperation was helped by a dream he had five days after the operation. In his dream, he visits a little-known, secluded part of the hospital grounds, a ruins site from the 19th century,

where he encounters a heavy metal door. The door opens with eerie creak and he enters a dimly lit cave. He finds three strange, two-story, cubical habitats, each with leaky and rusty pipes meant to furnish heat to the inside from a centrally located, old-fashioned wood-burning cook stove that was very dilapidated.

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. When he awoke from this dream, he reports that he felt elated and immensely satisfied, because, in his own words, "my mind had found access to an experience I was not supposed to have undergone at all because of the total anesthesia." He believes, for example, that the creaking of the door was actually the sound of his rib cage when it was opened by the surgeon. He provides background information to develop an interpretation of the details of the dream, which in essence refers to his confrontation with his heart and its clogged arteries and with his ancestral history of coronary deficiency. More generally, he ascribes to his dream an act of restoration of the integrity of his personality--"a guarantee of the continuity of selfhood"--after being threatened by his near brush with death. The ability of dreams to spontaneously provide this otherwise missing ingredient to total recovery deserves further investigation. (Author's address: Menninger Foundation, P.O. Box 829, Topeka, KS 66601).

GROUP DREAMING: What happens when a group of people attempt to dream about the same thing? The December, 1983 issue of *Omni Magazine* reports the work of Henry Reed (DreamNet Sysop) on an intriguing approach to studying the psychic

potential of dreams. A group of dreamers would be gathered together, he would introduce them to a stranger said to be suffering from an undisclosed problem, and ask the group to dream for this person, to see if they could dream up a solution to the person's problem. In the morning the dreams were analyzed, the person's problem was revealed, and the pieces of information from the several dreams were pieced together to develop a solution. Most of the dreams evidenced psychic information in the dreams. Pooling the dreams enhanced the visibility of the psychic effect. Having a good reason for dreaming telepathically seems to increase the probability of psychic material in the dreams. For further reading: "Dreaming for Mary," *Sundance Community Dream Journal*, #3 (See Mail Order Services).

EXPLORING YOUR DREAMS: For a "hands-on" guide to the "New Dreamwork" see the October, 1983 issue of *New Age Journal*. It has a comprehensive special section on what's happening in the world of the new dreamworker. It gives several different approaches to dreamwork, has articles on some of the prominent dreamworkers, as well as general discussion of current developments and controversies.

NEW LUCID DREAM INDUCTION TECHNIQUE: Robert Price and David Cohen, of the University of Texas at Austin, report that they have accidentally discovered a method for inducing lucid dreams. It happened while they were researching the ability of a subject to control, while asleep in the dream state, the sounding of a tone being played in the dream laboratory. A biofeedback setup was used,

such that whenever the sleeping subject entered the dream state, with rapid eye movements (REM), a loud tone would be played. This tone would interrupt sleep, but if the subject could increase the amount of rapid eye movements, he could terminate the tone, and sleep in peace. They found that their research subject could learn this task. Then the subject began to report lucid dreaming, that is being aware in the dream state that he was dreaming, and reported that he tried to move his eyes as a means of signalling to the experimenter. A "communication" system was thus set up between the experimenter and the dreaming subject. The researchers suggest that such a biofeedback situation may be an effective way to learn lucid dreaming. Reported in *Lucidity Letter*, November, 1983 (See Mail Order Services).

TELEPATHIC DREAMS IN COUNSELING: A counselor whose dreams provide psychic information about clients has a powerful addition to his kit of clinical tools. Kenneth Orkin, Ph.D., has written an article entitled, "Telepathic Dreams: Their Application During the Counseling Process," describing his experiences with psychic dreaming about clients. He is in private practice in Miami, Florida. He recounts several types of psychic dreams, including precognitive dreaming about the problems of a client who would be coming for a consultation in the future, with the dream providing information about the source of that person's problem. He also recounts a story about a dream that provided past-life information about a client. His article appeared in the November, 1983 issue of *A.R.E. Journal*. You may write to the author c/o A.R.E., P.O. Box 595, Virginia Beach, VA 23451. ( 572)

# DREAM LIFE & WAKING LIFE: BOTH ARE CREATIONS OF THE PERSON

There is a growing appreciation for the variety of dream phenomena, such as the creativity in dreams and their sometimes transpersonal aspects. Older theories that generally ignored such facts are being replaced by newer ones that attempt to account for such phenomena. Most recently, Gordon Globus, M.D., Professor of Psychiatry and Philosophy at the University of California, Irvine, has taken a stab at integrating such perspectives as psychoanalysis, transpersonal psychology, cognitive science, and phenomenological philosophy in a pleasantly person-able statement of a view of dreams that readers of *Perspective* can live with.

That dreams are a creative experience is one of the main factors that he wishes to explain. The author rejects the notion, in existence before Freud made it law, that dreams are merely rearrangements of past memory experiences. Instead, the author claims that dreams are created "de novo," meaning from scratch. In defending this position, he finds himself arguing that our waking life is also an experience that we create, thus placing his work close at hand to the metaphysical perspective that claims that we "create our own reality." Both realms are created "in the image" (meaning "in the imagination") of the person, in the same way God has been said to create the world. The symmetry between the creative aspect of both dream existence and waking existence, and the "divine" role given to the person, is pleasing both to the ancient Buddhist and modern spiritual metaphysician.

The question is, how does this modern, scientifically grounded theoretician justify such a metaphysical basis to dreams and waking life? He does so by reference to both the leading edge theories of perceptual psychology and certain philosophical traditions. Perceptual psychology has long abandoned the camera analogy to explain how we see things. Plato's concept of the archetype, the transpersonal, non-material "ideas" that govern the actual ideas and things that we experience, has gained new favor in modern thinking about the perceptual process. Instead of theorizing that our perceptual mechanisms "photograph" what is out there, modern work has forced the theory that we already "know" or "suppose" what it is that we are trying to perceive, and then we search and analyze data bits according to their significance and fit to what we are attempting to "perceive." Meaning and intention are more significant to perception, in modern theory, than light waves and photo-sensitivity. In other words, the creative and subjective processes in perception are given more central prominence, and the physics of perception are accorded more the status of tools than primary determinants. Similarly, the philosophy of science has been arguing that facts, as such, do not exist; rather theories--in other words, intentional approaches to creating meaning--are what determine which data bits constitute facts, and determines whether or not the data bits will even be noticed.

Perhaps such philosophical abstractions seem cloudy or irrelevant, but the mechanistic, sensory-based, objective approach to perception (whether in

visual perception or scientific knowing) has been undergoing radical changes. Fans of the transpersonal dimension of life who assume that the eye sees like a camera have an unnecessarily tough time trying to justify as scientific their views on ESP. Realizing how scientific and philosophical views on perception have evolved makes ESP seem more natural than supernatural. Thus the author's work does us a great service. It provides a readable treatise on how one can argue, on the basis of both scientific and philosophical grounds, that dreams, not to mention our lives, are pregnant with meaning (sometimes transpersonal meaning), and deserve our attention.

Source: Dream life, waking life: The human condition through dreams.

Published by the State University of New York Press, 1987. (574)

## HOW TO PROBLEM-SOLVE IN YOUR DREAMS

Source: AMERICAN HEALTH July/August 1987.

Your dreams are "written" in your own private vocabulary; that's why their meaning is often unclear (and why dream books you buy at the corner newsstand won't explain your own visions). Moreover, the language of dreams is sensory and visual, whereas the language of daily life is verbal. You need to translate a dream much as you would a foreign language.

Unfortunately, the same forces that make us disguise problems in our dreams are likely to hinder our recognizing them when we're awake. Even Freud had trouble with self-analysis. So an impartial listener - attained therapist - can help. "It's a collaborative process," says New York psychoanalyst Walter Bonime, author of the classic text, THE CLINICAL USE

OF DREAMS (Da Capo Press, \$29.50)

But that doesn't mean you shouldn't explore your dreams alone or with a partner. People who keep dream journals say that over time, patterns often emerge.

To put your dreams to work solving problems, try this routine:

- o Program yourself to wake up after every REM period. I did it while writing this article simply by telling myself I wanted to at bedtime.

But don't make it a regular habit. "The ability to maintain consciousness during sleep can backfire," says Dr. Neil Kavey, director of the Columbia-Presbyterian sleep lab. "If you can't shut it off, you may have trouble remaining asleep, or you may sleep so poorly that you feel you didn't sleep at all."

- o Put a notebook and pen or tape recorder at your bedside.

- o At bedtime, select a problem and sum it up with a question, such as "Should I take this new job?" Write it down and list possible solutions.

- o Turn off the lights and reflect on these solutions. Stick with it until you drift off to sleep.

- o When you wake up - during the night or in the morning - lie still. To jog your memory, pretend you're a detective interviewing an eyewitness.

What's the last thing you remember? Before that? Going backward can help you more easily reconstruct a dream.

o Write down or tape record all that you remember. Do it before you shower and have breakfast.

o If you have trouble catching dreams, try sleeping late on weekends  
The longest dreams occur in the last part of sleep and many of us cut sleep short on week nights.

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Once you've recorded your dream, how do you decode it? Tell it to yourself in the third person, suggest psychologist Lillie Weiss in *DREAM ANALYSIS IN PSYCHOTHERAPY* (Pergamon Press, \$11.95). This may give you some distance from the dream and help you see the actions more clearly. Then look at the part of the dream that is the most mysterious. "Frequently the most incongruous part provides the dream message," Weiss says.

In her dream-therapy study, Cartwright asks participants to examine and try to change repetitive, troublesome dreams along seven dimensions:

o Time orientation. Do all your dreams take place in the past? Try positioning them in the present or future.

o Competence to affect the outcome. Try finding a positive way to resolve a dream.

o Self-blame. In your dreams, do you hold yourself responsible when things

go wrong? Must you?

o Relation to former role: If your divorced, do you still dream of yourself as married? If you have lost your job, do you still see yourself at work? Consider alternatives.

o Motivation. Do you dream of being nurtured? Can you think of a way to take care of yourself?

o Mood. What would make a dream more pleasant?

o Dream roles: Do you like the part you play in your dreams? What role would you prefer? (576)

## DREAM PRECOGNITION

This following is an excerpt from "Psi Notes", prepared by William Braud, Ph.D., of the Mind Science Foundation in San Antonio, Texas.

Question: What percentage of a person's dreams are precognitive (foretell the future) and how can we recognize the difference between a precognitive dream and an ordinary dream?

Answer: A large proportion of precognitive experiences occur during dreams. One survey indicates that as many as 65 percent of precognitive experiences occurred during sleep. Precognitive dreams also seem to provide more complete and more accurate information than do waking psychic experiences.

. There's no way to know with certainty what percentage of our dreams are precognitive. The content of the majority of our dreams is probably quite mundane, involving replays of experiences of the day, perhaps some wish fulfillment, and maybe even "random" content. But now and then, dreamers do have accurate glimpses of the future as they sleep.

. The only way to know with certainty which dreams are precognitive and which are not is to keep a dream diary of all dreams and check to see which come true and which don't. Some persons are able to associate certain feelings of confidence in connection with psychic dreams - but these are very subtle feelings which are difficult to put into words and which may differ from person to person.

. Let me describe a program of research in which we are more certain about what's going on. This research program was initiated by a New York psychiatrist, Dr. Montague Ullman, as a result of his observation that he and his patients were sharing telepathic dreams in the context of psychotherapy. A dream laboratory was set up at Maimonides Medical Center in Brooklyn. Ullman, along with his associates Stanley Krippner and Charles Honorton, designed experiments in which persons spent the night in the dream lab. They were monitored electro-physiologically in order to detect physiological indications of dreaming - these indications include: an activated EEG, rapid eye movements, and reduced muscle tension. When these indications of dreaming occurred, the sleeper was awakened and asked to describe his dream. These descriptions were tape-recorded and later transcribed. The next day, a target experience was randomly selected and the subject then went through some waking sensory experience. What was discovered was that the sleeper was able to have accurate dreams about

events of which no one was as yet aware at the time of the dream, but which were randomly selected the next day. (577)

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## ONLY DREAMING

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Author - Bill Gorvine

Approximately one-third of our lives are spent while asleep. Consider that for a person who lives for sixty years, twenty years of that lifetime are passed unconsciously. Moreover, it is no mistake that enlightenment and other exalted states of consciousness are described as one who has overcome the sleep of ignorance.

Tibetan Buddhism has long acknowledged that the night, like any other time, is important for practice. The state of sleep and dream is considered a bardo or intermediate state in some Buddhist systems and is a very good training ground for those who would approach the bardo at the end of their life with confidence. Similar to the bardo of the afterlife, the dream period is a looser, less concrete extrapolation of our waking reality, with greater possibilities of all kinds. On the one hand, it is very easy to resemble an animal or a corpse when asleep - this is essentially our condition when we remain devoid of clear awareness and passively experience all kinds of karmic dreams. On the other hand, as Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche has explained, the dream state can also serve as a marvelous opportunity to accomplish the goals of our practice which

would ordinarily seem beyond our capabilities.

As Rinpoche elucidated during the Dream Yoga workshop (Feb. 19-20, 1994 here in Charlottesville), each of our dreams is said to be connected with one of the disturbing emotions (hatred, attachment, delusion, jealousy, pride, or, in some cases, a combination) and originates from a corresponding energy center in our body. A dream manifests when the mind travels to one of these cakras during sleep and activates a karmic latency. (e.g. sexual center corresponds with desire, heart center with jealousy/emotional relations with others, etc.)

Rinpoche discussed two general methods for working with karmic dreams, both of which require the practitioner to become lucid in the dream (to understand that the dream is a dream). While this is obviously difficult, there are things to do during the day and surrounding the periods of sleep that are designed to facilitate lucid dreaming. These involve practices such as reminding one self many times during the day that this is a dream, setting a firm intention to become lucid just before sleeping, and invoking the lama, yidam, and dakini for help. One should also not become discouraged if one finds in the morning that not much happened; instead, one should resolve to continue the training. There is also a visualization of seed syllables, which correspond to the cakras, that one endeavors to do at certain points during the night; one's sleeping posture is also important to the practice.

Once one is lucid within the dream, the two methods involve either remaining in the presence of awareness, thus leaving things 'as they are' to 'self-liberate' (a Dzogchen approach), or else one recognizes the

dream and, realizing one's power to control the manifestations, one begins transforming things (a tantric approach). In the second method, which is easier for a beginner, one can perform all kinds of unusual activities, such as multiply objects or one's own form, fly, or communicate with our teachers or individuals from the past.

Either of these methods can help us to see our waking life in a less concretized fashion, thereby overcoming fears while generating insight into what in Dzogchen is called energy and manifestation. On a more conventional level, it is also possible to purify karmic potentialities in the dream state before they fully manifest. One can also develop and increase 'dreams of clarity' which help us (and others) on the path to enlightenment. As Rinpoche emphasized, enlightenment is the true purpose for working with dreams or any other practice in Buddhism.

## PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS OF THE CHAOSSPHERE

by Fra.: Neonfaust

The Chaosphere is the prime working tool of Chaos magicians and the Magical Pact of the Illuminates of Thanateros (IOT). The physical Chaosphere has a vast range of applications of which a few shall be briefly delineated here:

Meditation employing the Chaosphere:

- 1, The Chaosphere is a symbol of the primeval Big Bang, it maybe considered as a "frozen explosion" or even as "frozen information".

Regard the Chaosphere in a relaxed state, using the 180° stare if you prefer. After a while shut your eyes and meditate on the creative powers of Chaos. Chaos is not disorder let alone entropy but rather the sum total of all possibilities incumbent in existence and the unmanifest as a whole. In this manner you will open the doors to the magickal multiversum for yourself.

2, Proceed as described above simultaneously meditating on Nietzsches Zarathustra admonition:

"I say unto you: a man must have chaos yet within him to be able to give birth to a dancing star. I say unto you: ye have chaos yet within you."

You can have this statement read aloud to you by a partner or friend during your meditation (or use a cassette recording). Experience shows that this will greatly enhance the effect described above under item number 1.

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Sigil charging employing the Chaosphere:

In lieu of other charging techniques you can project the magickal sigil activation into the Chaosphere; banishing (preferably by laughter) should follow immediately. Afterwards aim to forget the whole magickal operation as thoroughly as possible to avoid interference with the sigil's operation by the unwanted rise of

consciousness of said operation/sigil and resultant inhibiting psychic sensor activity.

Drawing energy employing the Chaosphere:

To be performed preferably after a meditation with the Chaosphere (see above); regard the Chaosphere in a very intensive manner for a while and stretch your palms in its direction. Now close your eyes fully or halfway and suck in the powers of Chaos through your palms while inhaling; exhaling, distribute the energies all over your body or store them in the Hara centre (appr. three fingers` width below the navel). You will probably experience these energies as a warm or cool current, possibly as a slightly tingling sensation.

Telepathy employing the Chaosphere:

During a partner experiment participants concentrate on the Chaosphere (can also be performed with different participants working on different locations); observe in a very relaxed state messages, information and/or images rising from the unconscious. Advanced magicians will find that this experiment can be performed successfully via great distances even without participants practising simultaneously. For Chaos (= pure information) is not restricted by space and time.

Astral projection and lucid dreaming employing the Chaosphere:

1, Using the 180\* stare regard the Chaosphere until you ex-

perience a strong suction emerging from the sphere and pulling at your "psychic entrails". This can frequently even be felt as a strong physical sensation. Give way to this suction and let your astral body emerge gradually. In the beginning this should be practised partially, ie. the astral body portion extracted increasing with every subsequent attempt. Thus, you may for example only project half an arm the first time, the full at the next go etc. Finally the astral body should emerge totally. Be aware that astral projection may demand weeks` or months` dedicated practice to succeed, depending on personal talent and inhibitions. Incidentally, the same technique may be used to extract the magickal doppelganger, personal daemons etc.

2, Immediately before dropping off to sleep visualize the Chaosphere as accurately as possible and continue as described above. This will induce either stronger astral projection or lucid dreaming or both. This has proved to be an extremely powerful exercise, but it is strongly suggested that you attempt it only after having acquired a thorough working knowledge with the variaant described above under item 1. (If you start off with mental working chances are that you will very soon become severely sloppy without even being aware of the fact; this may in turn inhibit control of magickal powers and could lead to obsession.) You may also want to wake yourself up at 4 a.m. and give this exercise a try for a few minutes before dropping off to sleep again. Take care to note your dreams next thing in the morning, do not - repeat: DO NOT! - rely on your memory alone.

Activating psychogones/chaoservitors employing the Chaosphere:

Use the Chaosphere as a "base camp" and "home" for psychogones/-chaoservitors and/or as a form of "launching pad". In case of the former the Chaosphere presents itself as a high class power receptacle and storage battery from which you can extract your psychogones/chaoservitors into the Chaosphere as you would with sigils to be activated; thus, the Chaosphere will become a gate to the Sphere of Chaos for your magickal entities in which (and from which) they will become active in accord with your bidding.

Charging magical objects employing Chaosphere:

Magical objects such as talismans, amulets, fetishes etc. can be charged with the aid of the Chaosphere by fastening them to the sphere or its tip during a ritual, placing them under it etc. while directing the energies of Chaos into the objects in question.

Combat magic training employing the Chaosphere:

During combat magical training the Chaosphere is particularly suited as a power storage battery out of which the magician draws Magis or Mana. It is furthermore used as a combat target while practising the kiai or other battle cries and martial arts Chi techniques. In the same manner, magickal energy bolts, curses, words of powers and strong affections are hurled emphatically into the Chaosphere where they may be stored for further use.

### Charging the Chaosphere:

Experience has shown that the Chaosphere does not demand a special charging by ritual etc. Rather, the charging takes place alone by its practical application. Should you desire to incorporate magickal "condensator" fluids or solids (eg. as used for charging magickal mirrors) this can easily be achieved by unscrewing the tips and replacing them after filling in the condensator. (1396)

## LUNAR INFLUENCES

The superficies of the earth being twice seven times that of the moon, what an influence the earth must exercise over its satellite! We may be unable to describe this influence in all of its effects; but we may observe its existence in some of its apparent signs. The moon not only turns while we turn, but its rotations on its axis keep exact time with its revolutions round our globe; it accompanies us as we encircle the sun, facing us all the while, never turning its back upon us; it waits on us like a link-bearer, or lackey; is our admiring Boswell, living and moving and having its being in the equability it derives from attending its illustrious master. An African sage

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once illustrated this philosophical principle of the greater controlling the less, by the following fine conundrum. "Why does the dog waggle his tail?" This problem, being beyond his auditors, was given up. The sage made answer, "Because the dog is bigger than the tail; else the tail would waggle the dog." It is alarming to contemplate the effect which the moon might have upon our august earth, if it were fourteen times larger instead of fourteen times smaller in extent of surface. As it is, Luna's influences are so many and so mighty, that we will require considerable space merely to set them in order, and to substantiate them with a

few facts. We believe that most, if not all, of them, are the offspring of superstition; but we shall none the less find them in every land, in every age. In the nineteenth century as well as in the dark ages, in London as well as in the ends of the earth, men of all colours and clans are found turning their faces heavenward to read their duty and destiny in the oracular face of the moon. Many consult their almanacks more than their Bibles, and follow the lunar phases as their sole interpretation of the will of God.

Among those who worship the moon as a personal deity, whether beneficent or malign, its influences are of course welcomed or dreaded as the manifestations of supreme power. In South America, for example, "the Botocudos are said to give the highest rank among the heavenly bodies to Taru, the moon, as causing thunder and lightning and the failure of

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vegetables and fruits, and as even sometimes falling to the earth, whereby many men die." [321](#) So, in Africa, the emotions of the worshippers vary with their subjective views of their god. "Negro tribes seem almost universally to greet the new moon, whether in delight or disgust. The Guinea people fling themselves about with droll gestures, and pretend to throw firebrands at it; the Ashango men behold it with superstitious fear; the Fetu negroes jumped thrice into the air with hands together and gave thanks." [322](#) But even amongst men who neither personify nor deify the moon, its dominion over the air, earth, and sea, over human health and happiness, is held to be so all-important, that if the Maker and Monarch of all were jealous, as men count jealousy, such lunar fears and affections would be unpardonable sin.

Let us proceed to particulars, rising from inorganic nature to beings endowed with the highest instruments of life. Even the mineral kingdom is supposed to be swayed by the moon; for in Scotland, Martin says, "The natives told me, that the rock on the east side of Harries, in the Sound of Island Glass, hath a vacuity near the front, on the north-west side of the Sound; in which they say there is a stone that they call the *Lunar Stone*, which advances and retires according to the increase and decrease of the moon." [323](#) An ancient instance of belief in lunar influence upon inanimate matter is cited by Plutarch. "*Euthydemus* of *Sunium* feasted us upon a time at his house, and

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set before us a wilde bore, of such bignesse, that all wee at the table wondred thereat; but he told us that there was another brought unto him farre greater; mary naught it was, and corrupted in the carriage, by the beames of the moone-shine; whereof he made great doubt and question, how it should come to passe; for that he could not conceive, nor see any reason, but that the sunne should rather corrupt flesh, being as it was, farre hotter than the moone." [324](#) Pliny said that the moon corrupted carcasses of animals exposed to its malefic rays. As with the lifeless, so with the living. "The inhabitants of St. Kilda observe that when the April moon goes far in May, the fowls are ten or twelve days later in laying their eggs than ordinarily they use to be." [325](#) The influence of the moon upon vegetation is an opinion hoary with age. In the *Zend-Avesta* we read, "And when the light of the moon waxes warmer, golden-hued plants grow on from the earth during the spring." [326](#) An old English author writes:--

"Sowe peason and beanes, in the wane of the moone,  
Who soweth them sooner, he soweth too soone

That they with the planet may rest and arise,  
And flourish, with bearing most plentiful wise." [327](#)

Cucumbers, radishes, turnips, leeks, lilies, horseradish, saffron, and other plants, are said to increase during the fulness of the moon; but onions, on the contrary, are much larger and are better nourished during the decline. [328](#) To recur to Plutarch is to find

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him saying: "The moone showeth her power most evidently even in those bodies, which have neither sense nor lively breath; for carpenters reject the timber of trees fallen in the ful-moone, as being soft and tender, subject also to the worme and putrifaction, and that quickly, by reason of excessive moisture; husbandmen, likewise, make haste to gather up their wheat and other grain from the threshing-floore, in the wane of the moone, and toward the end of the month, that being hardened thus with drinesse, the heape in the garner may keepe the better from being fustie, and continue the longer; whereas corne which is inned and laied up at the full of the moone, by reason of the softnesse and over-much moisture, of all other, doth most cracke and burst. It is commonly said also, that if a leaven be laied in the ful-moone, the paste will rise and take leaven better." [329](#) Still in Cornwall the people gather all their medicinal plants when the moon is of a certain age; which practice is very probably a relic of druidical superstition. "In some parts it is a prevalent belief that the growth of mushrooms is influenced by the changes of the moon, and in Essex the subjoined rule is often scrupulously adhered to:--

"When the moon is at the full,  
Mushrooms you may freely pull  
But when the moon is on the wane,  
Wait ere you think to pluck again." [330](#)

Henderson says, "I may, perhaps, mention here, that apples are said to 'shrump up' in Devonshire if

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picked when the moon is waning." [331](#) A writer of miscellaneous literature tells us that "it has been demonstrated that moonlight has the power, *per se*, of awakening the sensitive plant, and consequently that it possesses an influence of some kind on vegetation. It is true that the influence is very feeble, compared with that of the sun; but the action is established, and the question remains, what is the practical value of the fact? 'It will immediately,' says Professor Lindley, 'occur to the reader that possibly the screens which are drawn down over hothouses at night, to prevent loss of heat by radiation, may produce some unappreciated injury by cutting off the rays of the moon, which nature intended to fall upon plants as much as the rays of the sun.'" [332](#) The same author says elsewhere, "Columella, Cato, Vitruvius, and Pliny, all had their notions of the advantages of cutting timber at certain ages of the moon; a piece of mummery which is still preserved in the royal ordonnances of France to the conservators of the forests, who are directed to fell oaks only 'in the wane of the moon' and 'when the wind is at north.'" [333](#) Of trees, astrologers affirm that the moon rules the palm tree (which the ancients say "sends forth a twig every time the moon rises") and all plants, trees, and herbs that are juicy and full of sap. [334](#)

"A description of the New Netherlands, written about 1650, remarks that the savages of that land 'ascribe great influence to the moon over crops.' This venerable superstition, common to all races, still

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lingers among our own farmers, many of whom continue to observe 'the signs of the moon ' in sowing grain, setting out trees, cutting timber, and other rural avocations." [335](#) What is here said of the new world applies also to the old; for in England a current expression in Huntingdonshire is "a dark Christmas sends a fine harvest": dark meaning moonless.

Of the lunar influence upon the tides, old John Lilly writes: "There is nothing thought more admirable, or commendable in the sea, than the ebbing and flowing; and shall the moone, from whom the sea taketh this virtue, be accounted fickle for encreasing and decreasing?" [336](#) Another writer of the sixteenth century says, "The moone is founde, by plaine experience, to beare her greatest stroke uppon the seas, likewise in all things that are moiste, and by consequence in the braines of man." [337](#) Dennys tells us that "the influence exerted by the moon on tides is recognised by the Chinese." [338](#) What some record in prose, others repeat in rhyme. The following is *one* kind of poetry.

"Moone changed, keepes closet, three daies as a Queene,  
Er she in hir prime, will of any be scene :  
If great she appereth, it showreth out,  
If small she appereth, it signifieth drou.  
At change or at full, come it late, or else soone,  
Maine sea is at highest, at midnight and noone,  
But yet in the creekes, it is later high flood:  
Through farnesse of running, by reason as good." [339](#)

Indirectly, through the influence upon the tides, the moon is concerned in human mortality.

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"Tyde flowing is feared, for many a thing,  
Great danger to such as be sick it doth bring.  
Sea eb, by long ebbing, some respite doth give,  
And sendeth good comfort, to such as shal live." [340](#)

Henderson says, "It is a common belief along the east coast of England, from Northumberland to Kent, that deaths mostly occur during the falling of the tide." [341](#) Every reader of the inimitable Dickens will be reminded here of the death of poor old Barkis.

"'He's a-going out with the tide,' said Mr. Peggotty to me, behind his hand.

"My eyes were dim, and so were Mr. Peggotty's; but I repeated in a whisper, 'With the tide?'

"'People can't die, along the coast,' said Mr. Peggotty, 'except when the tide's pretty nigh out. They can't be born, unless it's pretty nigh in-not properly born, till flood. He's a-going out with the tide. It's ebb at half-arter three, slack water half an hour. If he lives till it turns, he'll hold his own till past the flood, and go out with the next tide.'

"'He's coming to himself,' said Peggotty.

"Mr. Peggotty touched me, and whispered with much awe and reverence, 'They are both a-going out fast.'

"He now opened his eyes.

"I was on the point of asking him if he knew me, when he tried to stretch out his arm, and said to me distinctly, with a pleasant smile,--

""Barkis is willin'!"

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"And, it being low water, he went out with the tide." [342](#)

That the rise and fall of our tides twice a day, with spring and neap tides twice in the lunar month, are the effect of the combined action of the sun and moon, is never called in question. The water under the moon is drawn up from the earth, and the earth is drawn from the water on the opposite side, the consequence of which is two high tides in the two hemispheres at the same hour. The rotation of the earth bringing the same point of the ocean twice under the moon's meridian, once under the upper meridian and once under the lower, each hemisphere has two high tides in the course of the day. The spring tide is caused by the attractive force of the sun and moon acting in conjunction, or in a straight line; and the neap tide is caused by the moon being in quadrature, or when the sun and moon are at right angles to each other. They counteract each other's influence, and our tides are therefore low. So much is science; but the connection of ebb and flow with life and death is superstition.

From a very remote antiquity, in the twilight of natural astrology, a belief arose that changes in the weather were occasioned by the moon. [343](#) That the notion lives on, and will not soon die, is clear to any one who is conversant with current literature and common folk-lore. Even intelligent, well-informed people lend it countenance. Professor Newcomb, of Washington, rightly says: "Thus far there is no

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evidence that the moon directly affects the earth or its inhabitants in any other way than by her attraction, which is so minute as to be entirely insensible except in the ways we have described. A striking illustration of the fallibility of the human judgment when not disciplined by scientific training is afforded by the opinions which have at various times obtained currency respecting a supposed influence of the moon on the weather. Neither in the reason of the case nor in observations do we find any real support for such a theory. It must, however, be admitted that opinions of this character are not confined to the uneducated." [344](#) Mr. Edward B. Tylor holds similar language: "The notion that the weather changes with the moon's quarterings is still held with great vigour in England. That educated people to whom exact weather records are accessible should still find satisfaction in the fanciful lunar rule, is an interesting case of intellectual survival." [345](#) No marvel that the "heathen Chinees" considers lunar observations as forecasting scarcity of provisions he is but of the same blood with his British brother, who takes his tea and sends him opium. "The Hakkas (and also many Puntis) believe that if in the night of the fifteenth day of the eighth month (mid autumn) there are clouds obscuring the moon before midnight, it is a sign that oil and salt will become very dear. If, however, there are clouds obscuring the moon after midnight, the price of rice will, it is supposed, undergo a similar change." [346](#)

One of our provincial proverbs is: "So many days old the moon is on Michaelmas Day, so many floods after." Sometimes a proverb is a short saying spoken after long experience; at other times it is a small crystal left after a lengthy evaporation. In certain instances our rural apothegms are sacred relics of extinct but canonized fictions. An equally wise prediction is that if Christmas comes during a waxing moon we shall have a very good year; and the nearer to the new moon, the better. But if during a waning moon, a hard year; and the nearer the end of the moon, so much the worse. Another sage belief is that the condition of the weather is dependent upon the day of the week upon which the new moon chances to fall. We are told that "Dr. Forster, of Bruges, well known as a meteorologist, declares that by the *Journal* kept by his grandfather, father, and self, ever since 1767, to the present time, whenever the new moon has fallen on a *Saturday*, the following *twenty days* have been wet and windy, in nineteen cases out of twenty." [347](#) In Italy it is said, "If the moon change on a Sunday, there will be a flood before the month is out." New moon on Monday, or moon-day, is, of course, everywhere held a sign of good weather and luck.

That a misty moon is a misfortune to the atmosphere is widely supposed. In Scotland it is an agricultural maxim among the canny farmers that--

"If the moon shows like a silver shield,  
You need not be afraid to reap your field [p. 186](#)  
But if she rises haloed round,  
Soon we'll tread on deluged ground." [348](#)

Others say that a mist is unfavourable only with the new moon, not with the old.

"An old moon in a mist  
Is worth gold in a kist (chest)  
But a new moon's mist  
Will never lack thirst," [349](#)

is a rugged rhyme found in several places. In Cornwall the idea is that--

"A fog and a small moon  
Bring an easterly wind soon."

The east wind, as we know, is dry. Two of the Shepherd of Banbury's rules are:

- xii. If mists in the new moon, rain in the old.
- xiii. If mists in the old, rain in the new moon." [350](#)

One thing is a meteorological certainty: the full moon very frequently clears the sky. But this may be partly accounted for by the fact that a full moon shows the night to be clear, which in the moon's absence might be called cloudy.

Another observation shows that in proportion to the clearness of the night is its cold. The clouds covering the earth with no thick blanket, it radiates its heat into space. This has given rise to the notion that the moon itself reduces our temperature. It is *cold* at night without doubt. But the cold moon is so warm when the sun is shining full on its disk

that no creature on earth could endure a moment's contact with its surface. The centre of the "pale-faced moon" is hotter than boiling water. This thought may cheer us when "the cold round moon shines deeply down." We may be pardoned if we take with a tincture of scepticism the following statement "Native Chinese records aver that on the 18th day of the 6th moon, 1590, snow fell one summer night from the midst of the moon. The flakes were like fine willow flowers on shreds of silk." [351](#) Instead of cold, it is more likely that the white moon gives us heat, for from Melloni's letter to Arago it seems to be already an ascertained fact. Having concentrated the lunar rays with a lens of over three feet diameter upon his thermoscopic pile, Melloni found that the needle had deviated from  $0^{\circ} 6'$  to  $4^{\circ} 8'$ , according to the lunar phase. Other thermoscopes may give even larger indications; but meanwhile the Italian physicist has exploded an error with a spark of science.

"Another weather guide connected with the moon is, that to see 'the old moon in the arms of the new one' is reckoned a sign of fine weather; and so is the turning up of the horns of the new moon. In this position it is supposed to retain the water, which is imagined to be in it, and which would run out if the horns were turned down." [352](#) On this novel idea of a lunar bason or saucer, Southey writes from "Keswick, December 29th, 1828," as follows:--"Poor Littledale has this day explained

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the cause of our late rains, which have prevailed for the last six weeks, by a theory which will probably be as new to you as it is to me. 'I have observed,' he says, 'that, when the moon is turned upward, we have fine weather after it; but if it is turned down, then we have a wet season; and the reason I think is, that when it is turned down, it holds no water, like a bason, you know, and then down it all comes.' There, it will be a long while before the march of intellect shall produce a theory as original as this, which I find, upon inquiry, to be the popular opinion here." [353](#) George Eliot has taken notice of this fancy in the burial of "poor old Thias Bede." "They'll ha' putten Thias Bede i' the ground afore ye get to the churchyard," said old Martin, as his son came up. "It 'ud ha' been better luck if they'd ha' buried him i' the forenoon when the rain was fallin'; there's no likelihoods of a drop now, an' the moon lies like a boat there, dost see? That's a sure sign o' fair weather; there's a many as is false, but that's sure." [354](#)

In Dekker's *Match Me in London*, Act i., the King says, "My Lord, doe you see this change in the moone? Sharp hornes doe threaten windy weather."

In the famous ballad of Sir Patrick Spens, concerning whose origin there has been so much discussion, without eliciting any very accurate information, we read:

"O ever alack! my master dear,  
I fear a deadly storm. [p. 189](#)  
I saw the new moon late yestreen,  
Wi' the auld moon in her arm  
And if ye gang to sea, maister,  
I fear we'll suffer harm." [355](#)

Jamieson informs us that "prognostications concerning the weather, during the course of the month, are generally formed by the country people in Scotland from the appearance of the *new moon*. It is considered as an almost infallible presage of bad weather, if she *lies sair on her back*, or when her horns are pointed towards the zenith. It is a similar prognostic, when

the new moon appears *wi' the auld moon in her arm*, or, in other words, when that part of the moon which is covered with the shadow of the earth is seen through it." [356](#) The last sentence is a *lapsus calami*. Dr. Jamieson should have said, when that part of the moon which is turned from the sun is dimly visible through the reflected light of the earth.

"At Whitby, when the moon is surrounded by a halo with watery clouds, the seamen say that there will be a change of weather, for the 'moon dogs' are about." [357](#) At Ulceby, in Lincolnshire, "there is a very prevalent belief amongst sailors and seafaring men that when a large star or planet is seen near the moon, or, as they express it, 'a big star is dogging the moon,' that this is a certain prognostication of wild weather. I have met old sailors having the strongest faith in this prediction, and who have told me that they have verified it by a long course of observation." [358](#)

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"Some years ago," says a writer from Torquay, "an old fisherman of this place told me, on the morning next after a violent gale, that he had foreseen the storm for some time, as he had observed one star ahead of the moon, towing her, and another astern, chasing her. 'I know'd 'twas coming, safe enough.'" [359](#) The moon was simply in apparent proximity to two stars; but the old Devonian descried mischief.

The following incident from Zulu life will be of interest. "1878. A curious phenomenon occurred 7th January. A bright star appeared near the moon at noonday, the sun shining brightly. *Omen*--The natives from this foretold the coming war with the Amazulu. Intense heat and drought prevailed at this time." [360](#)

Hitherto we have reviewed only the imaginary influences of the moon over inanimate nature and what are called irrational beings. We have seen that this potent orb is supposed to affect the lightning and thunder of the air; the rocks and seas, the vegetables and animals of the earth; and generally to govern terrestrial matters in a manner altogether its own. Furthermore, we have found these imaginations rooted in all lands, and among men whose culture might have been expected to refuse such fruitless excrescences. When classical authors counsel us to set eggs under the hen at new moon, and to root up trees only when the moon is waning and after mid-day; and when "the wisest, brightest," if

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not the "meanest of mankind" seriously attributes to the moon the extraction of heat, the furtherance of putrefication, the increase of moisture, and the excitement of animal spirits, with the increase of hedges and herbs if cut or set during certain phases of that body, we can but repeat to ourselves the saying, "The best of men are but men at the best." The half, however, has not been told; and we must now pass on to speak of lunar influences upon the birth, health, intellect, and fortune of microcosmical man.

In the system of astrology, which professed to interpret the events of human existence by the movements of the stars, the moon was one of the primary planets. As man was looked upon in the light of a microcosm, or world in miniature, so the several parts of his constitution were viewed as but a reproduction in brief of the great parts of the vast organism. Creation was a living, intelligent being, whose two eyes were the sun and the moon, whose body was the earth, whose intellect was the ether, whose wings were the heavens. Man was an epitome of all this; and as the functions of the less were held to correspond with the functions of the

greater, the microcosm with the macrocosm, man's movements could be inferred by first ascertaining the motions of the universe. The moon, having dominion in the twelve "houses" of heaven, through which she passed in the course of the year, her *aspects* to the other bodies were considered as of prime significance, in indicating benignant or malignant influences upon

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human life. This system, which was based upon ignorance and superstition, and upheld by arbitrary rules and unreasoning credulity, is so repugnant to all principles of science and common sense, that it would be unworthy of notice, if we did not know that to this day there are educated persons still to be seen poring over old almanacs and peering into the darkness of divination, to read their own fortune or that of their children by the dim light of some lucky or unlucky configuration of the planets with the moon. The wheel of fortune yet revolves, and the despotism of astrology is not dead. The lunar influence is considered supreme in the hour of birth. Nay, with some the moon is potential even before birth. In Iceland it is said: "If a pregnant woman sit with her face turned towards the moon, her child will be a lunatic." [361](#) And this imagination obtains at home as well as abroad. We are told that "astrologers ascribe the most powerful influence to the moon on every person, both for success and health, according to her zodiacal and mundane position at birth, and her aspects to other planets. The sensual faculties depend almost entirely on the moon, and as she is aspected so are the moral or immoral tendencies. She has great influence always upon every person's constitution." [362](#) This is the doctrine of a book published not thirty years ago. Another work, issued also in London, says, "Cynthia, 'the queen of heaven,' as the ancients termed her, or the MOON, the companion of the earth, and chief source

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of our evening light, is a cold, moist, watery, phlegmatic planet, variable to an extreme, in astrological science; and partaking of good or evil, as she is aspected by good or evil stars. When angular and unafflicted in a nativity, she is the promissory pledge of great success in life and continual good fortune. She produces a full stature, fair, pale complexion, round face, gray eyes, short arms, thick hands and feet, smooth, corpulent, and phlegmatic body. Blemishes in the eyes, or a peculiar weakness in the sight, is the result of her being afflicted by the Sun. Her conjunction, semi-sextile, sextile, or trine, to Jupiter, is exceeding fortunate; and she is said by the old Astrologers to govern the *brain, stomach, bowels, left eye* of the male, and *right eye* of the female. Her usual diseases are rheumatism, consumption, palsy, cholic, apoplexy, vertigo, lunacy, scrophula, smallpox, dropsy, etc.; also most diseases peculiar to young children." [363](#) Such teaching is not a whit in advance of Plutarch's odd dictum that the moon has a "special hand in the birth of children."

If this belief have disciples in London, it is not by any means confined to that city. In Sweden great influence is ascribed to the moon, not only in regulating the weather, but as affecting all the affairs of man's daily life. The lower orders, and many of the better sort, will not fell a tree for agricultural purposes in the wane of that orb, lest it should shrink and decay; nor will the housewife then slaughter for her family, lest the meat should shrivel

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and melt away in the pot. The moon is the domestic deity, whom the household must fear: the Fortuna who presides over the daily doings of sublunary mortals. In the matter of birth, we

find Francis Bacon affirming that "the calculation of nativities, fortunes, good or bad hours of business, and the like fatalities, are mere levities that have little in them of certainty and solidity, and may be plainly confuted by physical reasons"; [364](#) and yet in his Natural History he writes: "It may be that children and young cattle that are brought forth in the full of the moon, are stronger and larger than those that are brought forth in the wane." [365](#) There surely can be no superstition in studying the moon's conjunctions and oppositions if her influence in a nativity have the slightest weight. And this influence is still widely maintained by philosophers who read Bacon, as well as by the peasants who read nothing at all. "In Cornwall, when a child is born in the interval between an old moon and the first appearance of a new one, it is said that it will never live to reach the age of puberty. Hence the saying, 'no moon, no man.' In the same county, too, when a boy is born in the wane of the moon, it is believed that the next birth will be a girl, and vice versa; and it is also commonly said that when a birth takes place on the 'growing of the moon' the next child will be of the same sex." [366](#)

As a natural proceeding, we find that the moon has influence when the child is weaned.  
Caledonian

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mothers very carefully observe the lunar phases on this account. Jamieson tells us that "this superstition, with respect to the fatal influence of a waning moon, seems to have been general in Scotland. In Angus, it is believed, that, if a child be put from the breast during the waning of the moon, it will decay all the time that the moon continues to wane." [367](#) So in the heart of Europe, "the Lithuanian precept to wean boys at a waxing, but girls on a waning moon, no doubt to make the boys sturdy and the girls slim and delicate, is a fair match for the Orkney Islanders' objection to marrying except with a growing moon, while some even wish for a flowing tide." [368](#) As to marriage, the ancient Greeks considered the day of the full moon the most propitious period for that ceremony. In Euripides, Clytemnestra having asked Agamemnon when he intended to give Iphigenia in marriage to Achilles, he replies, "When the full moon comes forth with good luck." In Pindar, too, this season is preferred. [369](#)

Lunar influences over physical health and disease must be a fearful contemplation to those who are of a superstitious turn. There is no malady within the whole realm of pathology which the moon's destroying angel cannot inflict; and from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot the entire man is at the mercy of her beams. We have all seen those disgusting woodcuts to which the following just condemnation refers: "The moon's influence on parts of the human body, as given in some old-fashioned

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almanacs, is an entire *fallacy*; it is most untrue and absurd, often indecent, and is a discredit to the age we live in." [370](#) Most of these inartistic productions are framed upon the assumption of the old alchemists that the physiological functions were regulated by planetary influence. The sun controlled the heart, the moon the brain, Jupiter the lungs, Saturn the spleen, Mars the liver, Venus the kidneys, and Mercury the reproductive powers. But even with this distribution among the heavenly bodies the moon was allowed plenipotentiary sway. As in mythology it is the god or goddess of water, so in astrology it is the embodiment of moisture, and therefore rules the humours which circulate throughout the human system. No wonder that phlebotomy prevailed so long as the reign of the moon endured. "This lunar planet," says La Martinière, "is damp of itself, but, by the radiation of the sun, is of various temperaments,

as follows: in its first quadrant it is warm and damp, at which time it is good to let the blood of sanguine persons; in its second it is warm and dry, at which time it is good to bleed the choleric; in its third quadrant it is cold and moist, and phlegmatic people may be bled; and in its fourth it is cold and dry, at which time it is well to bleed the melancholic." Whatever the moon's phase may be, let blood be shed! We are reminded here of that sanguifluous theology, which even Christians of a certain temperament seem to enjoy, while they sing of fountains filled with blood: as though

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a God of love could take delight in the effusion of precious life. La Martinière continues, and physicians will make a note of his words: " It is a thing quite necessary to those who meddle with medicine to understand the movement of this planet, in order to discern the causes of sickness. And as the moon is often in conjunction with Saturn, many attribute to it apoplexy, paralysis, epilepsy, jaundice, hydropsy, lethargy, catapory, catalepsy, colds, convulsions, trembling of the limbs, etc., etc. I have noticed that this planet has such enormous power over living creatures, that children born at the first quarter of the declining moon are more subject to illness, so that children born when there is no moon, if they live, are weak, delicate, and sickly, or are of little mind or idiots. Those who are born under the house of the moon which is Cancer, are of a phlegmatic disposition." [371](#)

That the ancient Hebrews, Greeks, and Romans believed in the deleterious influence of the moon on the health of man, is very evident. The Talmud refers the words, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death" (Ps. xxiii. 4) "to him who sleeps in the shadow of the moon." [372](#) Another Psalm (cxxi. 6) reads, literally, "By day the sun shall not smite thee, and the moon in the night." In the Greek Testament we find further proof of this belief. Among those who thronged the Great Teacher (Matt. iv. 24) were the *σεληνιαζομένοι* (*lunatici*, Beza; *i lunatici*, Diodati; *les lunatiques*, French version; "those who were lunatick"). The Revised Version of 1881 reads

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epileptic," but that is a comment, not a translation. So again (Matt. xvii. 15) we read of a boy who was "lunatick"--*σεληνιαζεται*. On which Archbishop Trench remarks, "Of course the word originally, like *μανία* (from *μήνη*) and *lunaticus*, arose from the widespread belief of the evil influence of the moon on the human frame." [373](#) Jerome attributes all this superstition to *dæmons*, of which men were the dupes. "The *lunatics*," he says, "were not really smitten by the moon, but were believed to be so, through the subtlety of the *dæmons*, who by observing the seasons of the moon sought to bring an evil report against the creature, that it might redound to the blasphemy of the Creator." [374](#) Demons or no demons, faith in moonstroke is clear enough. Pliny was of opinion that the moon induced drowsiness and stupor in those who slept under her beams. Galen, in the second century, taught that those who were born when the moon was falciform, or sickle-shaped, were weak and short-lived, while those born during the full moon were vigorous and of long life. He also took notice of the lunar influence in epilepsy [375](#) of which fearful malady a modern physician writes, "This disease has been known from the earliest antiquity, and is remarkable as being that malady which, even beyond insanity, was made the foundation of the doctrine of possession by evil spirits, alike in the Jewish, Grecian, and Roman philosophy." [376](#) The terrible disorder was a fact; and evil spirits or the moon had to bear the blame.

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In modern times the moon is no less the deity of insalubrious disaster. Of Mexico, Brinton says: "Very different is another aspect of the moon-goddess, and well might the Mexicans paint her with two colours. The beneficent dispenser of harvests and offspring, she nevertheless has a portentous and terrific phase. She is also the goddess of the night, the dampness, and the cold; she engenders the miasmatic poisons that rack our bones; she conceals in her mantle the foe who takes us unawares; she rules those vague shapes which fright us in the dim light; the causeless sounds of night or its more oppressive silence are familiar to her; she it is who sends dreams wherein gods and devils have their sport with man, and slumber, the twin brother of the grave." [377](#) So farther south, "the Brazilian mother carefully shielded her infant from the lunar rays, believing that they would produce sickness; the hunting tribes of our own country will not sleep in its light, nor leave their game exposed to its action. We ourselves have not outgrown such words as lunatic, moon-struck, and the like. Where did we get these ideas? The philosophical historian of medicine, Kurt Sprengel, traces them to the primitive and popular medical theories of ancient Egypt, in accordance with which all maladies were the effects of the anger of the goddess Isis, the moisture, the moon." [378](#) Perhaps Dr. Brinton's own Mexican myth is a better elucidation of this origin of nocturnal evil than that which traces it to Egypt. According to an ancient tradition in [\[paragraph continues\]](#)

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Mexico, "it is said that in the absence of the sun all mankind lingered in darkness. Nothing but a human sacrifice could hasten his arrival. Then Metzli, the moon, led forth one Nanahuatl, the leprous, and building a pyre, the victim threw himself in its midst. Straightway Metzli followed his example, and as she disappeared in the bright flames, the sun rose over the horizon. Is not this a reference to the kindling rays of the aurora, in which the dark and baleful night is sacrificed, and in whose light the moon presently fades away, and the sun comes forth?" [379](#) We venture to think that it is, and that it is nearest to a natural explanation of purely natural effects.

Coming next to Britain, we find that "no prejudice has been more firmly rivetted than the influence of the moon over the human frame, originating perhaps in some superstition more ancient than recorded by the earliest history. The frequent intercourse of Scotland with the north may have conspired to disseminate or renew the veneration of a luminary so highly venerated there, in counteracting the more southern ecclesiastical ordinances." [380](#) Forbes Leslie surely goes too far, and mixes matters up too much, when he writes: "An ancient belief, adhered to by the ignorant after being denounced and apparently disproved by the learned, is now admitted to be a fact; viz. the influence of the moon in certain diseases. This, from various circumstances, is more apparent in some of the Asiatic countries, and may have given rise to the custom which extended into [\[paragraph continues\]](#)

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Britain, of exposing sick children on the housetops." [381](#) We know that the *solar* rays, from the time of Hippocrates, the reputed "father of medicine," were believed by the Greeks to prolong life; and that the Romans built terraces on the tops of their houses called *solaria*, where they enjoyed their solar baths. "Levato sole levatur morbus," was one of their medical axioms. But who ever heard of the *lunar* rays as beneficial? If sick children were exposed on the housetops, it must have been in the daytime; and, unless it were intended as an alterative, it is difficult to see what connection this had with the belief that disease was the product of the lunar beam. Besides, is the moon's influence in disease an admitted fact? The "certain diseases" should be specified, and their lunar origin sustained.

The following strange superstition is singularly like that interpolated legend in the Gospel of John, about the angel troubling the pool of Bethesda. In this case the medicinal virtue seems to come with the change of the moon. But in both cases supernatural agency is equally mythical. "A cave in the neighbourhood of Dunskey ought also to be mentioned, on account of the great veneration in which it is held by the people. At the change of the moon (which is still considered with superstitious reverence), it is usual to bring, even from a great distance, infirm persons, and particularly ricketty children, whom they often suppose bewitched, to bathe in a stream which pours from the hill, and then dry them in the cave." [382](#)

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Those who are in danger of apoplexy, or other cerebral disease, through indulgence too freely in various liquors, vinous and spirituous, should cherish Bacon's sapient deliverance: "It is like that the brain of man waxeth moister and fuller upon the full of the moon; and therefore it were good for those that have moist brains, and are great drinkers, to take some of *lignum aloes*, rosemary, frankincense, etc., about the full of the moon. It is like, also, that the humours in men's bodies increase and decrease as the moon doth; and therefore it were good to purge some day or two after the full; for that then the humours will not replenish so soon again." [383](#) All this sounds so unphilosophical that it is almost incredible that the learned Bacon believed what he wrote. Darker superstitions, however, still linger in our land. "In Staffordshire, it is commonly said, if you want to cure chin-cough, take out the child and let it look at the new moon; lift up its clothes and rub your right hand up and down its stomach, and repeat the following lines (looking steadfastly at the moon, and rubbing at the same time):--

'What I see, may it increase;  
What I feel, may it decrease;

[paragraph continues] In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.'" [384](#) There is a little ambiguity here. What is felt is the child's stomach. But the desire is not that that may decrease, but only the whooping cough, which is *felt*, we take it, by proxy. A lady, writing of

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the southern county of Sussex, says: "A superstition lingering amongst us, worthy of the days of paganism, is that the new May moon, aided by certain charms, has the power of curing scrofulous complaints." [385](#)

As the cutting of hair, finger-nails, and corns has some relation to health and comfort, we may here mention that in Devonshire it is said that hair and nails should always be cut in the waning of the moon, thereby beneficial consequences will result. If corns are cut after the full moon, some say that they will gradually disappear. In the *British Apollo* we have the following request for advice:

"Pray tell your querist if he may  
Rely on what the vulgar say,  
That when the moon's in her increase,  
If corns be cut they'll grow apace  
But if you always do take care  
After the full your corns to pare,  
They do insensibly decay  
And will in time wear quite away.

If this be true, pray let me know,  
And give the reason why 'tis so." [386](#)

The following passage is worth quoting, without any abbreviation, as an excellent summary of wisdom and sense regarding the moon's influence on health: "There is much reason for regarding the moon as a source of evil, yet not that she herself is so, but only the circumstances which attend her. With us it happens that a bright moonlight night is always a cold one. The absence of cloud allows the

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earth to radiate its heat into space, and the air gradually cools, until the moisture it contained is precipitated in the form of dew, and lies like a thick blanket on the ground to prevent a further cooling. When the quantity of moisture in the air is small, the refrigerating process continues until frost is produced, and many a moonlight night in spring destroys half or even the whole of the fruit of a new season. Moonlight, therefore, frequently involves the idea of frigidity. With us, whose climate is comparatively cold, the change from the burning, blasting, or blighting heat of day, or sun-up, to the cold of a clear night, or sun-down, is not very great, but within the tropics the change is enormous. To such sudden vicissitudes in temperature, an Indian doctor, in whom I have great confidence, attributes fevers and agues. As it is clear that those persons only, whose business or pleasure obliges them to be out on cloudless nights, suffer from the severe cold produced by the rapid radiation into space of the heat of their own bodies and that of the earth, those who remain at home are not likely to suffer from the effects of the sudden and continued chill. Still further, it is clear that people in general will not care to go out during the darkness of a moonless night, unless obliged to do so. Consequently few persons have experience of the deleterious influence of starlight nights. But when a bright moon and a hot, close house induce the people to turn out and enjoy the coldness and clearness of night, it is very probable

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that refrigeration may be followed by severe bodily disease. Amongst such a people, the moon would rather be anathematised than adored. One may enjoy half an hour, or perhaps an hour, of moonlight, and yet be blighted or otherwise injured by a whole night of it." [387](#) In Denmark a superstition is current concerning the noxious influences of night. The Danes have a kind of elves which they call the "Moon Folk." "The man is like an old man with a low-crowned hat upon his head; the woman is very beautiful in front, but behind she is hollow, like a dough-trough, and she has a sort of harp on which she plays, and lures young men with it, and then kills them. The man is also an evil being, for if any one comes near him he opens his mouth and breathes upon them, and his breath causes sickness. It is easy to see what this tradition means: it is the damp marsh wind, laden with foul and dangerous odours; and the woman's harp is the wind playing across the marsh rushes at nightfall." [388](#) It is the Queen of the Fairies in the *Midsummer-Night's Dream* who says to the Fairy King,--

These are the forgeries of jealousy  
And never, since the middle summer's spring,  
Met we on hill, in dale, forest or mead,  
By pavèd fountain, or by rushy brook,  
Or in the beachèd margent of the sea,  
To dance our ringlets to the whistling wind,  
But with thy brawls thou hast disturb'd our sport.

No night is now with hymn or carol blest:  
Therefore the moon, the governess of floods,  
Pale in her anger, washes all the air, [p. 206](#)  
That rheumatic diseases do abound  
And this same progeny of evils comes  
From our debate, from our dissension  
We are their parents and original."

It will be thought rashly iconoclastic if we cast the least doubt upon the idea that blindness is caused directly by the light of the moon. So many cases have been adduced that it is considered a settled point. We, however, dare to dispute some of the evidence. For instance "A poor man born in the village *Rowdil*, commonly called St. Clement's, blind, lost his sight at every change of the moon, which obliged him to keep his bed for a day or two, and then he recovered his sight." [389](#) If logic would enable us to prove a negative to this statement, we would meet it with simple denial. But we have no hesitation in saying that an investigation into this case would have exonerated the moon of any share in the affliction, and have revealed some other and likely cause. Our chief objection to this story is its element of periodicity; and we would require overwhelming testimony to establish even the probability of such a miracle once a month. That permanent injury may accrue to those whose sleeping eyes are exposed all night to the brightness of a full moon is probable enough. But this would take place not because the moon's beams were peculiarly baneful, but because any strong light would have a hurtful effect upon the eyes when fixed for hours in the condition of sleep.

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We can quite believe that in a dry atmosphere like that of Egypt, where ophthalmia is very prevalent on account of constant irritation from the fine sand in the air, the eye, weary with the heat and aridity of the day, would be impaired if uncovered in the air to the rays of the moon. Carne's statements are consequently quite credible. He tells us: "The effect of the moonlight on the eyes in this country is singularly injurious; the natives tell you, as I found they also afterwards did in Arabia, always to cover your eyes when you sleep in the open air. The moon here really strikes and affects the sight, when you sleep exposed to it, much more than the sun; indeed, the sight of a person who should sleep with his face exposed at night, would soon be utterly impaired or destroyed." [390](#) For the same reason, that strong light oppresses the slumbering eye, "the seaman in his hammock takes care not to face the full moon, lest he be struck with blindness." [391](#) Nor can we regard the following as "an *extraordinary* effect of moonlight upon the human subject." In 1863, "a boy, thirteen years of age, residing near Peckham Rye, was expelled his home by his mother for disobedience. He ran away to a cornfield close by, and, on lying down in the open air, fell asleep. He slept throughout the night, which was a moonlight one. Some labourers on their way to work, next morning, seeing the boy apparently asleep, aroused him; the lad opened his eyes, but declared he could not see. He was conveyed

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home, and medical advice was obtained; the surgeon affirmed that the total loss of sight resulted from sleeping in the moonlight." [392](#) This was sad enough; but it was antecedently probable. No doubt a boy of thirteen who for disobedience was cast out of home in such a place as London had a hard lot, and went supperless to his open bed. His optic nerves were young and sensitive, and the protracted light so paralysed them that the morning found them closed "in endless night." This was a purely natural result: to admitting it, reason opposes no

demur. But we must object, for truth's sake, to the tendency to account for natural consequences by assigning supernatural causes. The moon is no divinity; moonlight is no Divine emanation, with a vindictive animus; and those who countenance such silly superstition as that moonstroke is a mysterious, evil agency, are contributing to a polytheism which leads to atheism: for many gods logically means no GOD at all.

Another branch of this umbrageous if not fructuous tree of lunar superstition is the moon's influence on human fortune. Butler satirizes the visionary who--

"With the moon was more familiar  
Than e'er was almanac well-willer (compiler);  
Her secrets understood so clear  
That some believed he had been there;  
Knew when she was in fittest mood  
For cutting corns, or letting blood:  
Whether the wane be, or increase,  
Best to set garlick, or sow pease: [p. 209](#)  
Who first found out the man i' th' moon,  
That to the ancients was unknown."--*Hudibras*.

A Swiss theologian amusingly describes the superstitious person who reads his fortune in the stars. He, it is said, "will be more afraid of the constellation fires than the flames of his next neighbour's house. He will not open a vein till he has asked leave of the planets. He will not commit his seed to the earth when the soil, but when the moon, requires it. He will have his hair cut when the moon is either in *Leo*, that his locks may stare like the lion's shag, or in *Aries*, that they may curl like a ram's horn. Whatever he would have to grow, he sets about when she is in her increase; but for what he would have made less, he chuses her wane. When the moon is in *Taurus*, he never can be persuaded to take physic, lest that animal which chews its cud should make him cast it up again. He will avoid the sea whenever *Mars* is in the midst of heaven, lest that warrior-god should stir up pirates against him. In *Taurus* he will plant his trees, that this sign, which the astrologers are pleased to call *fixed*, may fasten them deep in the earth. If at any time he has a mind to be admitted into the presence of a prince, he will wait till the moon is in conjunction with the sun; for 'tis then the society of an inferior with a superior is salutary and successful." [393](#)

The *new moon* is considered pre-eminently auspicious for commencements,--for all kinds of building

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up, and beginning *de novo*. Houses are to be erected and moved into; marriages are to be concluded, money counted, hair and nails cut, healing herbs and pure dew gathered, all at the new moon. Money counted at that period will be increased. The *full moon* is the time for pulling down, and thinking of the end of all things. Cut your timber, mow your grass, make your hay, not while the sun shines, but while the moon wanes; also stuff your feather-bed then, and so kill the newly plucked feathers completely, and bring them to rest. Wash your linen, too, by the waning moon, that the dirt may disappear with the dwindling light. [394](#)  
According to one old notion it was deemed unlucky to assume a new dress when the moon was in her decline. So says the Earl of Northampton: "They forbidde us when the moone is in a fixed signe, to put on a newe garment. Why so? Because it is lyke that it wyll be too longe in wearing, a small fault about this towne, where garments seldome last till they be payd for. But thyr meaning is, that the garment shall continue long, not in respect of any strength or

goodness in the stuffe, but by the durance or disease of him that hath neyther leysure nor liberty to weare it." [395](#) It is well known that the ancient Hebrews held the new moon in religious reverence. The trumpets were blown, solemn sacrifices were offered and festivals held; and the first clay of the lunar month was always holy. In a Talmudic compilation, to which Dr. Farrar has

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contributed a preface, we find an interesting account of the *Blessing the new moon*. "It is a very pious act to bless the moon at the close of the Sabbath, when one is dressed in his best attire and perfumed. If the blessing is to be performed on the evening of an ordinary week-day, the best dress is to be worn. According to the Kabbalists the blessings upon the moon are not to be said till seven full days after her birth, but, according to later authorities, this may be done after three days. The reason for not performing this monthly service under a roof, but in the open air, is because it is considered as the reception of the presence of the Shekinah, and it would not be respectful so to do anywhere but in the open air. It depends very much upon circumstances when and where the new moon is to be consecrated, and also upon one's own predisposition, for authorities differ. We will close these remarks with the conclusion of the Kitzur Sh'lu on the subject, which, at p. 72, col. 2, runs thus:

"When about to sanctify the new moon, one should straighten his feet (as at the Shemonah-esreh) and give one glance at the moon before he begins to repeat the ritual blessing, and having commenced it he should not look at her at all. Thus should he begin--'In the united name of the Holy and Blessed One' and His Shekinah, through that Hidden and Consecrated One! and in the name of all Israel!' Then he is to proceed with the 'Form of Prayer for the New Moon,' word for word, with

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out haste, but with solemn deliberation, and when he repeats-

'Blessed is thy Former, Blessed is thy Maker,  
Blessed is thy Possessor, Blessed is thy Creator,'

he is to meditate on the initials of the four Divine epithets, which form 'Jacob'; for the moon, which is called 'the lesser light,' is his emblem or symbol, and he is also called 'little' (see Amos vii. 2). This he is to repeat three times. He is to skip three times while repeating thrice the following sentence, and after repeating three times forwards and backwards: thus (*forwards*)--'Fear and dread shall fall upon them by the greatness of thine arm; they shall be as still as a stone'; thus (*backwards*)--'Still as a stone may they be; by the greatness of thine arm may fear and dread fall on them'; he then is to say to his neighbour three times, 'Peace be unto you,' and the neighbour is to respond three times, 'Unto you be peace.' Then he is to say three times (very loudly), 'David, the King of Israel, liveth and existeth!' and finally, he is to say three times, 'May a good omen and good luck be upon us and upon all Israel! Amen!'" [396](#)

That the ancient Germans held the moon in similar regard we know from Cæsar, who, having inquired why Ariovistus did not come to an engagement, discovered this to be the reason: "that among the Germans it was the custom for their matrons to pronounce from lots and divination, whether it were expedient that the battle should be engaged in or not; that

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they had said, 'that it was not the will of heaven that the Germans should conquer, if they engaged in battle before the new moon.'" [396\\*](#)

Halliwell has reproduced an illustration of British superstition of the same sort. "A very singular divination practised at the period of the harvest moon is thus described in an old chap-book. When you go to bed, place under your pillow a prayer-book open at the part of the matrimonial service 'with this ring I thee wed'; place on it a key, a ring, a flower, and a sprig of willow, a small heart-cake, a crust of bread, and the following cards:--the ten of clubs, nine of hearts, ace of spades, and the ace of diamonds. Wrap all these in a thin handkerchief of gauze or muslin, and on getting into bed, cross your hands, and say:--

'Luna, every woman's friend,  
To me thy goodness condescend  
Let me this night in vision see  
Emblems of my destiny.'

[\[paragraph continues\]](#) If you dream of storms, trouble will betide you; if the storm ends in a fine calm, so will your fate; if of a ring or the ace of diamonds, marriage; bread, an industrious life; cake, a prosperous life; flowers, joy; willow, treachery in love; spades, death; diamonds, money; clubs, a foreign land; hearts, illegitimate children; keys, that you will rise to great trust and power, and never know want; birds, that you will have many children; and geese, that you will marry more than once." [397](#) Such ridiculous absurdities would be rejected

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as apocryphal if young ladies were not still in the habit of placing bits of wedding cake under their pillows in the hope that their dreaming eyes may be enchanted with blissful visions of their future lords.

Hone tells us that in Berkshire, "at the first appearance of a new moon, maidens go into the fields, and, while they look at it, say:--

'New moon, new moon, I hail thee!  
By all the virtue in thy body.  
Grant this night that I may see  
He who my true love is to be.'

[\[paragraph continues\]](#) Then they return home, firmly believing that before morning their future husbands will appear to them in their dreams." [398](#)

In Devonshire also "it is customary for young people, as soon as they see the first new moon after midsummer, to go to a stile, turn their back to it, and say:--

'All hail, new moon, all hail to thee!  
I prithee, good moon, reveal to me  
This night who shall my true love be  
Who is he, and what he wears,  
And what he does all months and years.'" [399](#)

Aubrey says the same of the Scotch of his day, and the custom is not yet extinct. "In Scotland (especially among the Highlanders) the women do make a curtsy to the new moon; I have

known one in England doe it, and our English woemen in the country doe retain (some of them) a touch of this gentilisme still, *e.g.*:--

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'All haile to thee, moon, all haile to thee  
I prithee, good moon, declare to me,  
This night, who my husband must be.'

This they doe sitting astride on a gate or stile the first evening the new moon appears. In Herefordshire, etc., the vulgar people at the prime of the moon say, "'Tis a fine moon, God bless her.'" [400](#) " In Ireland, at the new moon, it is not an uncommon practice for people to point with a knife, and after invoking the Holy Trinity, to say:--

'New moon, true morrow, be true now to me,  
That I ere the morrow my true love may see.'

The knife is then placed under the pillow, and silence strictly observed, lest the charm should be broken." [401](#)

Dr. Charles Mackay quotes from Mother Bridget's *Dream and Omen Book* the following prescription for ascertaining the events of futurity. "*First new moon of the year.* On the first new moon in the year take a pint of clear spring water, and infuse into it the *white* of an egg laid by a *white* hen, a glass of *white* wine, three almonds peeled *white*, and a tablespoonful of *white* rose-water. Drink this on going to bed, not making more nor less than three draughts of it; repeating the following verses three several times in a clear distinct voice, but not so loud as to be overheard by anybody:--

'If I dream of water pure  
Before the coming morn,  
'Tis a sign I shall be poor,  
And unto wealth not born. [p. 216](#)  
If I dream of tasting beer,  
Middling, then, will be my cheer--  
Chequered with the good and bad,  
Sometimes joyful, sometimes sad;  
But should I dream of drinking wine,  
Wealth and pleasure will be mine.  
The stronger the drink, the better the cheer--  
Dreams of my destiny, appear, appear!'" [402](#)

The day of the week on which the moon is new or full, is a question that awakens the most anxious concern. In the north of Italy Wednesday is dreaded for a lunar change, and in the south of France the inauspicious day is Friday. [403](#) In most of our own rural districts Friday's new moon is much disliked

"Friday's moon,  
Come when it wool,  
It comes too soon."

Saturday is unlucky for the *new*, and Sunday for the *full* moon. In Norfolk it is said:--

"Saturday's new and Sunday's full,  
Never was good, and never wull."

An apparently older version of the same weather-saw runs:--

"A Saturday's change, and a Sunday's prime,  
Was nivver a good mune in nea man's time."

In Worcestershire, a cottager near Berrow Hill told Mr. Edwin Lees, F.L.S., that as the new moon had fallen on a Saturday, there would follow twenty-one days of wind or rain; for

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"If the moon on a Saturday be new or full,  
There always *was* rain, and there always *will*."

One rustic rhyme rehearsed in some places is:--

"A Saturday moon,  
If it comes once in seven years,  
Comes once too soon."

Next to the day, the medium through which the new moon is first beheld, is of vital moment. In Staffordshire it is unlucky to see this sight through trees. A correspondent in *Notes and Queries* (21st January, 1882) once saw a person almost in tears because she looked on the new moon through her veil, feeling convinced that misfortune would follow. Henderson cites a canon to be observed by those who would know what year they would wed. "Look at the first new moon of the year through a silk handkerchief which has never been washed. As many moons as you see through the handkerchief (the threads multiplying the vision), so many years will pass ere you are married." [404](#) Hunt tells us, what in fact is widely believed, that "to see the new moon for the first time through glass, is unlucky; you may be certain that you will break glass before that moon is out. I have known persons whose attention has been called to a clear new moon hesitate. 'Hev I seed her out o' doors afore?' if not, they will go into the open air, and, if possible, show the moon 'a piece of gold,' or, at all events, turn their money." [405](#) Mrs. Latham says: "Many of our Sussex superstitions are probably of Saxon origin; amongst which may be

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the custom of bowing or curtseying to the new or Lady moon, as she is styled, to deprecate bad luck. There is another kindred superstition, that the Queen of night will dart malignant rays upon you, if on the first day of her re-appearance you look up to her without money in your pocket. But if you are not fortunate enough to have any there, in order to avert her evil aspect, you must immediately turn head over heels! It is considered unlucky to see the new moon through a window-pane, and I have known a maidservant shut her eyes when closing the shutters lest she should unexpectedly see it through the glass. Do not kill your pig until full moon, or the pork will be ruined." [406](#) In Suffolk, also, "it is considered unlucky to kill a pig in the wane of the moon; if it is done, the pork will waste in boiling. I have known the shrinking of bacon in the pot attributed to the fact of the pig having been killed in the moon's decrease; and I have also known the death of poor piggy delayed, or hastened, so as to happen during its increase." [407](#)

The desirability of possessing *silver* in the pocket, and of turning it over, when the new moon is first seen, is a point of some interest. Forbes Leslie says, "The ill-luck of having no *silver* money--coins of other metals being of no avail--when you first see or hail a new moon, is still

a common belief from Cornwall to Caithness, as well as in Ireland." [408](#) And Jamieson writes: "Another superstition, equally ridiculous and unaccountable, is still regarded by

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some. They deem it very unlucky to see the new moon for the first time without having *silver* in one's pocket. Copper is of no avail." [409](#) We venture to think that this is not altogether unaccountable. The moon at night, in a clear sky, reflects a brilliant whiteness. The two Hebrew words used of this luminary in the Bible, mean "pale light" and "white." "Hindooism says that the moon, Soma, was turned into a female called Chandra--'the White or Silvery One.'" [410](#) The Santhals of India call the sun *Chando*, which means bright, and is also a name for the moon. Now pure silver is of a very white colour and of a strong metallic lustre. It was one of the earliest known metals, and used as money from the remotest times. Its whiteness led the ancient astrologers, as it afterwards led the alchemists, to connect it with the moon, and to call it Diana and Luna, names previously given to the satellite. For Artemis, the Greek Diana, the Ephesian craftsmen made silver shrines. The moon became the symbol of silver; and to this day fused nitrate of silver is called *lunar* caustic. It was natural and easy for superstition to suppose that silver was the moon's own metal; and to imagine that upon the reappearance of the lunar deity or demon, its beams should be propitiated by some argentine possession. We find that silver was exclusively used in the worship of the moon in Peru.

In a book published in the earlier part of last century, and attributed to Daniel Defoe, we read;[\[paragraph continues\]](#)

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"To see a new moon the first time after her change, on the right hand, or directly before you, betokens the utmost good fortune that month; as to have her on your left, or behind you, so that in turning your head back you happen to see her, foreshows the worst; as also, they say, to be without gold in your pocket at that time is of very bad consequence." [411](#) The mistake in substituting gold for silver here is easily explained. As among the Romans *æs* meant both copper and money; and among the French *argent* means both silver and money in general; so in England gold is the common expression for coin of any substance. Silver being *money*, the word gold was thus substituted; the generic for the specific. Other superstitions besides those above noticed are found in different parts of our enlightened land. Denham says, "I once saw an aged matron turn her apron to the new moon to insure good luck for the ensuing month." [412](#) And Halliwell mentions a prayer customary among some persons:--

"I see the moon, and the moon sees me.  
God bless the moon, and God bless me." [413](#)

In Devonshire it is lucky to see the new moon over the right, but unlucky to see it over the left shoulder; and to see it straight before is good fortune to the end of the month. "In Renfrewshire, if a man's house be burnt during the wane of the moon, it is deemed unlucky. If the same misfortune take place

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when the moon is waxing, it is viewed as a presage of prosperity. In Orkney, also, it is reckoned unlucky to flit, or to remove from one habitation to another, during the waning of the moon." [414](#) A recent writer tells us that in Orkney "there are superstitions likewise

associated with the moon. The increase, and full growth, and wane of that satellite are the emblems of a rising, flourishing, and declining fortune. No business of importance is begun during the moon's wane; if even an animal is killed at that period, the flesh is supposed to be unwholesome. A couple to think of marrying at that time would be regarded as recklessly careless respecting their future happiness. Old people in some parts of Argyllshire were wont to invoke the Divine blessing on the moon after the monthly change. The Gaelic word for fortune is borrowed from that which denotes the full moon; and a marriage or birth occurring at that period is believed to augur prosperity." [415](#)

Kirkmichael, says another writer on the Highlands of Scotland, hath "its due proportion of that superstition which generally prevails over the Highlands. Unable to account for the cause, they consider the effects of times and seasons as certain and infallible. The moon in her increase, full growth, and in her wane, are with them the emblems of a rising, flourishing, and declining fortune. At the last period of her revolution they carefully avoid to engage in any business of importance; but the first and the middle they seize with avidity, presaging the most

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auspicious issue to their undertakings. Poor Martinus Scriblerus never more anxiously watched the blowing of the west wind to secure an heir to his genius, than the love-sick swain and his nymph for the coming of the new moon to be noosed together in matrimony. Should the planet happen to be at the height of her splendour when the ceremony is performed, their future life will be a scene of festivity, and all its paths strewn over with rosebuds of delight. But when her tapering horns are turned towards the north, passion becomes frost-bound, and seldom thaws till the genial season again approaches. From the moon they not only draw prognostications of the weather, but according to their creed also discover future events. There they are clearly portrayed, and ingenious illusion never fails in the explanation. The veneration paid to this planet, and the opinion of its influences, are obvious from the meaning still affixed to some words of the Gaelic language. In Druidic mythology, when the circle of the moon was complete, fortune then promised to be most propitious. Agreeably to this idea, *rath*, which signifies in Gaelic a wheel or circle, is transferred to signify fortune." [416](#)

Forbes Leslie writes: "The influence which the moon was supposed to exercise on mankind, as well as on inanimate objects, may be traced in the practice of the Druids. It is not yet extinct in Scotland; and the moon, in the increase, at the full, and on the wane, are emblems of prosperity, established success, or declining fortune, by which many

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persons did, and some still do, regulate the period for commencing their most important undertakings." [417](#) And yet once more, to make the induction most conclusive; we are told that "the canon law anxiously prohibited observance of the moon as regulating the period of marriage; nor was any regard to be paid to certain days of the year for ceremonies. If the Lucina of the ancients be identified with Diana, it was not unreasonable to court the care of the parturient, by selecting the time deemed most propitious. The strength of the ecclesiastical interdiction does not seem to have prevailed much in Scotland. Friday, which was consecrated to a northern divinity, has been deemed more favourable for the union. In the southern districts of Scotland, and in the Orkney Islands, the inhabitants preferred the increase of the moon for it. Auspicious circumstances were anticipated in other parts, from its celebration at full moon. Good fortune depended so much on the increase of that luminary,

that nothing important was undertaken during its wane. Benefit even accrued to the stores provided during its increase, and its effect in preserving them is still credited." [418](#) To what, but to this prevalent belief in lunar influence on fortune can Shakespeare allude, when Romeo swears:

"*Rom.* Lady, by yonder blessed moon I swear,  
That tips with silver all these fruit-tree tops--  
*Jul.* Oh, swear not by the moon, the inconstant moon,  
That monthly changes in her circled orb,  
Lest that thy love prove likewise variable." [419](#)

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Upon the physiological influence of the lunar rays in the generation or aggravation of disease, we have but little to add to what has been already written. It is a topic for a special treatise, and properly belongs to those medical experts whose research and practice in this particular branch of physics qualify them to speak with plenary authority. Besides, it has been so wisely handled by Dr. Forbes Winslow, in his admirable monograph on *Light*, that inquirers cannot follow a safer guide than his little book affords. Dr. Winslow accounts for the theory of planetary influence partly by the action of the moon in producing the tides. He says: "Astronomers having admitted that the moon was capable of producing this physical effect upon the waters of the ocean, it was not altogether unnatural that the notion should become not only a generally received but a popular one, that the ebb and flow of the tides had a material influence over the bodily functions. The Spaniards imagine that all who die of chronic diseases breathe their last during the ebb. Southey says, that amongst the wonders of the isles and city of Cadiz, which the historian of that city, Suares de Salazar, enumerates, one is, according to p. Labat, that the sick never die there while the tide is rising or at its height, but always during the ebb. He restricts the notion to the isle of Leon, but implies that the effect was there believed to take place in diseases of all kinds, acute as well as chronic. 'Him fever,' says the negro in the West Indies, 'shall go

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when the water come low; him always come not when the tide high.' The popular notion amongst the negroes appears to be that the ebb and flow of the tides are caused by a '*fever of the sea*,' which rages for six hours, and then intermits for as many more." [420](#) Dr. Winslow then subjoins a long list of learned authorities, several of whose writings he subjects to a brief analysis. He disapproves of the presumption that the subject is altogether visionary and utopian; and affirms that it has not always been pursued by competent observers. Periodicity is noted as an important symptom in disease; a feature in febrile disturbance which the present writer himself had abundant opportunity of marking and measuring during an epidemic of yellow fever in the city of Savannah in the year 1876. This periodicity Dr. Winslow regards as the foundation of the alleged lunar influence in morbid conditions. Some remarkable cases are referred to, which, if the fact of the moon's interference with human functions could be admitted, would go a long way to corroborate and confirm it. The supposed influence of the moon on plants is not passed over, nor the chemical composition of lunar light as a possible evil agency. Still considering the matter *sub judice*, Dr. Winslow then proceeds to the alleged influence of the moon on the insane; a question with which he was pre-eminently competent to cope. After alluding to the support given to the popular belief by poets and philosophers of ancient and modern times, the question of periodicity, or [\[paragraph continues\]](#)

"lucid intervals," is again discussed, this time in its mental aspect, and the hygienic or sanatory influence of light is allowed its meed of consideration. The final result of the investigation is that the matter is held to be purely speculative, and it is esteemed wise to hold in reserve any theory in relation to the subject that may have been formed. With this conclusion we are greatly disappointed. Dr. Winslow's aid in the inquiry is most valuable, and if he, after his careful review of pathological literature on lunar influence, coupled with his own extended experience, holds the question in abeyance, who will venture upon a decision? We however believe, notwithstanding every existing difficulty, that the subject will be brought into clear light ere long, and all superstition end in accurate science. Meanwhile, many, even of the enlightened, will cling to the unforgotten fancy which gave rise to the word *lunatic*, and in cases of mental derangement will moralize with young Banks in the *Witch of Edmonton* (1658), "When the moon's in the full, then wit's in the wane."

- The End -